Top Tips from the Production Team

Helping your research to make an impact
Part 1 – search engine optimization

As you write up your research into a paper for publication in one of our books or journals you can help raise the profile of your work by thinking about search engine optimization. This means considering how potentially interested readers can find your work – what terms they may use to search and discover your article, for example. To make your paper more ‘discoverable’ you want it to be placed prominently in a list of search results, as high up the list as you can. How a search engine determines the ranking of items in a search list will vary, but here are some general Top Tips to consider.

• **Keywords** what words are most relevant to your paper? Your title should contain the most important words: Google Scholar positions articles with the search term in the title near the top of the list of results. These keywords should then appear in your abstract and throughout the article text.

Avoid keyword ‘stuffing’ as context is important and too much repetition of key phrases and words will annoy your readers and may get you ‘blacklisted’ and removed from search results. Consider synonyms for the keywords in case readers search using alternative terms.

• **Article structure** divide your article into headed sections and incorporate your keywords and phrases into these headings. Try to keep your article title short.

• **Citations** significant weight is assigned to citation counts by academic search engines and the number of citations to your past work factors into the ranking of your current and future publications. Reference your own work, if appropriate, and include a link so that readers can locate the articles and the search engine can index the full text of the cited papers. You should not, however, include citations that are not pertinent – including citations simply to increase your citation count is unethical.

• **Consistency** you should check that you are referring to any authors’ names in a consistent way throughout the paper. Are the spellings and initials correct and the same as they appear in other publications?

We’ll look at promoting your published article in Part 2 of ‘Helping your research to make an impact’.

Best wishes

The Production Team