

Terms of reference

2022 ABDC Journal Quality List (JQL) review

1. Purpose of 2022 JQL review

The scope of the 2022 review will be confined to:

- inclusion of new relevant journals;
- exclusion of non-relevant journals;
- exclusion of likely predatory or overly aggressive journals;
- journal name changes.

Most notably, the 2022 review will not accommodate any re-rating of currently listed journals — such re-ratings will be the major focus of the next full review due in 2024–25. Submissions to the Panels that propose re-rating of journals will not be considered.

2. Guiding principles

As was the case in prior JQL reviews, the operation of the 2022 review will be underpinned by four guiding principles:

- **Transparency:** The process will be transparent. A key determinant of the credibility of a journal rating list is the transparency of the process by which journals are included/excluded and ratings are determined. Aspects of transparency relate to who makes the decisions and the method (broadly defined) by which decisions are made. As with previous reviews, Panels will be required to submit final reports of their deliberations and the rationale underlying their recommendations.
- **Consistency:** Recommendations and decisions will be consistent methodologically: informed by globally recognised and externally validated journal ranking lists, appropriate and select citations metrics and, if/when required, expert peer review.
- **External validation:** The final recommendations by the Panels must be externally validated by the ABDC Steering Group in consultation with an International Advisor appointed by the ABDC. The latter will be an internationally recognised academic not formally affiliated in any Australian or New Zealand universities.
- **Stability:** For the purpose of the 2022 review, the 2019 List is accepted as a strong foundation. Panel recommendations should therefore be incremental in focus. Indeed, given the light touch nature of the 2022 review, there will only be marginal changes to the ABDC JQL.

3. Operational considerations

With respect to operational considerations:

- Due to the light nature of the review task, only Panel Chairs will be officially appointed. The Panel Chairs will be encouraged to engage expert opinion from experts as deemed appropriate.

- Following the appointment of Panel Chairs, a public call for submissions in relation to the four considerations that are the object of this review will be made, with submissions received via the ABDC website.
- Submissions will be accepted through a special-purpose ABDC hosted portal.
- Anonymous submissions will not be accepted, and all submissions will be considered on the strict condition that they will be publicly available.
- Each Panel Chair will have access to a Research Assistant who can be tasked with requests pertaining to citation metrics and other relevant activities, e.g. searches for evidence of being a predatory journal.
- There will be seven Panel Chairs aligned to the groupings used in the 2019 review. An indicative mapping of these seven panels into the new FoR codes is shown below:

Panel name	New FoR codes (indicative only)
Accounting	3501
Business and taxation law	4801 – Commercial Law, Contract Law, Tax Law
Economics	3801 3802 3803 3899 4905
Finance including Actuarial	3502
Information systems	4609
Management; Commercial services; Transport and logistics	3503 3504 3505 3507 3509 3599
Marketing and tourism	3506 3508

It should be noted that the FoR codes are only provided as a guide to the scope of each Panel — given the stability criterion mentioned above, the sub-lists will be assigned as per the discipline delineation identified in the 2019 list. It should be noted that journals are assigned to a particular Panel in a custodian role, recognising that many journals service more than one FoR code. For example, while the journal *Accounting and Finance* is highly relevant to both 3501 Accounting and 3502 Finance; the Accounting Panel is deemed the custodian rater of this journal.

Panel Chairs will provide their final recommendations to the ABDC Steering Group, which will subsequently consult with the International Advisor. After a two-week period of public feedback on a draft revised JQL (early November 2022), the ABDC Steering Group will take responsibility for the Journal Quality List recommendations submitted to the ABDC for final approval.

In addition to quality indicators, the key criteria for adding journals not included on the 2019 Interim Review List are that they contain a substantive business element. In the submission process, this will need to be evidenced by > 50% of articles over three years written by

business faculty, or > 50% of articles over three years being of a business nature. Where a journal has been in existence for < three years, the substantive business element test applies to the time of the journal's existence.

Panels' recommendations will be guided by the following percentage thresholds, which provide a numerical ceiling to impose discipline on judgements while at the same time ensuring a degree of consistency across the Panels in terms of outcomes:

- **A***: the highest quality category, representing the top 5–7% of the journals assigned to an individual Field of Research.
- **A**: the second highest quality category, representing the next 15–25% of the journals assigned to an individual Field of Research.
- **B**: the third highest quality category, representing approximately the next 35–40% of the journals assigned to an individual Field of Research.
- **C**: the fourth highest quality category, representing the remaining recognised quality journals assigned to an individual Field of Research.
- **Unrated and/or unlisted journals**: There will be a range of relevant journals deemed not to reach the quality threshold level and therefore not included in the Final List. These will include predatory/illegitimate outlets.

4. Timeline and milestones

The timeline for the 2022 review process will incorporate the following milestones:

Milestone #	Description	Timeframe/Deadline
1	ABDC approval of Terms of Reference	July 2022
2	Confirmation of ABDC Steering Group	July 2022
3	Eol call for Panel Chairs	5–22 August 2022
4	Appointment of Panel Chairs	1 September 2022
5	Digital Architecture confirmed as fit-for-purpose	1 September 2022
6	Call for public submissions	September 2022
7	Review of submissions	October 2022
8	Initial Public Release of draft new JQL with feedback window	November 2022
9	Feedback consideration by Panel Chairs, with recommendations to ABDC Steering Group	November 2022



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10	ABDC Steering Group deliberation and submission of Final Draft List to ABDC for approval	30 November 2022
11	ABDC Executive endorsement	December 2022
12	Release of Final ABDC JQL	December 2022