



# NTU Library

Journal metrics indicators  
- supporting your decision of where to publish

[www.ntu.ac.uk/library](http://www.ntu.ac.uk/library)

NOTTINGHAM  
TRENT UNIVERSITY 

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## Introduction

Historically journal citation metrics acted as an indicator of the overall influence of a journal and how it performed against other titles in the wider publishing world. Although functioning as a loose proxy for journal quality, these metrics **do not** account for variant citation behaviour in different disciplines. The most well-known of these traditional journal metrics is the Impact Factor (a proprietary metric owned by Thomson-Reuters) which is based on the yearly average number of citations to articles published in a journal.

A newer generation of journal metrics utilise 'normalisation' techniques which adjust for disciplinary variance in publication and citation behaviour. Like the Impact Factor these metrics are based on the citation counts of previous years but they are able to provide a measure of the potential for citation in a selected publication.

The key journal metric used at NTU is Source Normalised Impact per Paper (SNIP) which is presented both within the Scopus database and also independently. Alongside SNIP is another useful metric available via Scopus is ScImago Journal Rank (SJR). Both of these metrics also help to identify journals within the top journal percentiles and where they rank within subject areas.

These 'normalised' metrics can support decision making when deciding where to publish by identifying publications which offer the greatest potential for citation. This is important as it supports NTU's citation improvement agenda.

Please note that not all journals have accompanying metric data; this could be due to age of a particular journal, its lack of measurable impact, its omission from key research databases or, in some cases, where it is not a genuine journal title. More information about your target journals can be found by using the [Ulrich's Periodicals Directory](#) or by contacting your [Research Support Librarian](#).

## Journal metric indicators in more detail

### SNIP (Source Normalised Impact per Paper) for citation potential

SNIP measures a source or publication's contextual citation impact: it considers characteristics of the source's subject field, particularly the frequency at which authors cite other papers and the speed at which citation impact matures. e.g. Life Sciences tend to have much higher publication and citation rates than Arts and Humanities, therefore a citation in a discipline with low citation behaviour has higher impact than that in a high citation discipline.

**The scoring scale brings everything down to 1 for easy comparison. So a journal with a SNIP value >1 has above average citation potential and journal with a SNIP value <1<sup>1</sup>**

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<sup>1</sup> More detail on how these metrics are calculated can be found here: <https://www.journalmetrics.com>.

## N.B. SNIP values are only available for journals indexed in Scopus.

SNIP values can easily be obtained (and compared for decision-making) using the 'Compare Journals' tool available via [www.scopus.com](http://www.scopus.com) (SNIP values are only available for journals indexed in Scopus).

Search Alerts Lists

Register now for the free Scopus webinar on July 21st: Learn about what types of APIs Scopus offers and how they can benefit you

Document search | Author search | Affiliation search | Advanced search

Search for... *Eg., "heart attack" AND stress* Article Title, Abstract, Keywords

Limit to:

Date Range (inclusive)  
 Published All years to Present  
 Added to Scopus in the last 7 days

Document Type  
ALL

Subject Areas  
 Life Sciences (> 4,300 titles . .)  
 Health Sciences (> 6,800 titles . 100% Medline coverage )  
 Physical Sciences (> 7,200 titles . .)  
 Social Sciences & Humanities (> 5,300 titles . .)

Learn more about how to improve Scopus

Stay up-to-date on Scopus. Follow @Scopus on Twitter

Watch tutorials and learn how to make Scopus work for you

Get citation alerts pushed straight to your inbox

Get started with Scopus APIs

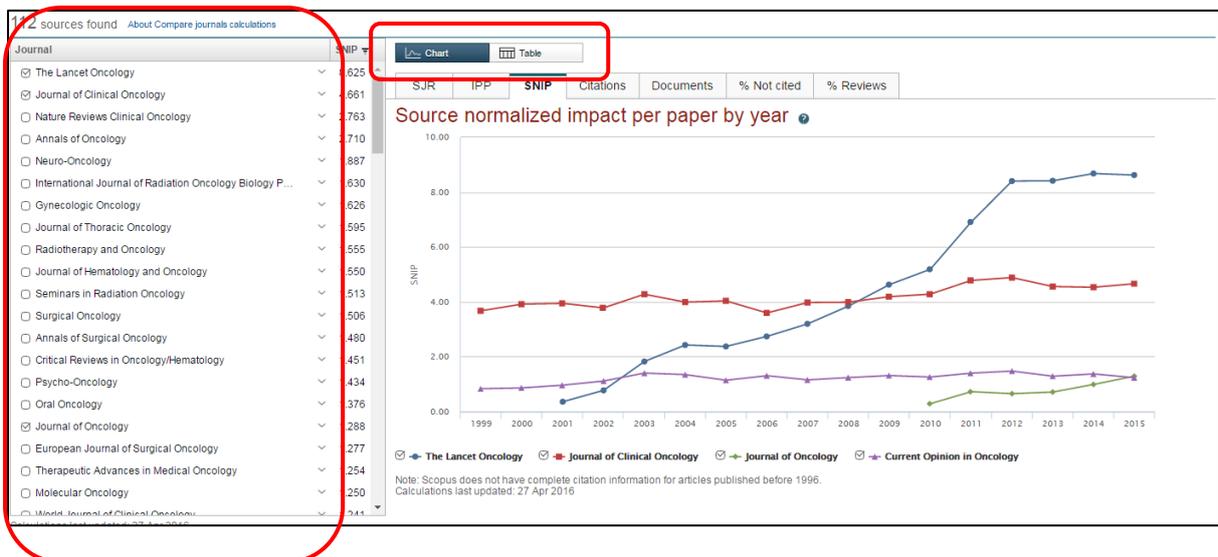
Enter the title of your publication, select the SNIP radio button and search:

Compare journals Search for and choose up to 10 journals to analyze and compare.

Lancet oncology Journal Title Limit to: All Subject areas

Show:  SJR  IPP  SNIP  ISSN

Select your title from the list and it will be automatically added to graph, you can then opt to add up to ten titles to help you make a comparison (this can be viewed as a graph or table).



## SNIP – identifying titles in top journal percentiles

These metrics are updated annually, and the latest SNIP values pertaining to journal position in the top journal percentiles are available [here](#).

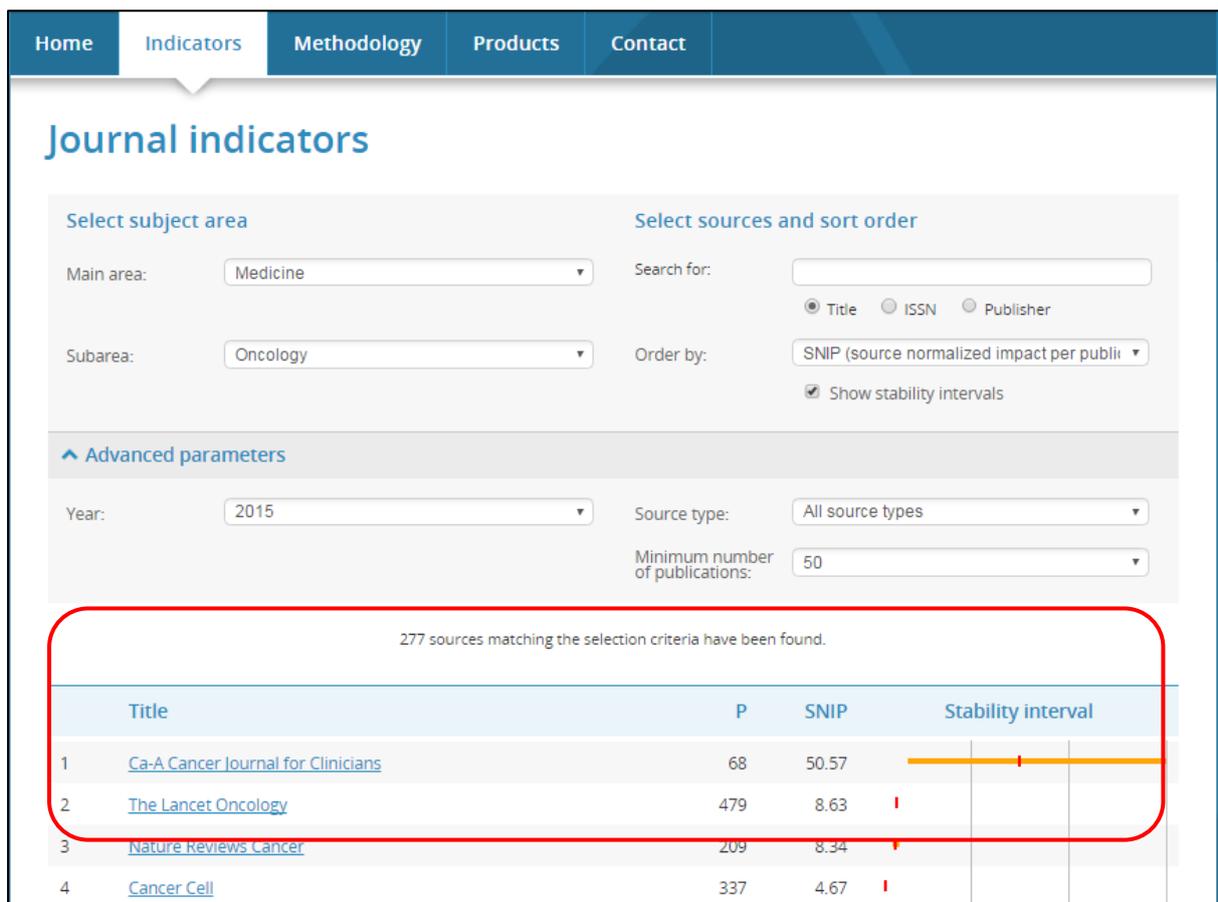
## SNIP – identifying subject/disciplinary rankings

Subject rankings by SNIP are not available in Scopus, you will need to access them by going directly to the CWTS Journal Indicators website: <http://www.journalindicators.com/>

- Select the indicators tab



- Select your Main Subject Area (and Subarea where applicable)
- This will produce a list of sources ordered by SNIP rank



The screenshot shows the search results page on the CWTS Journal Indicators website. The search filters are set to 'Main area: Medicine' and 'Subarea: Oncology'. The search results are ordered by SNIP rank. The table below shows the top 4 results, with 'The Lancet Oncology' ranked 2/277.

	Title	P	SNIP	Stability interval
1	<a href="#">Ca-A Cancer Journal for Clinicians</a>	68	50.57	
2	<a href="#">The Lancet Oncology</a>	479	8.63	
3	<a href="#">Nature Reviews Cancer</a>	209	8.34	
4	<a href="#">Cancer Cell</a>	337	4.67	

- So in the example above *The Lancet Oncology* is ranked 2/277 in the subject area of Oncology.

## Identifying Subject areas from a journal title

- Search for your publication by title

**Journal indicators**

Select subject area

Main area: All main areas

Subarea: All subareas

Select sources and sort order

Search for: Lancet Oncology

Title  ISSN  Publisher

Order by: SNIP (source normalized impact per publi)

Show stability intervals

- Select the title from the list to display the subject areas.

**The Lancet Oncology**

Source type: Journal

Publisher: Lancet Publishing Group

Areas: Oncology

Print ISSN: 1470-2045

Electronic ISSN: 1474-5488

- Return to the [main search page](#) and then search by category/subcategory without entering your journal title, then you can see its position in the list.

**Journal indicators**

Select subject area

Main area: Medicine

Subarea: Oncology

Select sources and sort order

Search for:

Title  ISSN  Publisher

Order by: SNIP (source normalized impact per publi)

Show stability intervals

Advanced parameters

Year: 2015

Source type: All source types

Minimum number of publications: 50

277 sources matching the selection criteria have been found.

	Title	P	IPP	SNIP	% self cit
1	<a href="#">Ca-A Cancer Journal for Clinicians</a>	68	117.28	50.57	0.4%
2	<a href="#">The Lancet Oncology</a>	479	24.96	8.63	1.4%
3	<a href="#">Nature Reviews Cancer</a>	209	34.34	8.34	0.7%
4	<a href="#">Cancer Cell</a>	337	21.78	4.67	1.1%
5	<a href="#">Journal of Clinical Oncology</a>	1540	13.37	4.66	3.0%

## SJR (Scimago Journal and Country Rank) for citation potential

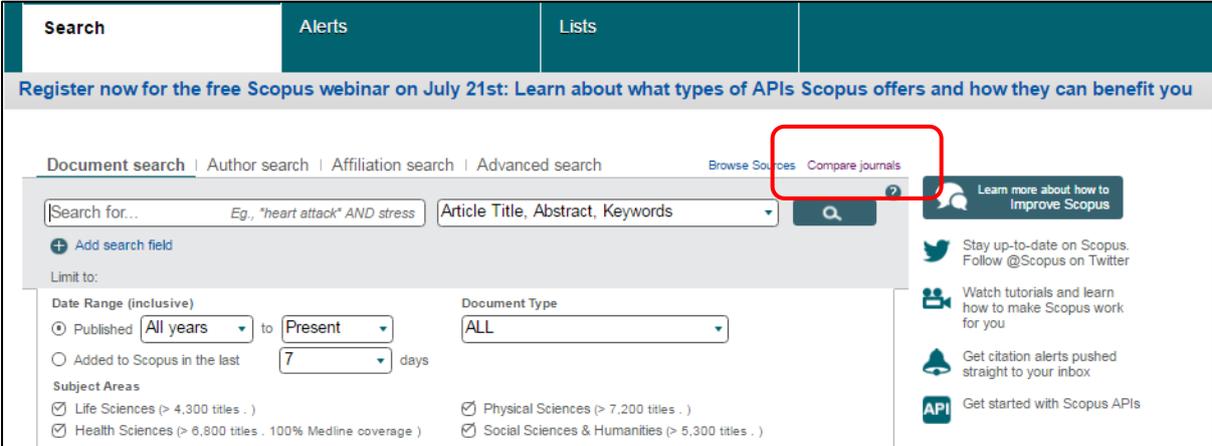
Although a normalised metric similar to SNIP, SJR is based on a more complicated algorithm<sup>2</sup> which incorporates an element of prestige in its scoring (higher weighting is ascribed to citations received from better 'quality' titles). As with SNIP:

**The scoring scale brings everything down to 1 for easy comparison.**

**So a journal with a SJR value >1 has above average citation potential and journal with a SJR value <1.**

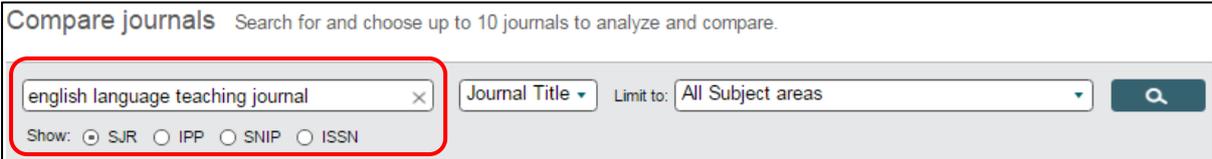
**N.B. SJR values are only available for journals indexed in Scopus.**

SJR values, like SNIP values, can easily be found (and compared for decision-making) using the 'Compare Journals' tool available via [www.scopus.com](http://www.scopus.com).



The screenshot shows the Scopus search interface. At the top, there are tabs for 'Search', 'Alerts', and 'Lists'. Below the tabs is a banner for a webinar. The main search area includes a search bar with the text 'Search for...' and a dropdown menu for 'Article Title, Abstract, Keywords'. To the right of the search bar is a 'Compare journals' link, which is highlighted with a red box. Below the search bar are various filters including 'Date Range (inclusive)', 'Document Type', and 'Subject Areas'. On the right side, there are several social media and service icons.

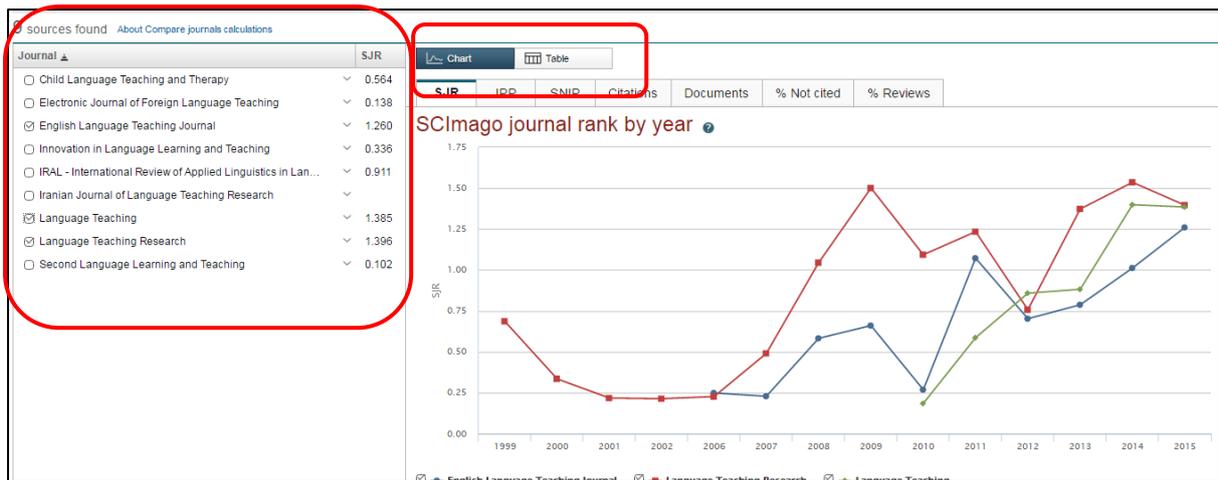
Enter the title of your publication, select the SJR radio button and search:



The screenshot shows the 'Compare journals' tool. The search bar contains the text 'english language teaching journal'. Below the search bar, there are radio buttons for 'SJR', 'IPP', 'SNIP', and 'ISSN'. The 'SJR' radio button is selected. To the right of the search bar is a dropdown menu for 'Journal Title' and a 'Limit to:' dropdown menu set to 'All Subject areas'. A search button is located to the right of the 'Limit to:' dropdown.

Select your title from the list and it will be automatically added to graph, you can then opt to add up to ten titles to help you make a comparison (this can be viewed as a graph or table).

<sup>2</sup> More information can be found here: [www.journalindicators.com](http://www.journalindicators.com)



## SJR - identifying subject/disciplinary rankings and quartiles

Subject rankings by SJR are not available in Scopus, you will need to access them by going directly to the [SJR website](#).

Select 'journal rankings' from the top of the page:

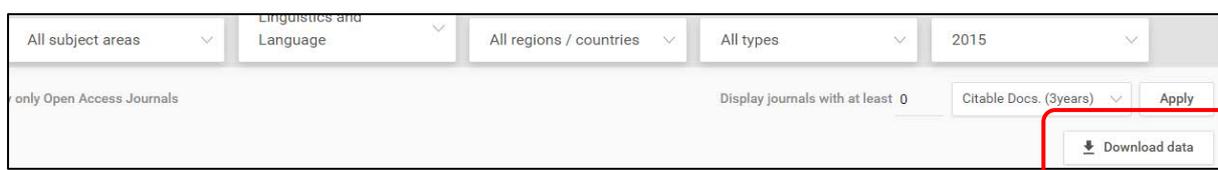


Then use the drop down menus to select 'subject area' and/or 'subject category' and 'journals' as appropriate. You will be provided with a list in SJR order, scroll through the list to discover where the publication ranks, this will also provide you with information about which the journal's position within a subject area.

So in the example below the English Language Teaching ranks 217/659 in the subject of Language and Linguistics and is in the Q2 = Top 50%

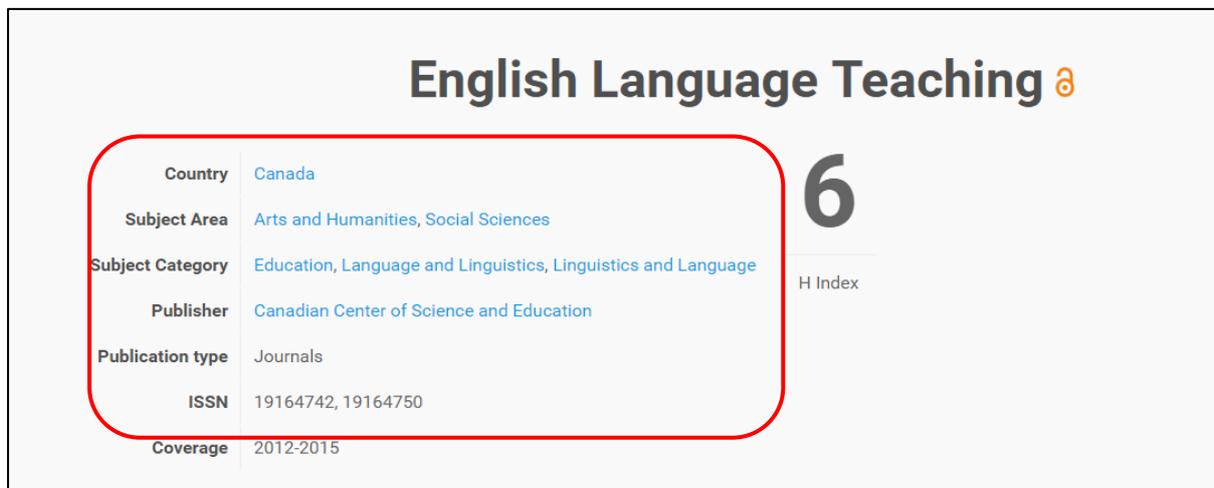
217	English Language Teaching	journal	0.253	Q2
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If the subject category contains many titles it is probably easier to download the information into a spreadsheet to easily find the rank.



## Identifying subject areas from a journal title

When you have the title but are unsure of the subject category, you can use the journal title search on the [SJR homepage](#)



This display also gives you lots of visual information including journal quartiles for different categories which can be found by hovering your mouse over the coloured boxes:



## Journal Citation Reports (JCR): Journal Impact Factor (IF)

This is probably the most well-known and long established metric used as a proxy for journal quality. It has been criticised from several quarters<sup>3</sup> many due to the following:

- The way it is calculated is less than transparent<sup>4</sup> (primarily this due to the fact that it is a proprietary metric owned by Thomson-Reuters, a commercial company)
- It makes no distinction for varying citation /publication behaviour between disciplines i.e. Life Sciences tends to have greater publication and citation activity and therefore impact factors will always be much higher in this area.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.ascb.org/dora/>

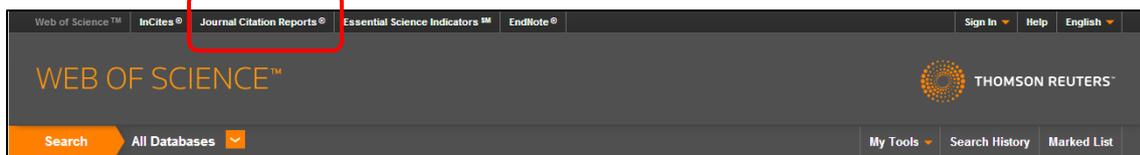
<sup>4</sup> <http://wokinfo.com/essays/impact-factor/>

**N.B. Impact Factors are only available for journals indexed in Web of Science.**

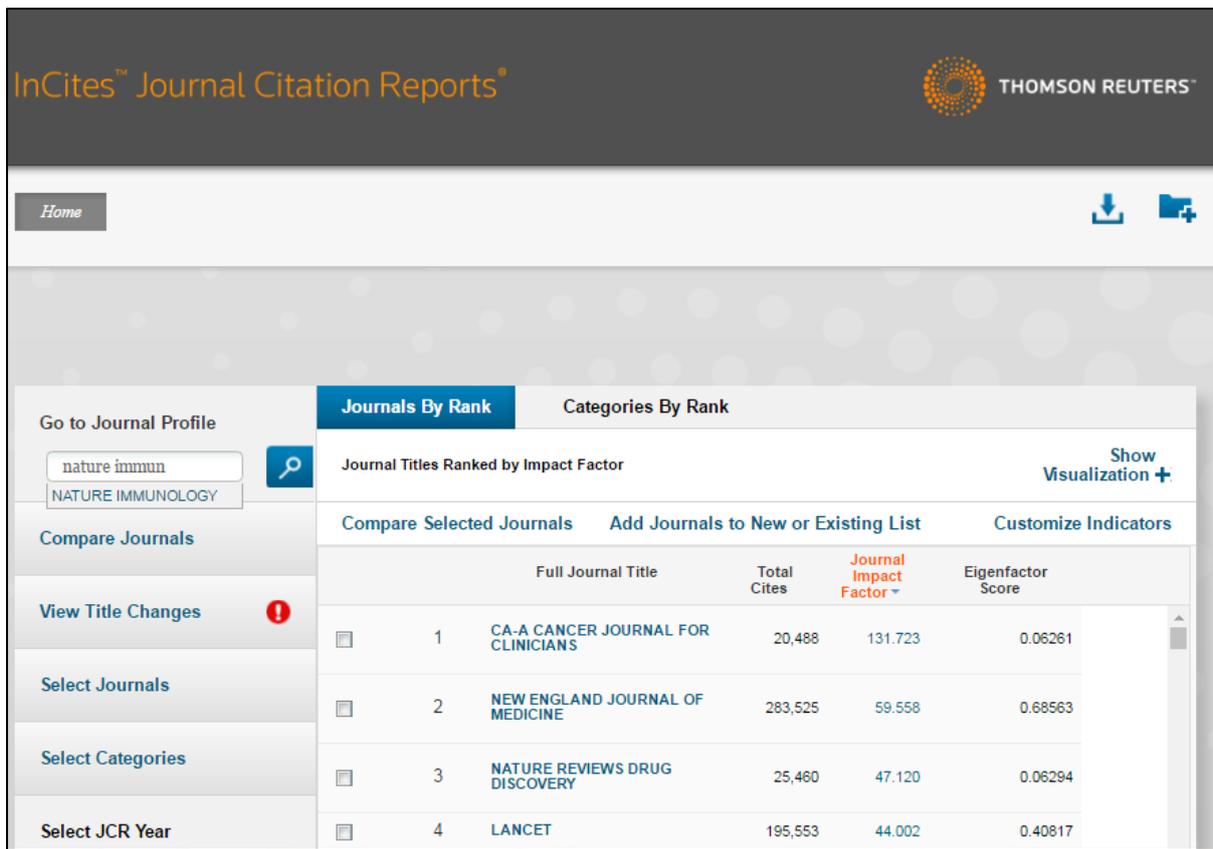
Despite criticisms it still provides something of a gauge of influence and prestige and can be a useful metric when combined with expert opinion and other metrics.

**Where to find Journal Impact Factors?**

This information is available via the Journal Citation Reports (JCR) link in the Thomson Reuter's [Web of Science](#) database.



From the JCR home page type the title of the journal in the search box and you will be taken to the a profile page of that publication which includes a range of key information about that journal including its Impact Factor.



Go to Journal Profile		Journals By Rank	Categories By Rank		
<input type="text" value="nature immun"/>	<input type="button" value="Search"/>	Journal Titles Ranked by Impact Factor <span>Show Visualization +</span>			
Compare Journals		Compare Selected Journals	Add Journals to New or Existing List	Customize Indicators	
		Full Journal Title	Total Cites	Journal Impact Factor	Eigenfactor Score
View Title Changes <span>!</span>		1 CA-A CANCER JOURNAL FOR CLINICIANS	20,488	131.723	0.06261
Select Journals		2 NEW ENGLAND JOURNAL OF MEDICINE	283,525	59.558	0.68563
Select Categories		3 NATURE REVIEWS DRUG DISCOVERY	25,460	47.120	0.06294
Select JCR Year		4 LANCET	195,553	44.002	0.40817

**NATURE IMMUNOLOGY**  
 ISSN: 1529-2908  
 NATURE PUBLISHING GROUP  
 75 VARICK ST, 9TH FLR, NEW YORK, NY 10013-1917  
 USA

Go to Journal Table of Contents    Go to Ulrich's

**Titles**  
 ISO: Nat. Immunol.  
 JCR Abbrev: NAT IMMUNOL

**Categories**  
 IMMUNOLOGY - SCIE

**Languages**  
 ENGLISH

12 Issues/Year;

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**Key Indicators**

Year	Total Cites	Journal Impact Factor	Impact Factor Without Journal Self Cites	5 Year Impact Factor	Immediacy Index	Citable Items	Cited Half-Life	Citing Half-Life	Eigenfactor Score	Article Influence Score	% Articles in Citable Items	Normalized Eigenfactor	Average JIF Percentile
2015	36,446	19.381	18.867	23.358	5.325	126	6.9	5.5	0.11402	11.655	84.92	12.95...	97.667
2014	35,403	20.004	19.477	23.956	4.322	121	6.4	5.2	0.13523	12.884	85.95	15.14...	97.635
2013	34,765	24.973	24.276	25.566	4.507	136	6.0	5.1	0.14260	13.027	87.50	15.71...	98.264

JCR - identifying subject rankings and journal quartiles  
 Subject category and ranking information can also be found the journal profile page in JCR.

Home    **Journal Profile**

**NATURE IMMUNOLOGY**  
 ISSN: 1529-2908  
 NATURE PUBLISHING GROUP  
 75 VARICK ST, 9TH FLR, NEW YORK, NY 10013-1917  
 USA

Go to Journal Table of Contents    Go to Ulrich's

**Titles**  
 ISO: Nat. Immunol.  
 JCR Abbrev: NAT IMMUNOL

**Categories**  
 IMMUNOLOGY - SCIE

**Languages**  
 ENGLISH

12 Issues/Year;

Please note that the title may fall into more than one category.  
 If you scroll down the page, you will notice the option of 'Rank' – this will provide you with the ranking of the journal within all categories in which it is listed as well as the quartile which is a journal's position within a subject area i.e. Q1 = Top 25%.

2006	20,761	27.596	26.726	Not A...	5.856	132	3.6	4.6	Not A...	Not A...	87.12	Not A...	97.863
2005	16,989	27.011	26.096	Not A...	5.362	130	3.2	4.2	Not A...	Not A...	86.15	Not A...	97.826
2004	14,063	27.586	26.545	Not A...	5.400	130	2.7	4.0	Not A...	Not A...	86.15	Not A...	97.748
2003	10,198	28.180	27.255	Not A...	6.496	139	2.2	4.0	Not A...	Not A...	86.33	Not A...	98.684
2002	6,297	27.868	26.796	Not A...	5.933	134	1.6	3.9	Not A...	Not A...	84.33	Not A...	98.739
2001	1,863	17.431	16.092	Not A...	5.492	132	1.2	3.7	Not A...	Not A...	84.85	Not A...	96.930
2000	113	Not A...	Not A...	Not A...	1.631	65	0.5	3.6	Not A...	Not A...	90.77	Not A...	1.293

Source Data

**Rank**

Metric Trend

Cited Journal Data

[View All Years](#)

JCR Impact Factor			
IMMUNOLOGY			
JCR Year	Rank	Quartile	JIF Percentile
2015	4/150	Q1	97.667
2014	4/148	Q1	97.635
2013	3/144	Q1	98.264

## JCR – Immediacy Index

The Immediacy Index is the average number of times an article is cited in the year it is published and indicates how quickly articles in a journal are cited.

This metric can provide a useful perspective to inform your choice of publication when you need to accumulate citations quickly, e.g. when publishing close to the deadline for REF submission.

The higher the number, the better your potential to accrue citations more quickly.

Key Indicators													
Year	Total Cites	Journal Impact Factor	Impact Factor Without Journal Self Cites	5 Year Impact Factor	Immediacy Index	Citable Items	Cited Half-Life	Citing Half-Life	Eigenfactor Score	Article Influence Score	% Articles in Citable Items	Normalized Eigenfactor	Average JIF Percentile
2015	36,446	19.381	18.867	23.358	5.325	126	6.9	5.5	0.11402	11.655	84.92	12.95...	97.667

## JCR – other key metric indicators

JCR provides a range of different metrics, many of which are based on complicated algorithms and are beyond the scope of this guide, more information on the calculation and potential use of these metrics can be found [here](#).

Further help and support is available from the [Library Research Team](#).