



How to assess a journal

A.K.A. How not to publish in an undesirable journal

Key Things to Consider When Assessing a Journal*

*It's up to you to weigh these factors in order to make your decision



Don't trust unsolicited emails

- If a call for submission does not come from a trusted source, treat it as spam.



Be similarly wary of unsolicited offers to join editorial boards or conference invitations.



Review several issues of the journal

- Check for writing and research quality, relevance to discipline and adequate copy editing.

Check to see if OA journals are listed at doaj.org

Note: Very new journals will not be listed.



Review the journal website. It should contain:

- a clear and appropriate scope;
- an editorial board with recognized experts and current contact information for them;
- a description of the peer review process;
- transparent information about whether article processing charges (APCs) or other fees are charged.



If your research grant or institution requires that your article be openly available, make sure the journal's policy allows this.



Two journals can have similar names but different reputations; don't mistake one journal for another.



Check that any impact metrics listed by the journal are recognized and reputable

- e.g. Journal Impact Factor, H-index, Eigenfactor



Beware: there are a number of made-up metrics on the internet.

Still Unsure?



Check with your colleagues and peers in your field.



Contact digital-scholarship@sfu.ca for help from an SFU librarian.



Visit thinkchecksubmit.org for more useful tips.

To find out more about open access, visit lib.sfu.ca/oa

Neutral Factors

The following factors are not indicative of journal quality:

Lack of impact metrics

- Not all reputable journals display impact metrics.

Geographical location of publisher

- Journal publishing is a global pursuit.

Article Processing Charges (APCs)

- Reputable open access journals operate under a variety of business models, including many who use APCs.

Reputation of other journals by the same publisher

- A publisher can be responsible for both highly respected and less reputable journals.

Adapted from Canadian Association of Research Libraries "How to Assess a Journal," used under CC BY.



SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
LIBRARY

www.lib.sfu.ca