

TERMS OF REFERENCE

ABDC Journal Quality List

Review of Frequency, Methodology, and Scope

In existence since 2008, the ABDC Journal Quality List (JQL) is used widely to influence assessments about the academic standing of outlets for research in Accounting, Business and Tax Law, Economics, Finance, Management, Marketing, and Tourism. The 2019 JQL was the fifth iteration of its type, and as flagged in the Final Report, it is timely for the ABDC to review the frequency, methodology, and scope of future JQL review exercises.

The method and approach of the 2019 JQL review is available on pp. 7-9 of the Final Report. Preparations began in early 2018 for finalising a methodology and this was completed in February 2019. Using a similar timeframe for the 2021 review of frequency, methodology, and scope, it can be envisaged that this process should be completed by the end of the year, which would provide the springboard for the ABDC to undertake the next full review of its JQL in 2022. Another option might be to carry out an interim review in 2022 and defer the next full review to 2024. This would mirror an analogous timeline from the 2013 full review, to the 2016 interim review, to the 2019 full review.

As with the 2019 JQL, the 2021 review of the frequency, methodology, and scope of the JQL review will be based on transparency and procedural consistency. It will be coordinated by the BARDeNet Chair, and submissions will be invited from stakeholders in the academy, publishers, and other interested parties. Submissions will be limited to 300 words per question. **Anonymous submissions will not be accepted.**

Submissions are invited on the following specific questions:

1. What value does the ABDC JQL provide? Do the benefits of having the list outweigh the costs of undertaking the review?
2. How frequently should the JQL be subjected to review?
3. How should reviews of journal rankings be conducted? For instance, should it be panel-based? How should these panels be appointed? Who should qualify to make submissions to the review?
4. What factors should determine journal quality ratings? For instance, what type of metrics should be prioritised? What should be the nature of the peer review?
5. Which specific fields of research should be covered in the JQL?
6. To what extent should other journal quality lists (e.g., FT, CABs) be taken into account?
7. Are the current percentage thresholds for A* (5–7% of listed journals), A (15–25%), B (25–40%), and C (remainder) journals appropriate?

The 2021 review will disregard submissions that:

- Propose changes to the 2019 JQL or seek to contest or recontest ratings under the 2019 JQL.
- Propose revised journal ratings, new outlets, or removal of specific outlets in any future review.
- Engage in any commentary directed at individuals involved in, or the process surrounding, previous JQL exercises.

Submissions will be considered by an expert panel overseen by the Chair of BARsNet, which will provide a series of recommendations to the ABDC executive for consideration.

As with the 2019 JQL review, submissions for the 2021 exercise will be made through a special-purpose portal on the ABDC website.

The timeline for the 2021 review of frequency, methodology, and scope will incorporate the following milestones:

- Milestone 1 — 18 June: Release of ABDC Consultation Paper and opening of submissions.
- Milestone 2 — 18 August: Submissions close.
- Milestone 3 — 18 August to 31 October: Expert panel considers submissions and finalises recommendations for the ABDC executive.
- Milestone 4 — 1 December: ABDC releases framework on JQL frequency, methodology, and scope.

Inquiries about the 2021 review of frequency, methodology, and scope should be directed to ABDC Executive Officer, Caroline Falshaw: office@abdc.edu.au.

Andrew O'Neil
BARsNet Chair
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