

COMMITTEE ON SCHOLARLY PUBLISHING IN SOUTH AFRICA

Report on Peer Review of Scholarly Journals in the Social Sciences and Related Fields



*Applying scientific thinking
in the service of society*





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ISBN 978-0-9869835-0-4

Published by:

Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf)

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The Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf) was inaugurated in May 1996 in the presence of then President Nelson Mandela, the Patron of the launch of the Academy. It was formed in response to the need for an Academy of Science consonant with the dawn of democracy in South Africa: activist in its mission of using science for the benefit of society, with a mandate encompassing all fields of scientific enquiry in a seamless way, and including in its ranks the full diversity of South Africa's distinguished scientists.

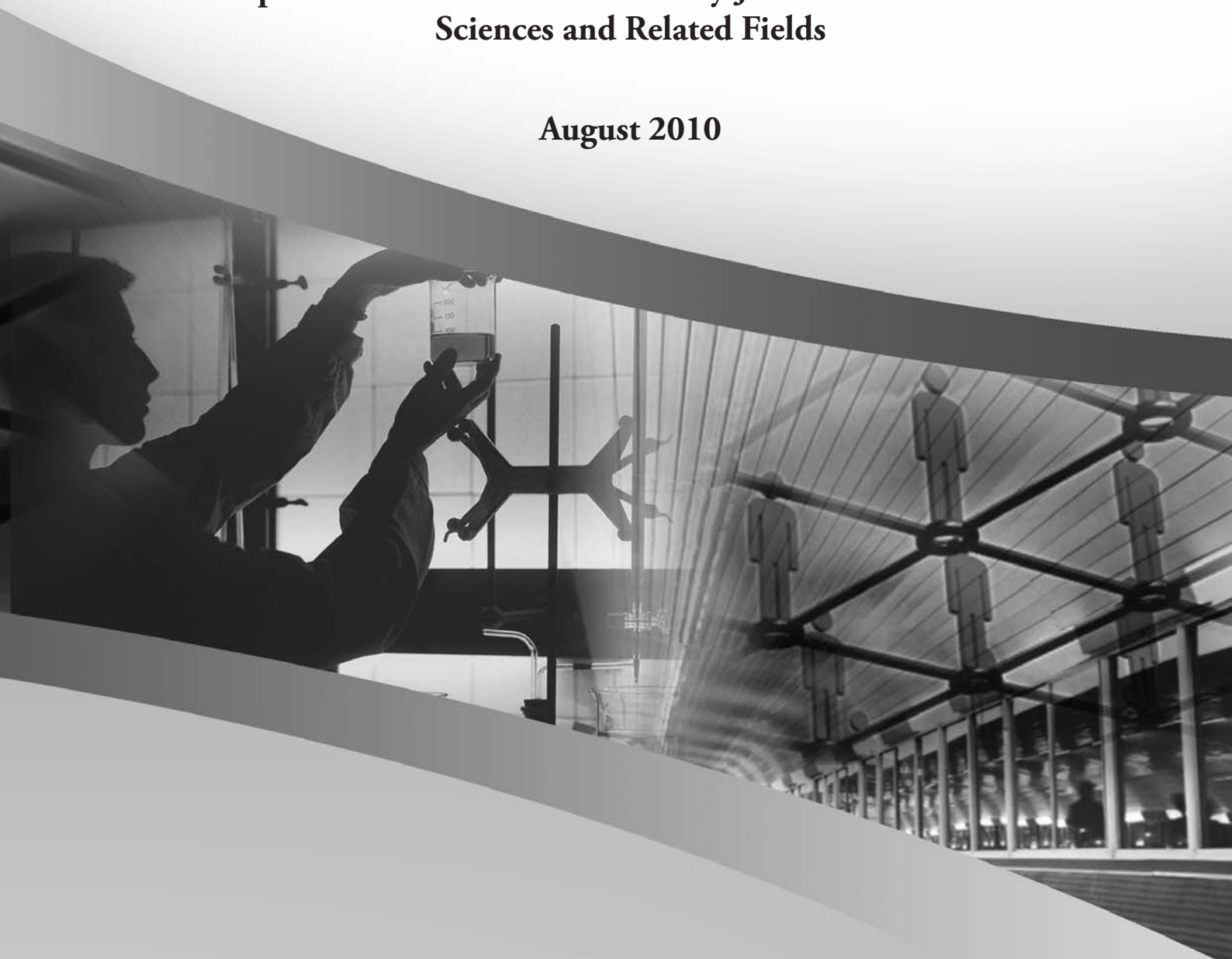
The Parliament of South Africa passed the Academy of Science of South Africa Act (Act 67 in 2001) which came into operation on 15 May 2002.

This has made ASSAf the official Academy of Science of South Africa, recognised by government and representing South Africa in the international community of science academies.

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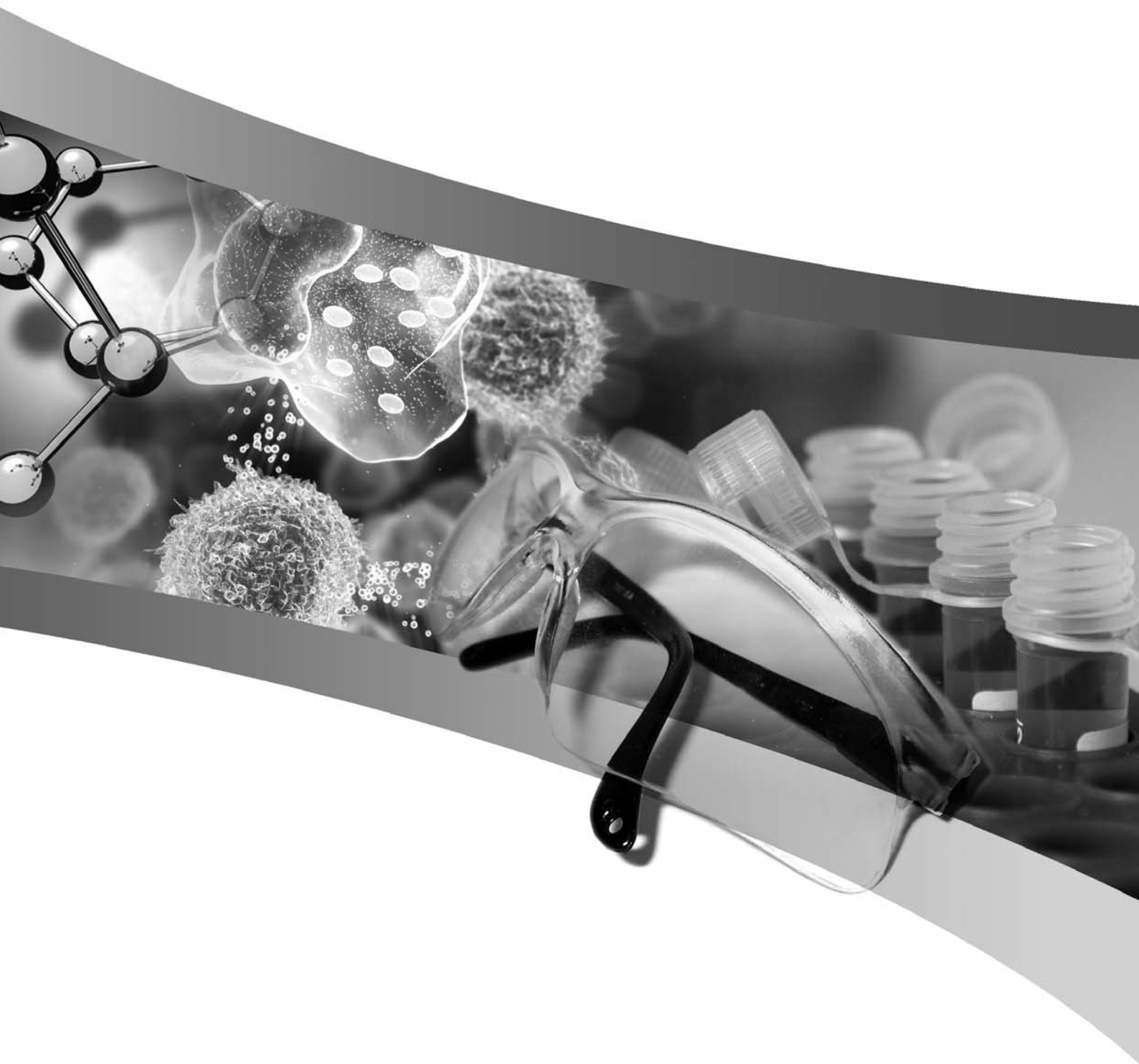


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PREFACE

ACADEMY OF SCIENCE OF SOUTH AFRICA (ASSAf)

COMMITTEE ON SCHOLARLY PUBLISHING IN SOUTH AFRICA

Discipline-Grouped Peer Review Reports on South African Scholarly Journals

Independent, multiple peer review in science and scholarship is the equivalent of democracy in politics – sometimes awkward, often criticised, but ‘the least bad way to do things’, all things considered (for a full discussion, see Chapter 3 of ASSAf’s Consensus Report on *Scholarly Books: their Production, Use and Evaluation in South Africa Today*: ASSAf, 2009, Pretoria).

The traditional focus of peer review is on a single journal article, book chapter or book. Journals have not often been subjected to independent, multiple peer review, and are usually evaluated in qualitative, reputational terms, or, more recently, quasi-quantitatively by the bibliometrics of impact factors.

Peer review of journal titles thus requires the development of an unfamiliar methodology, including encouraging peers to undertake a task that seems daunting when approached in the traditional way of close reading and evaluation of an entire work. We have accordingly taken on this ambitious programme of peer reviewing, in groups, all scholarly journals published in South Africa, by ‘paving the way’ in two pilot reviews; these have respectively examined the last 3-5 years of local journals in the Social Sciences and related fields and those in the Agricultural and related Basic Life Sciences. Multi-perspective peer review panels were appointed by the Academy Council on the recommendation of the Academy’s Committee on Scholarly Publishing in South Africa; editors were requested to complete specially designed questionnaires, and peer reviewers were selected from a spectrum of scholars in the fields concerned. Each was asked to provide answers to a set of pointed questions, which addressed the quality, scope and focus of the peer-reviewed articles in the journals under review, the authorship generally, and the presence or absence of enrichment features such as editorials, topical reviews, book reviews and ‘news and views’ articles. [The editors’ questionnaire and peer reviewers question list are provided as Appendices to this Report.]

Each peer review panel met to discuss the individual peer reviews and questionnaires and consolidated these into a consensus review for each journal. Final formulations and recommendations were prepared, including suggestions for improvement from both the peer reviewers and the panel. The responsible editors were asked to confirm the accuracy of the information in each individual journal report, and the final version of the full report sent for approval to both the ASSAf Committee on Scholarly Publishing in South Africa and the Council of the Academy of Science of South Africa.



We have learnt a great deal about the peer review of journals from these two pilot reviews. The task can be achieved and we believe it is going to be valuable, from the point of view of the national accreditation system, editors, prospective authors (new and established) and peer reviewers, and the National System of Innovation generally.

We would like to thank the members of the two pilot peer review panels, the many peer reviewers, and the Director, Susan Veldsman, and Thabo Radebe and Zweli Ndayi of the Scholarly Publishing Unit of the Academy for helping to make these two pilot reviews possible. The path forward will be a lot easier as a result of their contributions.

Wieland Gevers

David R Woods

Chairpersons, Peer Review Panels, ASSAf



FOREWORD

DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING

UNIVERSITY EDUCATION POLICY AND DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT

Policy and Procedures for the Measurement of Research Output of Public Higher Education Institutions

In 2003, the Department of Education (now the Department of Higher Education and Training – DHET) introduced the ‘Policy and Procedures for the Measurement of Research Output of Public Higher Education Institutions’. The purpose of the policy is to “encourage research productivity by rewarding quality research output at public higher education institutions”. The policy defines research output as “textual output where research is understood as original, systematic investigation undertaken in order to gain new knowledge and understanding”. Therefore, the policy is a tool for the distribution of subsidy in lieu of research publication which, in turn, is regarded as proxy for the research productivity of institutions. It is in this regard that the allocation of subsidy is only to authors who are officially associated with the claiming institutions and not anyone outside the public higher education sector. The distribution of subsidy or allocation of funds against approved publications is, therefore, to the institutions and not the individual authors or academics.

The policy recognises the following categories of research outputs for subsidy:

- **Journals** – defined as “peer-reviewed periodical publications devoted to disseminating original research and new developments within specific disciplines, sub-disciplines or field of study”. Only articles in journals which appear on approved journal lists qualify for subsidy.
- **Books** – defined as “peer-reviewed, non-periodical scholarly or research publications disseminating original research on developments within specific disciplines, sub-disciplines or fields of study”. Monographs, book chapters and edited works are included in this category.
- **Conference proceedings** – defined as the “published record of a conference, congress, symposium or other meeting whose purpose is to disseminate original research and new developments within specific disciplines, sub-disciplines or fields of study”. Only peer-reviewed proceedings are considered.

The Department is aware that certain publications fall outside of the parameters set by the policy and, in this regard, improvements to the policy are under consideration. The purpose of the policy should, however, always be remembered, and this means that non-recognised publications do not signify lack of importance or poor quality.



For instance, textbooks are not recognised under the policy but the production of quality textbooks to support teaching is important.

The policy makes provision for the development of a list of approved quality South African journals¹. The Department receives applications for inclusion of journals in the DHET list on an annual basis. The process for consideration of inclusion of a journal is twofold. First, the journals are reviewed within the Department for compliance with the requirements of the policy. Second, all applications are then sent to the Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf) for consideration before a final decision is made by the Department. The DHET follows this process to ensure that all accredited journals are of high quality, and the involvement of ASSAf is important to ensure a robust review process.

Furthermore, periodic reviews of all listed journals are undertaken by the Department, again in collaboration with ASSAf, to ensure that all approved journals continue to meet both the technical and quality criteria as laid out in the policy. This continued involvement is vital to support the development of quality South African journals. We would like to believe that the fruit of this exercise is seen in the increasing number of South African journals that appear on quality international indexes.

While care is always taken to ensure and sustain consistency in policy implementation, the policy itself must be dynamic to always be relevant to current developments in higher education. It is for this reason that the policy is currently being considered for improvement. Moreover, it also recognises electronic publications that meet the standards and quality set for this form of medium.

The Directorate: University Education Policy and Development Support of the Department, is in continuous communication with the individual research offices of all universities in the country. Much information resides at these research offices; as such, queries on the policy can be directed to the universities' research offices or directly to the Directorate. All university research offices have the contact details of the Directorate.

Mr M Mabizela

Dr G Simpson

Ms N Luruli

Directorate

¹A journal is considered South African if its seat of publication is in South Africa.



1 PERIODIC PEER REVIEW OF SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOLARLY JOURNALS: APPROVED PROCESS GUIDELINES AND CRITERIA

1.1 Background

During the launch meeting of the ASSAf-led National Scholarly Editors' Forum held on 25 July 2007, the 112 participants supported ASSAf and the Committee on Scholarly Publishing in South Africa (CSPISA) taking the lead in the implementation of Recommendation 5 of the 2006 ASSAf Report, *A Strategic Approach to Research Publishing in South Africa*. This recommendation dealt specifically with the need for a system of quality assurance for the over 260 South African journals that are accredited by the Department of Education:

Recommendation No 5: that ASSAf be mandated jointly by the Departments of Education and Science and Technology to carry out external peer review and associated quality audit of all South African research journals in 5-year cycles, probably best done in relation to groups of titles sharing a particular broad disciplinary focus, in order to make recommendations for improved functioning of each journal in the national and international system.

1.2 ASSAf peer review panels

The quality assurance system for journals is conducted primarily through discipline-grouped peer reviews carried out by a series of purpose-appointed peer review panels (PRPs) drawn from the ranks of researchers and other experienced scholars in and around the fields concerned in each case, and also include persons with practical (technical) knowledge of publishing. The proposed ASSAf PRPs are overseen by the CSPISA, but appointed by the Academy Council. Their draft reports are sent to relevant stakeholders for comment and relevant inputs, before finalisation by the PRP concerned, and final consideration sequentially by the CSPISA and the ASSAf Council.

The following quote from the 2006 ASSAf Report clarifies the approach to be followed in the review of the journals and some aspects of the approach proposed:

*The periodic, grouped **quality assurance-directed peer review of South African research periodicals** would function analogously to the quality audits of the CHE/HEQC, would be developed as an outcome of the Editors' Forum, and would focus on: the quality of editorial and review process; fitness of, and for purpose; positioning in the global cycle of new and old journals listed and indexed in databases; financial sustainability; and scope and size issues. The **ASSAf panels** carrying out the reviews would each comprise 6-8 experts, some of whom would not be directly drawn from the areas concerned, and would require data-gathering, interviews, and international comparisons, before reports with recommendations are prepared, approved, and released to stakeholders, such as national associations, the Departments of Science and Technology and of Education, the CHE/HEQC, the NRF and HESA.*

The first ASSAf PRPs reviewed and assessed sets of journals in two selected fields, and simultaneously assisted to refine the initial criteria and process guidelines (see below), for use in the subsequent reviews of further sets of journals by other panels.



It must be emphasised that the main purpose of the ASSAf review process of journals is to improve the quality of scholarly publishing in the country and not an attempt to control these publications in any way. ASSAf respects the independence and freedom of researchers and of the research process itself as important preconditions for the critical and innovative production of new knowledge. At the same time, the work of South African researchers has to be assessed as part of the global community of scholars and scientists and in this respect ASSAf has an obligation to contribute to the improvement of quality of such work where possible.

1.3 Initial criteria

A number of criteria were explored in the part of the 2006 ASSAf Report (Chapter 4) that dealt with the survey of the then over 200 editors of accredited South African scholarly journals. Other possible criteria were proposed in other sections of the Report, or have since been suggested by members of the CSPiSA or the National Scholarly Editors' Forum; these are grouped and listed below (they have been consolidated in the Questionnaire presented in Appendix A):

1.3.1 Editorial-related criteria (generally based on the *Code of Best Practice in Editorial Discretion and Peer Review* developed by ASSAf):

- Longevity of the journal (continuous or discontinuous) in years.
- Number of original peer-reviewed articles published, plus the number of manuscripts submitted, rejected out-of-hand and rejected after peer review per year during the last five years; average length of published articles; and 'author demography' of articles submitted and published.
- Number and nature of peer reviewers used per manuscript and overall per year, including institutional and national/international spread; quality (as per the *Code of Best Practice*) and average length of peer review reports.
- Average time period between submission and publication of accepted manuscripts; frequency of publication.
- Professional stature and experience of the editor; selection and longevity of service of the editor; success in addressing the major issues in the field, through commissioning of reviews/articles, editorial comment, etc.
- Number and professional stature/experience of editorial board members; selection, turnover, nature of involvement and spread (national/international) of members.
- Existence and nature of editorial policy/guidelines and frequency of revision; and existence of a conflict-of-interest policy (for example when manuscripts are authored/co-authored by an editor or board member).
- Publication of *errata* and number per year.
- Publication, number, acquisition and proportion of enrichment features, such as editorials, 'news and views', correspondence, book reviews and policy/topical fora.
- Existence of a peer review process (e.g. by a professional association).

1.3.2 Business-related criteria:

- Frequency and regularity of publication.
- Print run; redundant stock; and method of distribution to readers (direct or indirect).
- Production model and service provider(s).
- Paid and unpaid advertising.
- Sponsorships and *quid pro quo* agreements.
- Paid and unpaid subscription base; marketing of subscriptions; and cost level of print and (if applicable) e-subscriptions.
- Existence (or consideration of), accessibility and evaluation, especially in respect of tagging and searchability, of an e-publication version.
- Existence of HTML and XML versions in addition to PDF versions; and use of multimedia.
- Provision of open-access portals.
- Total income and expenditure per annum.
- Distribution to international destinations.
- Inclusion (and nature thereof) in Thomson Reuters: Web of Science and/or IBSS, or any other international database. Receipt of offers to purchase from multi-national publishers.
- Existence of copyright agreements.

1.3.3 Bibliometric assessments:

- Citation practice (e.g. the number of authors listed).
- Availability, if applicable, of Web of Science journal-type impact factors (and various derivatives) over the last five years.
- Nature (regular/increasing) of publication of reviews.
- Publishing of English abstracts for non-English articles.

1.4 Process guidelines

The issues to be considered in forming ASSAf PRPs and in conducting quality assessment review activities include: selection of the panel members; organising panel activities; and conducting panel meetings. An ASSAf Projects Officer (within the Scholarly Publications Unit, SPU) is assigned to support the panel chairs, but reports to the Director of the SPU in terms of review logistics and the production of draft and final review reports (the panel chair and the Director agree in advance on the scope and extent of the activities to be undertaken by the Projects Officer).

1.4.1 Selecting panel members

The appointment process of PRP members is managed by the Chair of CSPiSA until the panel and panel chair have been appointed.

A typical PRP consists of 6-8 members. (A smaller group limits panel interaction while a larger group may be unwieldy.) The individuals selected to serve on a panel should

have experience and credibility in the disciplines under review, or in related disciplines, but at least one panel member must be from a completely different discipline. A majority of the panel members should have demonstrable expertise and experience in both the editing and peer review aspects of research journals – a mix of senior researchers and a few active or former editors is appropriate – but all should have some appreciation of the significance of both editing and peer review in building and maintaining the standing of scholarly journals. At least one member should have direct practical (technical) experience of publishing.

Persons selected as panel members are typically drawn from the ASSAf membership, academic institutions, science councils and consultancies, attracted variously by direct invitation and/or Web notices, or through disciplinary associations. It is necessary to avoid known conflicts.

Committee expertise, balance and conflict of interest are discussed at the first PRP meeting (and may again be discussed at any later meeting), and recommendations to resolve problematic issues are brought through the SPU (Secretariat) to the ASSAf Council for possible amendment of the composition of PRPs. Panel members are requested to submit written 'Conflict of Interest' statements, and are bound to report any new potential sources of conflict during the review process.

The PRPs are chaired by an ASSAf Member appointed by Council for this purpose, who assumes accountability for the panel's work in helping to develop a credible quality assurance mechanism for South African scholarly journals.

1.4.2 Setting up and organising the panels

Organisation of the panel is conducted by its chair, supported by the assigned Projects Officer functioning as the 'Study Director' under the Academy's guidelines for projects and studies. The activities related to organisation may include:

- identifying the scope of panel activities;
- identifying possible additional panel members;
- identifying and approaching suitable independent peer reviewers for an individual or group of journals [see 1.4.3 below];
- issuing invitations to interview or correspond to editors, publishers, selected peer reviewers, presidents of national disciplinary associations etc.;
- assembling print or e-copies of journals for peer review and panel meetings;
- establishing meeting dates;
- preparing/drafting and distributing pre- and post-meeting materials [see 1.4.3 below];
- arranging meeting logistics;
- establishing meeting agendas;
- taking responsibility for post-meeting activities, including report preparation and evaluation of the panel processes.

1.4.3 Peer reviews

Independent peer reviewers are selected on the basis of their eminence and activity in their disciplines, drawing from the ASSAf membership, registers of grant holders from the National Research Foundation (NRF), Medical Research Council (MRC) and others, and from the leadership and general membership of scholarly associations. Once they have agreed to serve, they are provided with a set of questions (Appendix B) to be answered in examining all the issues of particular journals that have appeared during the preceding 2-3 years, or not fewer than eight issues. They are asked to examine print or e-copies of the journals, and to submit a confidential report including, if possible, comments in each of the areas specified in the question list, plus on any other relevant matter.

As the individual reviews are subsumed in the process of drafting the consolidated consensus review, they are in effect anonymous and confidential.

1.4.4 Panel reports

A detailed and motivated draft report of each PRP's findings and recommendations are prepared by the assigned Projects Officer, working closely with the panel chair, and in consultation with the CSPISA. The drafting of the consensus review from the individual reviews is key, and is overseen by the panel chair and the Director of the SPU. Draft materials are circulated to all panel members for review and comment before draft consensus reports are prepared. The relevant excerpts are sent to the editors and publishers for comment and correction of misconceptions and inaccuracies, after which the final versions of each report are prepared for consideration by the CSPISA and subsequently the ASSAf Council. If approved, the reports are published by the Academy and made generally available. Specific submissions and recommendations are made to the Department of Higher Education and Training.

2 SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS CONCERNING SOUTH AFRICAN SOCIAL SCIENCE JOURNALS

The 2006 ASSAf Report, *A Strategic Approach to Research Publishing in South Africa* contained some contextually important information about the role of local journals in disseminating the country's research in broad fields of scholarship. While the discipline 'Social Sciences and related fields' covered in this Report is narrower than the 'Social and Economic Sciences' discipline covered in the 2006 Report, there is no reason to doubt the applicability of the findings about the larger group to the specific one of interest to us here.

Over a 15-year period from 1990 to 2003, about 16% of all (Department of Education-accredited) articles authored by scholars with South African addresses were in the 'Social and Economic Sciences', with a rather static production rate of between 1000 and 1200 articles per year. No fewer than 77% (11 826 items) were published in local journals not indexed in the Thomson Reuters: Web of Science (Arts and Humanities Citation Index, Social Sciences Citation Index and Science Citation Index Expanded), hereafter referred to as WoS; this figure rose to 83% when including local journals that

were indexed. This shows that South African journals in this group under review are overwhelmingly important for the dissemination of local research outputs.

The impact factors (the average number of current year citations in all indexed journals to articles published in the two preceding years) of local 'Social and Economic Sciences' journals in the WoS indexes were exceptionally low over the periods assessed in the 2006 ASSAf Report. The 'composite extended impact factors', using 8-year collection periods, were also unimpressive, although two journals in this group (*South African Journal of Psychology* and *Social Dynamics*) fell in the (small) highest-performing subset.

Analyses of citations in the evolving Latin-American SciELO platform has permitted the identification of journals with significant 'regional' (or 'non-WoS') impact factors and much lower 'international' (WoS) impact factors. The recent decision to launch a South African site of SciELO, and the eventual free inclusion in this open-access, online, world-wide service, of all or most of the quality-assured local journals in the 'Social Sciences and related fields' will allow new and more refined bibliometric approaches to impact assessment to be conducted, which will be of great value in this and similar groups of disciplines.

The WoS index has recently added more journals published in developing countries to its various indexes, and it is desirable that the peer-review process conducted by ASSAf should become part of the application/admission process of that organisation.

3 PANEL MEMBERS

The Panel Members of the PRP for South African scholarly journals in the 'Social Sciences and related fields' were as follows:

- i. Prof Wieland Gevers, MASSAf, Chairperson: CSPiSA (Chairperson)
- ii. Prof Bernard Lategan, MASSAf, Director: Stellenbosch Institute for Advanced Studies (Deputy Chairperson)
- iii. Prof Thoko Mayekiso, MASSAf, Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Research, Technology and Planning at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (ASSAf Council nominated)
- iv. Prof Owen Crankshaw, Department of Sociology, University of Cape Town (Outgoing Editor: *Society in Transition/SA Review of Sociology*) (Volunteer)
- v. Prof Fred Hendricks, MASSAf, Dean: Humanities, Rhodes University, (Editor: *African Sociological Review*) (Volunteer)
- vi. Prof Jimi Adesina, MASSAf, Department of Sociology, Rhodes University, (Member, CSPiSA) (Nominated by CSPiSA members)
- vii. Dr Glenda Kruss, Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), Cape Town (Editorial Boards: *SA Journal of Higher Education* and *Industry and Higher Education*) (Volunteer)

- viii. Prof Sarah Howie, MASSAf, Centre for Evaluation and Assessment, Education Faculty, University of Pretoria (ASSAf Council nominated)
- ix. Prof Arvin Bhana, MASSAf, HSRC, Durban and Department of Psychology, University of KwaZulu-Natal (ASSAf Council nominated)

Servicing Project Officer, SPU: Mr Thabo Radebe

4 CONSENSUS REVIEWS OF JOURNALS IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES AND RELATED FIELDS

1. Tydskrif vir Geesteswetenskappe

Editing functions: Standing and spread of editorial collective, international participation, peer review

Consensus review: The editor-in-chief and other members of the editorial team are mostly eminent scholars drawn from all over the country, working in Afrikaans as scholarly language. They represent a large number of disciplines, and are organised as an 'editorial board', an 'advisory editorial board' and a 'list of international members', whose standing is more difficult to assess but who all appear to be interested in South African humanities in one way or another. The current editor-in-chief is well reputed in the field of literary theory and comparative literature, and serves, *inter alia*, on the board of the International Comparative Literature Association. The balance between the social and applied social sciences on the one hand, and the humanities on the other, seems to be weighted more on the side of the latter (see discussion below).

Synopsis of questionnaire: The journal has been published since 1961 without interruption. The present editor-in-chief was approached by the Council of the *Suid-Afrikaanse Akademie vir Wetenskap en Kuns* to assume the editorship of the journal after the retirement of the previous editor; the period for editorship was not specified. The members of the editorial bodies mentioned above are selected from a list submitted by the existing editorial board (including responses to advertised invitations), and appointed by the Council of the *Akademie*. Editorial board members are not appointed for a definite period, but the list is revised by the editorial board itself, usually every three years.

A minimum of two and a maximum of four reviewers are approached to conduct the peer review of each submitted manuscript; if a manuscript covers more than one discipline (usually by more than one author) it is submitted to specialists from all sub-disciplines discussed in the article. Review reports are stored both as hard copy (in files) and electronically under the caption 'Keurdersverslae/Reviewers' Reports' for each year. The frequency of publication is four times annually (March, June, September and December); in addition, one or more 'Supplements', dealing with specific topics, are published annually, and usually compiled by guest editors who are invited to edit a topical issue. Editorial/policy guidelines have always been observed as a matter of course, especially with regard to meticulous peer review; their adaptation to conform to the ASSAf *National Code of Best Practice in Editorial Discretion and*

Peer Review for South African Scholarly Journals (hereafter referred to as *National Code of Best Practice*) has however not been confirmed.

Content: Quality, focus, spread within domain, sample of best work in South Africa, enrichment features

Consensus review: The articles are mostly original, challenging and well written, and none could be considered poor. About 40-50 articles appear per annum, spread over quarterly issues, with some thematic symposia. In aggregate, they should, however, be a bigger sample of the best work done by local scholars in the fields concerned. There is a focus on local content, but much of this is internationally 'connected', and not parochial. Most of the articles are by local authors, drawn from across the country's institutions; the articles are of somewhat uneven quality. The articles are of reasonable quality on average, and there are also some very good articles, but the quality does vary between and within volumes.

The number of articles published per annum, taking into account the journal's multi-disciplinary character within the broader humanities and social sciences, is contextually adequate to good. There is a sense of historical fragmentation along a number of lines, including, but not limited to, language. In many areas the best work done in the country is simply not reflected in the journal. This may be because many of the authors draw largely on scholarship in Afrikaans, supplemented in some cases with international scholarship about local contexts: this means that in such cases one cannot talk of a South African conversation in any real sense. The broad disciplinary focus of the journal, coupled with the small size of the scholarly community it caters for as a result of publication in Afrikaans, makes it difficult to congregate around the journal and a critical mass of scholars that work in the same area and engage with each other. This weakness is exacerbated by the deliberately broad focus, not underpinned by a shared intellectual journey. In some areas, where specific authorial expertise has been focused on a topic or has amassed a critical mass of scholars, such as Afrikaans literature and language studies, the journal undoubtedly reflects some of the best work produced in the country.

There appears to be little contribution to the journal content by international scholars, except for one or two who also hold part-time appointments at South African universities.

Essential technical features: English abstracts, *errata*, citation practice, presentation

Consensus review: All articles have English abstracts. No *errata* were noted in the copies examined. The citation practice is good. The presentation, layout and style are impressive because of meticulous copy-editing and the editorial care taken.

The journal contains some useful scholarly features additional to peer-reviewed articles, such as editorials and book reviews, but this could perhaps be extended to include other features such as scholarly correspondence.

Capacity development and international comparability

Consensus review: The presence of challenging articles in the quarterly issues could prompt useful debates in certain areas, such as philosophy or Afrikaans literature and

language studies, and could stimulate student/staff thinking in these and other areas covered in more than occasional mode. The journal is positioned to be a much greater contributor in the light of the problems posed to the humanities/social sciences in South Africa, than is presently the case.

This is a well-established journal, which is interdisciplinary in that it spans the humanities, education, law, public administration, military studies, criminology and economics. The problem is that a broad brush approach to content, coupled with a small audience, is not conducive to the development of leading international scholarship, except in the case of a few fields in which the journal has succeeded to draw together substantial expertise. An approach needs to be found that will raise the significance of the journal in national scholarly debates and controversies. It is possible that a less 'conservative' presentation of the print copy may perhaps lead to a larger 'audience' exposure in certain contexts, e.g. making the journal available online.

Suggested improvements

Consensus review: There should not be a problem in doubling the number of articles to between 60 and 80 per annum, in the light of continuing good support from Afrikaans-speaking academics. Because of the broad focus of the journal, it is advisable to expand and re-invigorate the rather complex editorial board system. The international list is quite small in comparison with those of many leading journals. Academics who are well grounded in what one might term 'South African Studies' should for example be invited to join the boards.

A finely crafted, new intellectual statement for the journal published in each volume is something that is worth considering. At the moment, it is not clear what exactly holds the journal together as an intellectual enterprise, except perhaps for the fact that it is published in Afrikaans and has a substantial focus on South Africa. (The latter fact is not stated in the outline of the journal's focus provided on the back page and is therefore implicit, based on the contents of the journal.) Because the terrain covered is indeed too broad, one could give consideration to reining in the scope of the journal and to focus on selected areas. In particular, it is worth considering omitting topics such as public administration, education and criminology, in order to maintain a focus on the humanities. The possibility of translating certain articles into English might have to be considered, so that their impact and post-publication vitality can be enhanced. Producing a print version in Afrikaans, and then translating that version into English for online databases is something worth considering, despite the cost implications.

If one takes into account the advisability of the journal to become open access (free online) on the SciELO-South Africa platform, the recommendation below that the journal should continue to be DHET-accredited, and the further suggestion that English-language articles should be included (with Afrikaans abstracts), in addition to vigorous marketing to potential good authors and an expansion of more focused content, this journal should be able to thrive. This expansion could be further assisted by developing a 'front section' of enrichment features such as editorials, book reviews and correspondence, which would greatly contribute to enlivening the journal and attracting discerning readers.

Business aspects

Synopsis of questionnaire: The journal is published by the *Suid-Afrikaanse Akademie vir Wetenskap en Kuns*. The print run is 700 copies per issue, with 608 subscribers. Both WoS and Scopus have recently agreed to index the journal. There are no page charges. The annual expenditure is about R234 180. The editor does not know whether the journal has ever been independently peer reviewed before. In principle, the editor is interested in an invitation to join the new SciELO-South Africa platform of free-online, high-quality, fully indexed South African journals. It remains important, however, that the journal continues to appear in print as well.

Panel's consensus view:

- i. **The *Tydskrif vir Geesteswetenskappe* should be reconceptualised as an important humanities journal in South Africa**, published in Afrikaans with abstracts and metadata in English; the possibility of an English online version combined with a printed Afrikaans version should be explored.
- ii. **The journal should continue to be listed on the DHET list of accredited journals (over and above its entitlement to this, under policy as a WoS-indexed periodical. (See Appendix C.)**
- iii. **The editor and publisher should be invited to consider joining the new SciELO-South Africa free online collection.**
- iv. **In addition, the Panel believes** that attention should be given to the above recommendations for improvement suggested by the reviewers.
- v. **This journal and the above review should be taken into account in the forthcoming grouped peer review of South African journals in the humanities field.**

II. South African Review of Sociology

Editing functions: Standing and spread of editorial collective, international participation, peer review

Consensus review: Editors, until recently, were elected by the Board of the South African Sociological Association, with the minimum requirement being a solid local reputation; some have enjoyed a degree of international disciplinary standing as reflected by NRF ratings. The editorial board, including the deputy editor, has been elected on grounds of institutional, gender and racial representation, meaning that their scholarly reputation is somewhat variable.

Synopsis of questionnaire: The journal has been published since 1969 without interruption. In 2008, an editorial collective was appointed on a competitive basis to serve for four years. The editorial collective (based in Gauteng) recommended three regional editors (within other regions of South Africa), who were each appointed by the Association's Council for a 4-year term. The editor/editorial collective makes recommendations for the appointment of members of the editorial board to the Association's

Council, which make the final appointments; the recommendations are designed to ensure gender, racial and institutional representation, from within the country. In 2009, a 20-person International Advisory Committee, appointed by the editorial collective and composed of members from outside the country, was established. The editorial board members handle manuscripts, advise on editorial policy, and, in some instances, provide specific topical expertise.

Editorial guidelines are published and revisions are under consideration to align them with the ASSAf *National Code of Best Practice*. Peer review of submitted manuscripts is compulsory, with two reviewers per manuscript. In a particular volume (Volume 40), about 28 peer reviewers were used, of whom ten had non-South African addresses. Reviewers' reports are retained in the archives. Publication frequency is two issues per annum, and three per annum as from 2010.

Content: Quality, focus, spread within domain, sample of best work in South Africa, enrichment features

Consensus review: The journal does not appear to attract the best sociological research conducted by local or foreign-based sociologists. Most of the only 15 to 20 articles per annum are nevertheless of good quality, and would probably match that of articles published in leading sociological journals in Europe and the United States. The quality of the articles is similar to that of articles appearing in the best social science journals in the country (*Social Dynamics, Urban Forum*). Most of the articles are written by academics based at South African universities. The articles do not address international debates and instead restrict themselves to debates in South Africa. Despite this focus, the coverage is not wide enough to reflect all the major fields of sociology in South Africa, a country in which sociologists have an enormous number of opportunities for scholarly documentation and analysis.

Essential technical features: English abstracts, errata, citation practice, presentation

Consensus review: There are English abstracts for all articles. There are seldom any *errata* due to the stringent editorial process. The citation practice is good. The presentation and layout are done by a publishing company. The printing quality and cover are excellent but the layout could be more stylish. There is a 'crowdedness' about the journal – the table of contents appears only on the outside of the back cover and not on the inside of the journal before the first article, and the printing margins are very narrow.

Capacity development and international comparability

Consensus review: The journal is very suitable for capacity development. It has an explicit and written policy of encouraging new or inexperienced academics and graduate students to publish articles; the editor/editorial collective also plays a strong role in providing advice to these authors.

The journal compares rather poorly with comparable international titles because of a lack of international contributors and an absence of editorials, debates, correspondence, etc. The articles do, however, tend to be relevant, addressing important issues, whereas top international journals frequently have very esoteric, narrow, highly

specialised articles. 'International' (namely British) journals that are most comparable to the *South African Review of Sociology* are 'area studies' journals, such as the *Journal of Southern African Studies*. The content matter is much the same, except that the *South African Review of Sociology* is more of a sociological journal than an interdisciplinary journal. Another difference is that most of the authors are local academics, whereas international journals have contributions from universities in Europe, the United States and Africa.

Suggested improvements

Consensus review: The journal needs to appear more regularly, and as scheduled. At the time of the review, the latest issue of the journal was No. 1 of 2008, i.e. a year behind its publication schedule. The issues of the journal should have a fairly constant size and not vary widely from issue to issue; better planning of each issue is required. The classification of articles needs to be made clearer and be more consistent (e.g. Vol 36, No. 2, 2005 has two classifications: 'Research Articles' and 'General Articles', but the former heading is inappropriate, as the 'Research Articles' are on a specific theme, namely South African policing. Thus, a more appropriate heading would have been: Theme – South African Policing. Vol 37, No. 1, 2006 indicated clearly, on the other hand, that it was a special focus issue on informal settlements).

A 'Table of Contents' and an 'Editorial' introduction to the contents of the issue would enhance the reader-friendliness of the journal. The *South African Review of Sociology* is the official journal of the South African Sociological Association, and could/should provide interesting and relevant news and information about the Association and especially its annual congresses, where a wide range of papers are presented. Good journals today provide all the bibliographic details, that is the journal title, vol, no., year, and pages of an article, on the first page, which is very useful for referencing purposes.

Business aspects

Synopsis of questionnaire: Prior to 2010, the publisher was Forum Press, whereas from 2010 it will be Routledge (Taylor & Francis), in collaboration with UNISA Press. The print run is approximately 280 copies per issue, with 160 association members and 80 subscribers. The journal will, as from 2010, be appearing free online to members of the Association only. The cost of publication has been approximately R25 000 per annum, of which about R19 000 is recovered through membership fees, and the remainder from other sources. In addition, the publisher receives all funds from subscriptions, which exceeded R50 000 in 2008. From 2010, with a new international publisher, larger revenues are expected. Copyright is held by the South African Sociological Association.

The journal, on account of its international publisher, would likely not be interested in joining the new SciELO-South Africa platform of free-online, high-quality, fully indexed South African journals.

The journal's recent re-visioning can be summarised as follows:

- i. International impact: Moving the journal to an international publishing house will improve the chances of South African sociology having an impact internationally,

and will make the journal more attractive for potential authors. Journal publishing now places greater emphasis on marketing (including the sale of packages) and online formats (including hypertext links), thus reinforcing the importance of the shift. In addition, academics will come under increasing pressure to demonstrate the impact that their work is having internationally.

- ii. Improved quality: The move to an international publisher should lead to various improvements, including a better design, proofreading, printing, and distribution. There will be more pressure to adhere to deadlines, which will place new demands on reviewers and authors, as well as the editors, but this should be welcomed as it ought to reduce the time delay between submission and printing. In addition, enhanced international visibility will help raise the standard of the articles published, which will be facilitated by better reviewing plus an increased number of submissions and greater selectivity.
- iii. 'Developmentalism': The parent Association is particularly concerned that specific steps should be taken to make the journal more accessible to first-time authors. If this issue can be addressed successfully, this will have a positive impact on the under-representation of black authors, which, in turn, will advance the quality of South African sociology more broadly.
- iv. Pro-activity and interactivity: Hitherto, the journal has been largely reactive, with the editor waiting for the submission of articles and then processing these in a professional manner. The aim now is for the journal to play a central role in shaping debate within South African sociology. Whilst it will remain open to all submissions in the traditional manner, the editors will encourage the production of special issues and special sections, solicit articles and critical discussion of important books, and provide space for academic debate. Given that it is the official journal of the South African sociological community, it is in a privileged position to play this role, and doing so will give it added dynamism and wider interest. Another aspect of interactivity is that the journal should be published more frequently, ideally four times per annum.
- v. In order to advance this vision, it was decided that it was advisable to appoint an editorial collective rather than a single editor. Recognising the value of having this collective located within one city, it was decided that three regional editors should also be appointed, to be consulted on a regular basis. In addition, it was agreed that there should be a new International Advisory Committee and that the editorial board would remain, but would be expected to refocus around the new vision.

Panel's consensus view:

- i. **The journal should continue to be listed on the DHET list of accredited journals. (See Appendix C.)**
- ii. **The editor and publisher should be invited to consider joining the evolving SciELO-South Africa platform, despite the involvement of a commercial multi-national publisher.**
- iii. **The editor and publisher should be encouraged to use the outcome of the present review in making application for indexing in WoS.**

iv. **The editor should seriously consider the above recommendations for improvement of the journal made by the reviewers.**

v. **In addition, the Panel believes** that the *South African Review of Sociology* should be strengthened and expanded, with wider coverage of all areas of the discipline and related areas, and enhanced international involvement in authorship and peer review. Enrichment through inclusion of scholarly features, such as book reviews, correspondence and debates would also enable it to become a flagship sociology journal in South Africa.

III. Social Dynamics

Editing functions: Standing, spread, international participation, peer review, etc

Consensus review: The journal has an editorial collective of three people, and an editorial board. In early 2009, two members resigned, and the third acted as 'solo-editor' until being joined in 2010 by two new editors. These are highly regarded nationally and, to some extent, internationally. New editors are appointed following a process of nomination by editorial board members, following which selected candidates were invited to apply; those whom the board deemed suitable to advance the journal's vision were subsequently interviewed before final selection and appointment. The process is thus competitive but not open process, reflecting the intentions of the board. The Editorial Board has some very prominent members, and the same can be said for the International Advisory Board.

A feature of the journal is that the active editors have frequently been contributors to the journal, which is potentially a worrying thing. The recently stated journal policy is to follow professional peer review practices: In the case of co-edited special issues/special symposia, a paper by an editor is editorially managed by the co-editor, while in the case of a general paper by the editor, the editorial discretion rests with another member of the editorial collective. All submissions, including those from editors, are independently peer reviewed by at least two scholars.

Questionnaire: The journal has been published since 1975 without interruption. The Editor is appointed for 5 years, but not competitively, and the members of the Editorial Board are nominated by existing members. Membership of the Editorial Board comes from inside and outside the country. Although members don't handle manuscripts, they review 1-2 articles a year if requested by the editors, and also advise on editorial policy.

Editorial guidelines are published; they have been aligned with the ISI guidelines but they are not explicitly similar to the ASSAf 'Best Practice' Code. As mentioned above, peer review is compulsory, with 2-3 reviewers per manuscript, and a pool of about 60 reviewers is used. Reports are retained in the archives. Issues appear on time, twice a year. Approximately 75-100% percentage of pages in each issue represents peer-reviewed, original material.

Content: quality, focus, spread within domain, sample of best work in SA, enrichment features, etc

Consensus review: Social Dynamics does not appear to cast itself as a social science and/or sociology journal, rather as an interdisciplinary journal operating within a broader field of African studies that covers the arts, humanities and social sciences and that has a particular interest in "theoretically-informed interdisciplinary approaches" (rather than in empirically-based articles). Thus it has appointed a political scientist as one of the new editors, as well as an historian, while a literary/cultural critic has been retained as editor. Demand for publication space in the journal suggests that it is indeed filling an important niche in the scholarly publishing arena (the output has been increased to three issues a year in order to be able to place the numerous successful submissions as well as proposals for special symposia that have been received, bringing the total annual output to approximately 40-45 peer-reviewed original articles.)

The standard of the articles is generally high. Social Dynamics is published by the Centre for African Studies at UCT and considers itself to be 'a forum for interdisciplinary work relevant to the study of Africa', as already indicated above. As such, it contains some of the best work done in certain fields of African studies, but not in others; the journal currently has a relatively high proportion of literary articles. Other contributors vary over a very wide range of disciplines: politics, psychology, philosophy, fine art, sociology, history, geography, humanities, etc. Despite the wide range, the articles while generally critical tend to be based on theory and/or readings, rather than being empirical and based on primary research or field work. There is regrettably a relative absence of economic-development coverage, and the journal contains few articles that provide any insight into the economic problems and challenges facing Africa as well as the reasons for these challenges. It also so far lacks incisive analysis on political problems in Africa, in spite of the fact that poverty and hunger are widespread in Africa and the continent has a poor track record in democracy.

The journal is indexed by Thomson Reuters ISI, which makes it more prestigious and widely read than would probably be the case otherwise. It publishes a significant sample of the best African-studies research produced in the country, but could include much more.

Essential technical features: English abstracts, errata, citation practice, presentation

Consensus review: There are proper (English-language) abstracts for all articles. No errata appear to be published, but the citation practice is good. The presentation, layout, style and copy-editing are also satisfactory.

Usefulness in capacity development, and international comparability

Consensus review: The journal is very suitable for scholars and students with an interest in theoretically informed, inter-disciplinary discourse analysis and a literary bent. It does not cater as well for scholars and students wishing to understand the political and economic challenges facing Africa from an empirical standpoint. Social Dynamics is thus a good journal according to the intentions of its editorial board and collective, but that does not mean that a wider scope and range, plus more empirical content, would not materially assist in enhancing its impact and usefulness.

Suggested improvements

Consensus review: The journal could do with a debate on its focus that extends beyond its editorial collective and board. It was started as a social science journal and built up a formidable reputation in that field. It may be that it would be possible to expand the range of its content without even departing from its present mission, so that it could address a wider range of issues about Africa, including the continent's social, political and economic challenges, with the heightened authority of an approach that combines theoretical discourse with empirical investigation. This should attract many more papers and enhance its impact as a truly international 'player'.

Business aspects

Questionnaire: The journal is published by Routledge (Taylor & Francis). The print run is unknown to the editor since the journal is published by this multi-national company (online and in print). The journal is indexed in the ISI system, with an ISI impact factor ranking of 13/37 in Area Studies. Routledge handles subscriptions (according to the agreement with Routledge, 5 free print and online subscriptions have been made available to selected research libraries in South Africa, and 50 free print subscriptions to research libraries elsewhere in Africa). Financial matters are handled by Routledge. The journal is part of a commercial (pay-to-view and/or pay-to-subscribe) e-publication service, and it is available on Informaworld – Taylor & Francis. Copyright is held by the publisher; there is a standard charge to republish but this is often waived on appeal by the editors (motivating factors: republication in South Africa by presses unable to afford their republication fees; marketing the journal as first place of publication). It seems unlikely that the journal would accept an invitation to join the new SciELO South Africa platform of free-online, high-quality, fully indexed South African journals.

Panel's consensus view:

- i. The journal should continue to be listed on the so-called DoHET 'list' of accredited journals (over and above its entitlement to this, under policy as an ISI-indexed periodical).**
- ii. The publisher/editor should be invited to consider joining the evolving SciELO South Africa open access platform, even though the journal is owned by a multinational, commercial publishing company.**
- iii. The editor should seriously consider the recommendations for improvement of the journal made by the reviewers above.**
- iv. In addition, the Panel believes that Social Dynamics should open a debate on its scope and mission, extending the latter to include empirical studies and a wider range of topics in African studies. The journal's editorial collective and board should have discussions with other local journals in the social sciences and African studies field to look at the feasibility of rationally distributing their combined capacity to publish the best work produced in the country.**

IV. African Sociological Review

Editing functions: Standing and spread of editorial collective, international participation, peer review

Consensus review: [This journal was usefully peer reviewed, as a published paper in the journal itself, by its present editor in 2006; relevant parts of that review are included here]. The journal has four managing editors, each from a different country in Africa (South Africa, Tunisia, Ivory Coast and Botswana); a significant number of editorial board members have worked in South Africa and/or with South African sociologists, and many are well-known international authorities in the field drawn from Africa, Western Europe, United States and Canada. The role of these important 'resources' is not defined in editorial declarations, but presumably they can play a role in providing and/or soliciting good-quality papers and helping the journal develop to its full potential (see Panel Recommendations below).

Synopsis of questionnaire: The journal has been financed by the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA), headquartered in Senegal, since its re-launch under the present title 12 years ago; through this it has a strong mandate as a continental journal. The editors are selected by the CODESRIA Committee on Publications from nominations received in response to a call, and appointed for a period of three years. The appointment procedure of editorial board members is similar. Both categories of editors handle manuscripts and advise on editorial policy. Editorial guidelines are available, and have been adapted to the ASSAf *National Code of Best Practice*. There is not yet a policy on conflicts of interest, however.

Content: Quality, focus, spread within domain, sample of best work in South Africa, enrichment features

Consensus review: The articles are generally of a good quality. In recent issues there has been a surprising emphasis on economics and trade in post-apartheid Africa, but the content otherwise deals (in declining order) with 'state of the discipline' issues, culture/language, organisational/occupational and labour matters, and globalisation. The types of articles represented vary from those reporting empirical data mainly of a qualitative nature (68%) and secondary historical matters that also are largely qualitative to original quantitative data analyses and secondary data examined in quantitative terms. Also surprisingly, the social science of HIV/AIDS is hardly included.

There are a 'reasonable' number of articles in each issue, but the biannual publication of the journal means that a total of about 12-15 papers per annum is all that is published by what aspires to be considered a premier continental sociology journal. The authors come from across the globe, but nearly half are South African, and of those a disproportionate number are from the parent institution, Rhodes University, although recent issues have lost this pattern. Regrettably, it cannot be concluded that a good sample of the best work done in Africa in this important field-of-focus is contained in this journal, despite its ambitious title.

Synopsis of questionnaire: Peer review is adhered to strictly, with three reviewers per manuscript, and a wide range of reviewers is used, most of whom are from outside South Africa. Reports are retained for record. Two-thirds of manuscripts submitted are ultimately accepted.

The book reviews are generally of good quality and interesting. Opinion-type editorials are absent, but occasionally inaugural lectures of a 'magisterial' type are included. These kinds of enrichment items are peer reviewed. There have been problems associated with publishing the journal on schedule, which is twice a year.

Essential technical features: English abstracts, *errata*, citation practice, presentation

Consensus review: There are English abstracts for all articles in English. Inexplicably, this bilingual journal does not regularly feature abstracts in French articles, in either French or English. There appears to be no need for publication of *errata*. The citation practice is good. The print presentation is neat and reader-friendly.

Capacity development and international comparability

Consensus review: This journal undoubtedly provides valuable material for graduate students and young researchers interested in Africa. It compares well with international journals, but is (still) a very small 'player'. It is not indexed in either the WoS or in IBSS, but is accredited by the DHET. The 2006 ASSAf Report indicated that the journal had a 'composite extended journal impact factor' (representing a window of eight years, from 1994 to 2002, of articles cited by articles published in WoS-indexed journals) of 0.08 – which was in fact in the upper half of local journals examined – and a 34% share of South African citations in the relevant field in WoS-indexed journals. It is clear that the groundwork for a significant African journal in sociology has been laid, as well as a reputable outlet for local authors to publish their best work.

Suggested improvements

Consensus review: The journal needs to considerably increase the number of submitted and publishable manuscripts in order to become a quarterly periodical with in excess of 40-50 articles per annum. There needs to be a shift to a greater proportion of quantitative articles (as observed in the 2006 self-review, the journal is more of a 'literary' than a 'normal science' journal) and a stricter adherence to sociological rather than economic/trade themes. While the use of 'Review' in the journal title may be problematic in this context, revising the title is less important than building on what has been achieved so far.

The publication of the journal needs to be expedited until it is according to schedule (the latest issue at the time of the review, No. 1 of 2008, only became available in May 2009); the journal is thus a year behind its production schedule. The factors preventing regular appearance, as well as expansion of content, need to be explored and addressed. If the journal seriously wants to serve both Anglophone and Francophone scholars it should ensure that both English- and French-speaking scholars can understand it through inclusion of abstracts of all articles in both English and French. The journal should consistently provide full addresses and contact details of the author(s) at the end of each article.

Business aspects

Synopsis of questionnaire: The print run is 1 000 copies per issue, and production and distribution to the 1 000 subscribers (nearly half of whom are organisations/institutions)

are outsourced. The journal is published online in a 'non-commercial e-publication service'. The total income and expenditure are about R112 000 per annum.

Panel's consensus view:

- i. The journal should continue to be listed on the DHET accreditation list. (See Appendix C.)
- ii. The editor and publisher should be invited to consider joining the evolving SciELO-South Africa platform (requires discussion with CODESRIA).
- iii. The editor and publisher should be encouraged to use the outcome of the present review in making application for indexing by WoS.
- iv. The editor should seriously consider the above recommendations for improvement of the journal made by the reviewers.
- v. In addition, the Panel believes that the journal should use its editorial board to help it build on its already established but very small African/continental base to achieve greater significance and international positioning in its field, including indexing in both WoS and IBSS.

V. *South African Journal of Psychology*

Editing functions: Standing and spread of editorial collective, international participation, peer review

Consensus review: The editor and associate editors are generally well-respected and prominent local academics and have national standing, but are not well known internationally. Some of them are well published. It is not clear what roles the four eminent international members of the International Board play in the journal, and on what grounds they were selected. The editorial board is made up of four presidents of sister psychological associations, suggesting a professional affiliation rather than a scholarly association.

Synopsis of questionnaire: The journal has been published for 38 years without interruption. The editor is competitively appointed for three years, as are the members of the editorial board, who handle manuscripts and advise on editorial policy. Editorial guidelines are published; they have been aligned with the ASSAf *National Code of Best Practice*. Peer review is compulsory, with three reviewers per manuscript, and a large pool (c.120) of reviewers is used, about one-third of whom are from outside South Africa. Reports are retained in the archives. The rejection rate is variable, but typically between 40% and 60% of submitted manuscripts. Issues are published quarterly and on time.

Content: Quality, focus, spread within domain, sample of best work in South Africa, enrichment features

Consensus review: The quality of articles is variable, some are good and some are average. (One reviewer reported having a personal experience of rejecting manuscripts for publication, but then seeing them appear in the journal.) There are a

contextually adequate (but not impressive) number of articles, with an average of 12 per issue or 50 per annum. They represent a good sample of the best work done in the country in the discipline and its sub-disciplines, but not necessarily of the best work. These range from methodological issues in research, to philosophical issues related to the discipline of psychology, to issues of psychological measurement and psychological assessment, to issues related to behavioural and clinical treatment and services issues. The range of topics is in fact very wide, but is countered to some extent by the use of special editions on specific topics; the content includes political and social commentary on race, gender, and politics. It is, however, less representative of applied research that is nationally based or policy-driven.

Most South African psychologists try to publish internationally, but make the strategic decisions to publish articles in the *South African Journal of Psychology*, when they think the items concerned are of 'less than international' quality or because they are of specific local interest. It is a national journal that publishes a wide range of topics, with no real identifiable 'mainstream' approach, either in terms of content or method. The journal is almost entirely focused on issues related to Africa. The authors reflect a good range of psychologists in this country, academics as well as practitioners; foreign scholars are barely represented, perhaps two or so per year, and there also are very few authors from the rest of Africa. There are some book reviews and commentary/correspondence articles, but no systematic enrichment of the article content (for example, book reviews were published only two to three times per annum).

Essential technical features: English abstracts, *errata*, citation practice, presentation

Consensus review: There are English abstracts for all articles. No *errata* appear to be published. The citation practice is good, consistent with the style of the international standard set by the American Psychological Association. About seven years ago, the presentation of the journal was poor, but it has improved to a good standard at present; currently the journal gives a professional impression, with a good presentation, layout and style, and quality copy-editing in evidence.

Capacity development and international comparability

Consensus review: The journal provides useful insight into research on various topics of relevance to South Africa. The journal is suitable as a general ongoing stimulus for local graduate students and young researchers in the discipline concerned; indeed the journal stands out as often being the first publication outlet for students and young scholars. The journal would, however, be inadequate as a primary source of reference, as ground-breaking studies and findings tend to appear in international journals, for obvious reasons. The articles are well structured and make extensive use of theoretical explanatory models, and may be considered to be equal to most similar journals elsewhere that attempt to serve an academic and professional outlet for publication. The articles are less comparable on the basis of sophistication of methodology and analysis, however, especially in quantitative analysis, and can even be considered to be weak in this regard.

While extensive attention is given to clinical and behavioural issues related to intervention, there is less focus on wider health issues and social policy issues. Special issues have

attempted to deal with issues of race, gender and violence in South African society. The journal cannot compete with the top international journals, but it nonetheless will be able to 'hold its own' in international company, as it has an WoS journal impact factor of 0.38, which is relatively favourable for a local journal in a small country.

Suggested improvements

Consensus review: The journal is clearly the leading general journal in psychology in South Africa. It is supported by the Psychological Society of South Africa. After more than 38 years (its two predecessors go back to 1962), it is a well-established, professionally managed and respected journal with good international exposure through the index services. The journal could, however, greatly benefit from regular editorials, used *inter alia* to review the state of the discipline or a specific sub-discipline (especially when coupled with special editions), and/or recent developments in psychology, and/or possible areas for future research, notes about international visitors to the country and their work, invited papers by prominent specialists in one or more fields, items on developments in the academic study of psychology and its applications in practice, scholarly correspondence, personalia, etc.

There could also be more directed efforts to attract international contributors and to foster international co-operation. A more substantial book review section would be a great asset, given the vast amount of new material published each year in the discipline.

Business aspects

Synopsis of questionnaire: The publisher is the Psychological Society of South Africa. The print run is 1 300 copies per issue, with 1 150 subscribers. The journal is indexed in WoS, is accessible on Medline, and is part of the pay-to-view e-publication service of Sabinet Online. There are no page charges. The annual expenditure is about R250 000. Copyright vests in the journal. The editor is in principle interested in an invitation to join the new SciELO-South Africa platform of free-online, high-quality, fully indexed South African journals.

Panel's consensus view:

- i. **The journal should continue to be listed on the DHET list of accredited journals (over and above its entitlement to this, under policy as an WoS-indexed periodical). (See Appendix C.)**
- ii. **The editor and publisher should be invited to consider joining the evolving SciELO-South Africa platform.**
- iii. **The editor should seriously consider the above recommendations for improvement of the journal made by the reviewers.**
- iv. **In addition, the Panel believes that the *South African Journal of Psychology* can increase the number of articles it attracts and publishes, from both local and international sources, and become much more of an 'obligatory read' for students, practitioners and policy-makers through a deliberate plan to increase enrichment features.**

VI. Psychology in Society (PINS)

Editing functions: Standing and spread of editorial collective, international participation, peer review

Consensus review: 'Critical' or 'societal' psychology represents a very small field in the vast world of psychology and this is also the case in South Africa. The editorial board consists of prominent exponents of this limited group of scholars.

Synopsis of questionnaire: The journal has been published since 1983 without interruptions; as an independent journal with little infrastructural support, regular publication has not always been achieved.

Content: Quality, focus, spread within domain, sample of best work in South Africa, enrichment features

Consensus review: Some of the articles are of good quality and intellectually challenging. There is a marked focus on meta-issues and on critical investigation, and most articles are either qualitative or theoretical. Only one volume is produced per annum, with an average of only five articles. Despite this, the journal gives a good sense of what is going on in this niche field. It contains good editorials that address topical issues and explicate the aims and importance of critical psychology. Nearly all of the articles have a bearing on local and regional issues. Book reviews are also an important feature. Contributions are mostly from four South African universities, with only two articles from international authors during the last three years.

Essential technical features: English abstracts, errata, citation practice, presentation

Consensus review: There are a few articles without abstracts. The journal does not contain *errata*. The citation practice is consistent but the presentation average (it operates on a restricted budget).

Capacity development and international comparability

Consensus review: The articles are generally provocative and challenging, with a focus on alternative approaches and on critical thought; the journal may therefore appeal to a restricted audience. Of the six articles in Volume 35, four were by student/lecturer combinations, while in Volume 36, three of the four articles were based on PhD work. While in one sense this is commendable, there is a concern that the authoritativeness of the content is jeopardised. Comparability with international journals is limited by the small number of articles and the restricted nature of the field.

Suggested improvements

Consensus review: The main aim of the journal, to provide a critical perspective on psychology and a platform for the vigorous interrogation of existing positions, should enable it to attract many more articles. The fact that it emphasises the importance of a social theoretical understanding of society and its own presuppositions, does not necessarily stereotype it as an 'alternative publication' outside of mainstream psychology. Greater interaction with the international network of critical psychologists, and

closer co-operation with scholars with similar interests, will strengthen its position in the local context.

Business aspects

Synopsis of questionnaire: The journal is self-published and printed by Smile Print. The regular print run is about 200 copies per issue, with 100 -120 subscribers. An electronic version of the journal is in the process of being created, with the intention that it will be free online. The journal's average expenditure is about R5 000 per issue. The copyright is held by PINS, but permissions are granted if formally requested and if the material is fully and properly acknowledged. The editor would like to join the SciELO-South Africa platform but would need to consult the other editors on this matter, specifically the editor responsible for managing the imminent electronic version.

Panel's consensus view:

- i. **The journal should continue to be listed on the DHET list of accredited journals. (See Appendix C.)**
- ii. **The editor should be invited to consider joining the evolving SciELO-South Africa platform.**
- iii. **The editor should seriously consider the above recommendations for improvement of the journal made by the reviewers.**
- iv. **In addition, the Panel believes** that the journal should consider amalgamating with the *South African Journal of Psychology* in order to exert more influence on the discipline than it can from its present niche positioning. An amalgamation would be beneficial for both journals, given that the articles published in PINS are intellectually stimulating and of good quality, with a focus on meta-issues. Amalgamation would also result in a greater number of published articles and a greater impact of critical material. The international impact of the journal's content also would be greater if it were part of the mainstream.

VII. South African Journal of Industrial Psychology

Editing functions: Standing and spread of editorial collective, international participation, peer review

Consensus review: The editor is known among South African industrial psychology academic departments and among professionals in this field. The editorial team consists of recognised academics in the field, all from local institutions; their standing in the broader discipline of psychology is not as pronounced. They are apparently not appointed competitively, and the term of the editor is unspecified. Of the 14 members of the advisory board, five are non-South Africans; it is difficult to know how actively the members participate in editorial processes. The journal appears to have very limited international reach, as its focus is exclusively on South African work and labour-related contexts. It is, however, noteworthy that industrial psychology, as an applied discipline, is not in the forefront of academic developments in South Africa, and elsewhere.

Synopsis of questionnaire: The journal has been published for 35 years without interruption. The editor has been in the position for 14 years; the appointment was not competitively made. The period of appointment of the editor is not specified, nor is that of the members of the editorial board, whose appointment is apparently based on expertise and profile. The editorial board members handle manuscripts occasionally and advise on editorial policy. Editorial guidelines are published; they have been aligned with the ASSAf *National Code of Best Practice*. Peer review is compulsory, with three reviewers per manuscript, and a large pool of local reviewers is used. Reports are retained in the archives. Desk rejections are between 70% and 80% of first submissions. Three issues, with an infrequent fourth special issue, are published per annum.

Content: Quality, focus, spread within domain, sample of best work in South Africa, enrichment features

Consensus review: The articles published are generally of an average-to-good standard, but, while the articles are representative of the latest developments in the field, the journal may not be the publishing outlet of first choice – the best articles are submitted to international journals. The journal publishes about 30 articles per annum, which, in the context of a very specific area of psychology, may be adequate. Each article is sent to three reviewers, almost all of whom are local. The rejection rate is 70-80%. The journal does tend to represent a sample of the best work done in the country in the discipline, particularly as it relates to research within South African academic departments. The articles, however, slant towards work based on test administration and the use of questionnaires to collect data. There are few to no enrichment features, excepting for an editorial introduction to the articles in each issue.

Essential technical features: English abstracts, errata, citation practice, presentation

Consensus review: The abstracts are well structured, are in English, and use typical American Psychological Association standards. The articles are well laid out and use a style of presentation that is easy to read. It is unclear what copy-editing process is used. No *errata* were published in the period under review. Good citation practice is one of the prominent features of the journal. It has a professional overall appearance.

Capacity development and international comparability

Consensus review: The journal provides a valuable store of knowledge and information of industrial psychology research in South Africa. It presents a fair reflection of the local state of the discipline, but it is unlikely that the articles will be often cited outside of South Africa, given this local focus. The journal is, however, likely to compare favourably with similar single-focus journals elsewhere. The journal is a good source of current issues and practices for graduate students and probably also is the publishing outlet of choice for graduate students. International journals in industrial psychology – because of their close relationship to industry – often tend to have a ‘glossy’ appearance, whereas this journal does not.

Suggested improvements

Consensus review: A more formal editorial board, with international membership, needs to be established. The journal should encourage submissions from international authors and also from ‘junior’ authors. The range of peer reviewers should be widened and include scholars drawn from other countries. Attention should be given to

theoretical and critical methodological issues, despite the understandable focus on practice and application; the latter will benefit in the long term from attention to theoretical issues. International indexing should also be sought.

Business aspects

Synopsis of questionnaire: The publisher is Open Journals Publishing, a division of AOSIS (Pty) Ltd. Open Journals Publishing took over the publication in 2008, and has developed it into a fully online, open-access journal. The print run is about 3 500 copies per issue. The journal is not indexed in WoS or the IBSS. The editor and the publisher would be interested in an invitation to join the new SciELO-South Africa platform because it would complement their use of Open Journal Systems for production and publishing.

Panel's consensus view:

- i. **The journal should continue to be listed on the DHET list of accredited journals. (See Appendix C.)**
- ii. **The editor and publisher should be invited to consider joining the evolving SciELO-South Africa platform.**
- iii. **The editor and publisher should be encouraged to use the outcome of the present review in making application for indexing by WoS.**
- iv. **The editor should seriously consider the above recommendations for improvement of the journal made by the reviewers.**
- v. **In addition, the Panel believes** that the editor and editorial board should be appointed competitively. In addition, the journal should endeavour to reach a wider audience and increase the number of articles published. It should also consider actively promoting the submission of articles by international authors. The journal could be enhanced by the publication of theoretical and analytical content, and should provide enrichment features to enhance its usefulness.

VIII. Social Work: A Professional Journal for the Social Worker

Editing functions: Standing and spread of editorial collective, international participation, peer review

Consensus review: Both editor and the editorial board members are spread over the country's academic departments, with some international members. The editor and editorial board members appear to be locally well-respected academics and practitioners.

Synopsis of questionnaire: The journal has been published for 44 years without interruption. The editor is not appointed competitively, but serves for a period of ten years, as do members of the editorial board. Editorial board members manage the peer review of individual manuscripts and advise on editorial policies/practices. The journal is in the process of aligning its procedures and policies with the ASSAf *National Code of Best Practice*. Peer review is compulsory, with two reviewers per manuscript.

Content: Quality, focus, spread within domain, sample of best work in South Africa, enrichment features

Consensus review: Slightly more than half the articles in any given volume have empirical data, the others are policy or opinion pieces, and very occasionally there is a special contribution (such as a book review, essay or memorial lecture). The length of the articles varies greatly from seven pages to more than 20 pages. Whilst most of the articles are clear in their aims and generally well conceived, they also vary greatly in the quality of the research design and methods; some simply do not elaborate on what design or approach they have adopted. The methods are not motivated in many cases, other than to briefly refer to a reference(s). There seems not to be a strong emphasis on the design and methods, as opposed to the conceptualisation, policies and outcomes of the research.

The articles represent a mix of policy and opinion pieces, literature reviews, and original research articles implementing qualitative methods (focus groups and surveys were common), with a few implementing quantitative methods with experimental designs. The scale of most of the research described in the articles was rather small, with few studies exceeding 100 participants and most research being very localised (except for a Belgian study of more than 2 000 participants in South Africa and Belgium). There are almost no national-level studies, and very few have an international 'flavour' or comparison.

The average number of annual issues (four, except for 2006 when Numbers 3 and 4 were combined) is satisfactory, and the total number of articles published is average for most journals (87 articles for the period 2005-2007). The number of articles could be considerably more, given the central position of social work in South Africa's current state of social development, and the enormous investments in (public) social grants being made by the government to address a huge range of social problems. Of the 87 articles, authors of 19 articles were repeat authors (single or first authors), and, in an extreme case, one author contributed seven articles (five articles of which were first authorships) during this time; one author also had five articles accepted as a sole author to this journal. There is thus a relatively small pool of authors continuously submitting and publishing articles. More than half of the 87 contributions during the three-year period were from traditionally Afrikaans universities, while historically disadvantaged institutions contributed only seven articles in this period. Postgraduate students, usually as co-authors with (presumably) their supervisors, contributed to about 12 of the 87 articles.

Foreign contributions are very limited, with only five articles having foreign authors and a further four co-authored with South Africans. It is important to note that editors (including deputy, sub and managing editors) should generally not be permitted to publish in their own journals unless very clear and transparent arrangements exist for transfer of the editorial discretion to an independent party.

Essential technical features: English abstracts, *errata*, citation practice, presentation

Consensus review: Enrichment features, such as editorials, topical reviews, book reviews and scholarly correspondence are not published, although in Volume 3 of 2007, a special contribution and an essay were included. As an example, a total of only two book reviews were published across 11 volumes. It is surprising, given that it is such a contested and charged field, that there are no position-taking editorials.

All volumes contained English abstracts, even where the articles were in Afrikaans (although there were generally few articles in Afrikaans). The abstracts varied greatly in length and content within each volume. Not all abstracts included an explicit problem statement, nor were the aim(s) or the research objectives outlined, and most abstracts did not include a clear enough indication of the methodology used. There was also not always a good summary of the overall findings. Publication of *errata* in the bound volumes of the journals was not evident. The citation practice appears to be adequate in most cases, but occasionally the literature cited was parochial and/or dated. The presentation of the articles is generally good, as is the layout, style and copy-editing.

Capacity development and international comparability

Consensus review: Given the high proportion of published articles (12 out of 87) that were submitted by postgraduate students, this journal does appear to serve as a relevant and necessary outlet for students. One or two articles per issue are authored by individual students without their supervisors, junior academics (those without PhDs), or non-university professionals. It is likely that the journal is insignificant internationally because it does not yet reflect the full scope and spectrum of South African social work issues. Most good scholarly journals in this field are similar but more substantial, and have a greater number of features and a greater 'weight' of collective professional opinion.

Suggested improvements

Consensus review: The quality of the abstracts could be enhanced by means of establishing guidelines and enforcing criteria for the length and content thereof, for example the aim(s) of the article, the nature of the problem, the design and methods, and a brief description of the findings. Some attention should be given to solving the problem of 'repeat' authorships, primarily by increasing the 'author catchment' and the number of articles. For the empirical studies included in the journal, greater attention is needed to ensure the quality of the research design and methods described. A policy for editorial staff publishing in the journal needs to be introduced and/or enforced. The journal would greatly benefit from an increase (two- to three-fold) in the number of articles, and also by including editorials (some invited), book reviews, correspondence and other features. The journal should seek to more actively engage with contemporary issues in social development that affect the practice and impact of social work. All articles in Afrikaans should have an English translation of their abstracts and key metadata.

It is important for this journal to be freely accessible online to all potential users, as its concerns and contributions are of wide interest in the nation.

Business aspects

Synopsis of questionnaire: The publisher is the University of Stellenbosch. The print run is 500 copies per issue, with 400 subscribers. The total expenditure is approximately R102 400 per annum. The editor responds to requests with regard to copyright permissions. The journal is not indexed in the WoS and/or the IBSS. The current editor is not interested in an invitation to join the new SciELO-South Africa platform of free-online, high-quality, fully indexed South African journals.

Panel's consensus view:

- i. The journal should be listed on the DHET list of accredited journals. (See Appendix C.)
- ii. The editor and publisher should be invited to consider joining the evolving SciELO-South Africa platform.
- iii. The editor and publisher should be encouraged to use the outcome of the present review in making application for indexing by WoS.
- iv. The editor should seriously consider the above recommendations for improvement of the journal made by the reviewers.
- v. In addition, the Panel believes that the journal is very important in South Africa's socioeconomic development context, and needs to become a major voice in this field and its applications in society.

IX. SAHARA Journal

Editing functions: Standing and spread of editorial collective, international participation, peer review

Consensus review: The South African editor has a good reputation in the field of social aspects of HIV/AIDS research, and is very well published in national and international journals. He was appointed and has acted since inception of the journal five years ago. The co-editor is from Cameroon, and there also is a managing editor. The editorial board, the members of which also have high national and international disciplinary reputations and standings, is appointed competitively and includes a wide array of national and international scholars, with a good spread from African universities. The journal is a project of the SAHARA network and is published by the South African Medical Association (SAMA), which gives it added standing. The editorial arrangements for the journal appear professional and well organised.

Synopsis of questionnaire: The journal has been published for five years, without any interruption. Over the last three years, the journal published 22 peer-reviewed articles from 59 manuscripts received, with no manuscript rejected without peer review. Peer reviewers, approached for each submitted manuscript, vary in number from four to six. The editor was appointed for an unspecified period. The members of the editorial board handle the peer review of individual manuscripts and also advise on editorial policies and practices. The journal uses Forum for African Medical Editors (FAME) editorial guidelines, which are in line with the ASSAf *National Code of Best Practice*.

Content: Quality, focus, spread within domain, sample of best work in South Africa, enrichment features

Consensus review: The articles are generally good and based on sound empirical research, but may not represent the best work in the field emanating from South Africa. Articles follow the medical model, including a clear explanation of the methodology employed and the results, as well as a discussion of the main evidence. They generally form part of the burgeoning literature on HIV/AIDS prevention and prevalence. This literature is not, however, theoretically rich, but an evidence base is growing and the

articles of this journal contribute to that growth. The journal is published quarterly, and the editor reports that it has appeared as scheduled at all times. While a good number of articles are published, the size and extent of the pool from which articles are drawn could be improved.

The work reported is conducted by researchers based at South African research universities and science councils (e.g. HSRC and MRC), often in multi-disciplinary and multi-institutional teams. Most of the research reported is located in a single country or a specific district within a country, and there is little evidence of cross-country comparative work. The research reported may thus enable generic methodologies to be developed and replicated in different country cases, but the lack of comparative work limits the ability to develop theoretical and conceptual frameworks in the field. The focus is apposite, however, and very topical, providing multi-faceted perspectives on HIV/AIDS prevalence and prevention programmes in a range of country contexts. Of the 44 articles published in 2008, no fewer than 18 had at least one non-South African author, which suggests strong interest in the journal, particularly from the target audience in Africa. The majority of articles are co-authored by three or more researchers, and some have large cross-institutional or cross-continental authorship. This collaboration is a potential strength for developing scholarship and capacity. The journal was initially funded by a number of donors, but is currently funded by the HSRC; with the editor based at the HSRC, caution needs to be exercised to ensure that it does not become an 'in-house' journal.

Essential technical features: English abstracts, *errata*, citation practice, presentation

Consensus review: Each issue has an introductory editorial, but no substantive editorial; there are also several book reviews. (Indeed, for some time there was a book reviews editor who was based at the University of the Western Cape, but, as of 2008, is no longer involved.) There is also a 'Letters to the Editor' section in some issues, or special features like conference announcements and reports, all of which contribute to creating an academic discourse in the field. These scholarly features are clearly demarcated as distinct from 'original articles' in separate sections. The abstracts are in both English and French, and include keywords. They are usefully laid out in a bold-face text box.

There is no evidence of *errata* publication. The citation system is consistent and good. The journal is indexed in both IBSS and WoS, and subscribes to the FAME editorial guidelines, which sets the standard for both the citation practice and the presentation. The journal is professionally laid out and easy to read.

Capacity development and international comparability

Consensus review: The journal provides a good lead into cutting-edge research in the field of social aspects of HIV/AIDS prevalence and prevention in Africa. It is thus suitable as a general ongoing stimulus for local graduate students and young academics in the discipline concerned. It compares favourably with leading international journals in the field because it gives an African perspective on social issues.

Suggested improvements

Consensus review: The journal has been in existence for only five years but it appears to be building a strong empirical, research-based academic discourse around the social aspects of HIV/AIDS. Efforts should be directed to increasing the pool and geographic scope of contributors, encouraging more theoretical and comparative contributions to the field, and building the academic standing of the journal. Comparative research and more critical reflection are needed to facilitate the growth of a theoretical base in the field, and to widen the pool of authors and readers beyond South African and African institutions.

Business aspects

Synopsis of questionnaire: The publisher is SAMA Health and Medical Publishing Group. The print run is 1 000 copies per issue. The expenditure is about R400 000 per annum. Authors sign copyright transfer agreements. The journal is indexed in both WoS and IBSS. The editor is in principle interested in an invitation to join the new SciELO-South Africa platform of free-online, high-quality, fully indexed South African journals (but, specifically for distribution in Africa, will also retain the print version).

Panel's consensus view:

- i. The journal should continue to be listed on the DHET list of accredited journals (over and above its entitlement to this, under policy as a WoS- and IBSS-indexed periodical). (See Appendix C.)
- ii. The editor and publisher should be invited to consider joining the evolving SciELO-South Africa platform.
- iii. The editor and publisher should seriously consider the above recommendations for improvement of the journal made by the reviewers.
- iv. In addition, the Panel believes that the journal should include formal, position-taking editorials, and generally become a dominant scholarly resource and forum in its extensive field.

X. Commonwealth Youth and Development

Editing functions: Standing and spread of editorial collective, international participation, peer review

Consensus review: The editor is a Professor in Development Studies at the University of South Africa (UNISA) and has served since the journal's inception in 2003; the editor's international and national reputation and standing are not clear. She was appointed to serve indefinitely by a meeting of Commonwealth partners, following acceptance of UNISA's proposal to host a journal to support youth development (in place of a proposal from the University of Ghana). The associate editors are all drawn from UNISA, rendering the influence of this single institution much too great. The editorial advisory board is drawn deliberately to reflect all four of the developing regions of Commonwealth countries, with all but one from outside South Africa. They are invited to serve for a period of three years and advise on editorial policies; they undertake peer review, but, regrettably, only infrequently.

Synopsis of questionnaire: The journal has been published for seven years without any interruption. During the last three years, the journal published 26 peer-reviewed articles, from about 40 submitted manuscripts (plus a further 12 articles that were not peer-reviewed but had been commissioned by the Commonwealth as original background and policy papers for the Commonwealth Youth Ministers' Meeting). The journal's policy makes provision for the appointment of a guest editor who is approached by the editor, or who may approach the editor with an offer to guest edit one or more issues. The members of the editorial board are appointed through invitation, for a 3-year period but with an option to be re-appointed, and they handle manuscripts on request. The journal deliberately tries to reflect participation of, and views from, all four of the developing regions of the Commonwealth.

Only the gist of the editorial guidelines appears in the journal, but copies of the full guidelines are available on request. The guidelines have not yet been adequately aligned with the ASSAf *National Code of Best Practice*. Two reviewers are approached for each manuscript, but a total of only seven reviewers were used, five of whom were non-South African. The publication frequency is biannual.

Content: Quality, focus, spread within domain, sample of best work in South Africa, enrichment features

Consensus review: There appears to be a very small pool of articles from which to choose for publication, which is confirmed by the small number of articles published per annum and raises questions about the quality of the contributions. For example, a 2005 issue contained four articles, three of them were by South Africans, about South Africans. One article was based on a public lecture, while the others were descriptive reflections on youth teaching and training programmes, reflecting on various measures to assess efficacy, such as interviews with course participants or completion statistics. The academic quality of these papers was underwhelming. The research reported in later issues has also been very descriptive and not methodologically sophisticated, reporting on attitudinal surveys with generally small samples, reflections on practice, or case studies of specific programmes. The commissioned articles, in particular, reflect on approaches and frameworks to youth development, and recommend future principles, improvements or changes to guide good practice. The articles cover a range of settings, but the empirical focus of each is localised to a single setting. There is no systematic comparative research that could inform theoretical development of the field, or problematise the implications drawn from practice in other contexts.

There are regular editorials but no book reviews or other enrichment features, because, as the editor reports, there have not been suitable submissions. Such submissions would need to be actively solicited. Generally, the articles lack academic rigour and are aimed at practitioners, to inform good practice in youth development. They do focus on relevant issues and problems in relation to youth development, such as HIV/AIDS, crime, work, youth leadership and conflict management. Of 25 published articles, eight, excluding a commissioned article, were by South Africans. The remaining articles were contributed by Commonwealth authors, suggesting a good spread across the Commonwealth.

Essential technical features: English abstracts, errata, citation practice, presentation

Consensus review: All articles have very short abstracts. It was necessary only once to publish *errata*. The citation practice is good and consistent. The size of the print journal is small (A5 format) and the text is rather dense. The readability could be enhanced by addressing the small format.

Capacity development and international comparability

Consensus review: The journal is a useful guide to its field of practice, and suitable as a general ongoing stimulus for local graduate students and young researchers in the discipline concerned. Its comparability with leading international journals in the field is difficult to determine, but is likely to be low.

Suggested improvements

Consensus review: The journal reflects the challenges of publishing on a not-for-profit basis, with minimal donor funding and ongoing indirect sponsorship of material and distribution costs by a university press. The dedication required for such a task is considerable. This young journal needs to strengthen its academic credentials. The limited audience, contributor base and scope are problems that need to be addressed. It may be necessary to decide between being a (good) periodical for practitioners and being a (poor) journal for scholars.

Business aspects

Synopsis of questionnaire: The publisher is UNISA Press. The print run was initially 3 000 copies, but has been reduced to 1500 copies per issue. The annual expenditure is R40 200 (for two issues). Copyright rests with UNISA. Start-up funding was received from the Commonwealth Youth Programme (during 2001 and 2002) which was sufficient to cover initial production costs. Currently the journal is indirectly sponsored by UNISA Press, which absorbs material and distribution costs. No fees are payable to any person involved on the editorial board, to reviewers or to authors. Authors are not charged page fees to ensure that potential contributions from the developing regions of the world are not discouraged. The journal is not published online. The editor is in principle interested in an invitation to join the new SciELO-South Africa platform of free-online, high-quality, fully indexed South African journals.

Panel's consensus view:

- i. **The journal should NOT be listed on the DHET list of accredited journals. (See Appendix C.)**
- ii. **The editor and publisher should NOT be invited to consider joining the evolving SciELO-South Africa platform.**
- iii. **The editor should seriously consider the above recommendations for improvement of the journal made by the reviewers.**
- iv. **In addition, the Panel believes that the journal should consider approaching some of the mainstream South/southern African sociological journals with a view to discuss forms of co-operation that would help address the problems identified by the reviewers and the Panel.**

XI. African Journal on Conflict Resolution

Editing functions: Standing, spread, international participation, peer review, etc

Consensus review: The journal is published by the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD). The editors of the journal have been Prof Jakes Gerwel, ex-Rector and Vice Chancellor of the University of the Western Cape (UWC), and Prof Jannie Malan, Professor Emeritus of UWC. Since 2009, Mr Vasu Gounden, Executive Director of ACCORD, has been listed as the Editor-in-Chief in an organisational capacity, but is now designated as 'Publisher'. Although the last-mentioned two people are both obviously leaders in the practical field of conflict resolution, they are not established scholars, as they have only a handful of publications between them, mostly published under the auspices of ACCORD. Prof Malan is the managing editor, and there are two additional co-editors (one South African, one European (an adviser to the research centre)). The editorial board/co-editors include scholars who are invited by the managing editor to serve and are generally responsible for quality and content. The board assesses articles after initial screening by the internal editorial team, and specific expert advice is sought as required. The 'Advisory Panel' of peer reviewers includes scholars from a range of institutions (universities, African associations) in Africa, Europe, Central America and South Africa, invited to serve by the managing editor. It should be noted that a determined attempt is under way to improve the functioning of the editorial bodies and the content of the journal as a whole.

The authors of articles are based in a wide spread of institutions across the African continent and internationally. The journal claims that it aims to publish a majority of writers from African countries other than South Africa, and it appears to have succeeded in this regard - 62% of papers published are by non-South Africans.

Questionnaire: The journal has been published for 10 years without interruption. The Editor is not appointed competitively; the editorial responsibility was added for an unspecified period to the editor's work as a senior researcher. The composition, tenure, governing rules and role of the Advisory Board are currently under review. There is a process under way to enhance the journal's guidelines, which are very much in line with the ASSAf code of best practice (which has been accepted as an authoritative guideline). Peer review is compulsory, two reviewers per manuscript.

On average, the rejection rate of submitted articles is approximately 55% percent: In the review years (2006 - 2008), for example, 26 articles were accepted and 25 rejected, while in the previous years (1999-2005) 36 articles were published and 50 rejected.

Content: quality, focus, spread within domain, sample of best work in SA, enrichment features, etc

Consensus review: It is useful to reflect briefly on how the field of conflict resolution and management has developed since the middle of the previous century. The field is interdisciplinary and varied, including theoretical or action-based studies in policy, ethnography and history. Africa has in recent times borne the greatest global burden of armed conflicts, and this continent should be at the centre of the scholarly field concerned. The style of many of the contributions in the journal regrettably reminds

the reader a bit of 'international relations material', more a kind of sophisticated journalism, in the sense that the articles concerned do not report on primary research, but rely on secondary material and recent policy documents to debate issues in the field. A (smaller) number of the articles do contain primary research, however, interrelated with theory and policy, new insights or perspectives, and are academically rigorous. The journal claims that it focuses on contemporary and ongoing conflict phenomena, their management and resolution, as well as peace-making, peace-keeping and peace-building in Africa, as well as on related policy issues - It aims to be a conduit between theory and practice. Yet the overall impression is one of a focus that is directed much more to policy and practice issues than to theoretical understandings of the phenomena concerned. The articles are, however, well-written in this sense, despite the fact that the substance of the contributions remains quite thin in most cases.

The journal is published bi-annually and each issue has at least four (usually 6-7) articles, with a degree of thematic coherence across an issue. There are infrequent special issues, for example, one on Identity and Cultural Diversity in conflict resolution, in partnership with the HSRC. The small total number of articles per year hardly represents an adequate sample of the best work done in this field in S A. The field has not really evolved into a scholarly one, but rather a field of policy and practical issues. The journal focuses on conflict resolution in Africa. Authors are often academics, researchers and lawyers in African institutions. Many, judging by their names, are of African origin but educated and employed overseas, mostly in the USA. There have been some delays in publication, but generally the journal appears as scheduled. The journal aims to contribute to intellectual development of the field of conflict management on the African continent, and it appears only partially to succeed in this ambition. A small pool of peer reviewers (9) are used, which is a potential limitation. Book reviews are selected to fit with themes. Editorials do not map out positions on issues, but simply highlight the dimensions and research concerns in relation to the issues and problems of conflict resolution discussed in the set of articles.

Essential technical features: English abstracts, errata, citation practice, presentation

Consensus review: Each issue has an 'editorial foreword' and at least one book reviews. The editorials are thoughtful, and link each article to a central debate, and to scholarship in the field. The abstracts are substantial and are almost like extended abstracts. There are no errata. Citation in each article is thorough and a consistent style is followed. An 'inconsistency' in a specific issue on identity was noted in an editorial as deliberate - the use of full first names to indicate the gendered identity of the author. Readership is aimed mostly at academics, but is not limited to them, so that an accessible style is used. The journal is well presented and clearly laid out, attractive to the reader.

Usefulness in capacity development, and international comparability

Consensus review: The type or standard of article in the journal is not out of reach of local graduates and young staff. It seems to provide a good entry to key debates in the field, as well as examples of good scholarship from multiple disciplines - history, political studies, anthropology - for young academics. International comparability must be considered in this context; the best journals in the field would be much more scholarly and substantial.

Suggested improvements

Consensus Review: A strategy needs to be developed to increase the impact and reach of the journal, based on the foundation built up over the past ten years. The ASSAf guidelines on best practice in editing and peer review should be rigorously applied, to enhance the emphasis on scholarship and the “conduit from theory into practice” in the field. Mechanisms to attract a larger pool of potential articles need to be devised, avoiding the ‘closed circle’, so that selection can be more competitive and rigorous, and the published material more innovative.

Business aspects

Questionnaire: The publisher is the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD). The print run is 1000 copies per issue. There are no subscribers; ACCORD publishes the journal as part of its mission to contribute to conflict management in Africa. The funds for the journal’s production are usually part of overall core support from donors such as the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the United Kingdom’s Department for International Development (DFID), and the governments of Norway, Finland and Denmark. The journal is freely accessible through the ACCORD website, and it can also be accessed through SABINET’s e-publications service and African Journals Online (AJOL). The total expenditure is approximately R202 930 per issue or R405 860 per annum. The editor responds to requests with regard to copyright. The journal is not indexed in the Thomson Reuters ISI and/or the IBSS. The editor is in principle interested in an invitation to join the new SciELO South Africa platform of free-online, high-quality, fully indexed South African journals.

ACCORD has entered into a three-year partnership with the University of Uppsala’s Department of Peace and Conflict Research, and has established an important memorandum of understanding for cooperation with the Nordic-Africa Institute. These partnerships are intended to form the key elements for enhancing the quality and impact of ACCORD’s research and of the African Journal on Conflict Resolution. A main goal is to enhance scholarship in the field of conflict resolution, drawing on a wider range of scholars and experts than before, to provide sharpened peer review services and to increase the pool of potential contributors to the journal.

Panel’s consensus view:

- i. **The journal should not be accredited by the DoHET** until it has substantially improved its scholarly standing.
- ii. **The journal should also not yet be invited to join the SciELO-SA platform.**
- iii. **The editor and publisher should implement the suggestions for improvement made by the peer reviewers**, especially those that relate to increasing the scholarly content of articles, enriching the content with significant features such as book reviews and correspondence, etc, and increasing the number of peer-reviewed articles. The editorial mechanism should be strengthened.

XII. Africa Insight

Editing functions: Standing and spread of editorial collective, international participation, peer review

Consensus review: The journal is published by the Africa Institute of South Africa, which is a statutory body. The journal is long established, and appears to have undergone a period of instability over the past few years, which it has addressed by putting together an editorial team with a capacity development element (there is a 'publisher', who presumably is the senior scholar, and then three layers of 'assistant editor', 'editorial assistant' and 'publishing intern'. (This kind of model is worth investigating elsewhere). The scholarly standing of the editor does not appear to be high, either nationally or internationally; most of her publications seem to have been published by the Institute itself. There has been a degree of change over time in the editorial committee and the editorial board, which can be positively viewed as a good way to inject new energy. The distinct role of the two bodies is not clear, however. The current editorial committee is small and South African-based, while the editorial board shows a wider range of national and international scholars of higher standing.

Synopsis of questionnaire: The journal has been published since 1970 and there has never been any interruption in publication. The editor is competitively appointed for a 3-year period. The members of the editorial board are approached on the basis of their intellectual standing and also appointed for a 3-year period; they handle manuscripts and advise on editorial policy. Editorial guidelines are published; they are in the process of being aligned with the ASSAf *National Code of Best Practice*. Peer review is compulsory, with three reviewers per manuscript; more than 50 scholars are used, more than half of whom are from outside South Africa. Reports are not necessarily retained in the archives. More than half of the manuscripts received are rejected. Issues appear quarterly, and as scheduled.

Content: Quality, focus, spread within domain, sample of best work in South Africa, enrichment features

Consensus review: The journal regularly publishes ten articles per issue, and three to four issues are published every year, not always on time and/or with correct numbering. The articles published in this journal have a strong focus on policy issues, without tackling the important debates that take place in depth in journals published outside South Africa. As a result, the articles have a strongly parochial nature, focusing on narrow questions that do not resonate with a broader literature. The subject matter of articles is very diverse. Some studies entail primary research, but just as many are debate pieces that draw on secondary material for their evidence. The special issues that focus on specific topics, such as sport or youth, generally contain articles of greater research and academic depth; the articles in these issues are also better organised thematically.

The contributing authors are mostly academics, ranging in seniority, and distributed across many kinds of institutions. One measure of the weakness of these contributions is that Google Scholar shows that most articles published in this journal are not cited by other scholars at all, and no article received more than 18 citations. The work published by this journal seems to fall into what one might be inclined to think of as the 'B level' of Southern African scholarship, possibly even the 'C level'. The journal is a multi-disciplinary, area studies journal with a strong social sciences focus, and is devoted exclusively to Africa; its relatively large number of articles published per annum indicates a good sample of local work in the areas covered.

Essential technical features: English abstracts, *errata*, citation practice, presentation

Consensus review: There are English abstracts for all articles and they are usefully laid out in a separate column on the first page. No *errata* are published. The citation style is outdated, with both footnotes and references, and is not consistently applied – there were cases in which articles used a different convention. Most articles are, however, thoroughly referenced.

The layout is excellent. The journal tends, however, to have editorials only on special issues. Book reviews are the only other enrichment feature. One aspect, that is useful to enhance accessibility, is that the journal is offered in African Journals Online whereby articles may be downloaded at a fee. The journal website needs to be updated to reflect the changes in the editorial team.

Capacity development and international comparability

Consensus review: While the journal is considered as having a fairly poor-to-average standard of scholarship, it has a role in providing a channel for young researchers and graduates to publish their work. The subject matter is rather apolitical for an African studies journal. The journal probably provides a good introduction to the field of African studies, as the articles are generally well-grounded in the literature, theoretically informed, and equipped with new analytical insights.

Suggested improvements

Consensus review: While the strength of this journal is that it allows inexperienced scholars to publish their work before growing confidence and ability allows them to publish in better journals, the journal should seek to publish the work of more mature scholars as well, in order to compete more strongly with international models. The journal needs a period of consolidation, in which it can build a more stable editorial team. More special issues, more features and a stronger 'editorial voice' also would help. The website should be updated to assist in these endeavours.

Business aspects

Synopsis of questionnaire: The publisher is the Africa Institute of South Africa. The print run is 1 000 copies per issue, with 1 150 subscribers. The journal is indexed in the IBSS system, and it is part of the pay-to-view e-publication service of Sabinet Online. There are no page charges. The annual expenditure is about R296 200. The Institute owns the copyright on published articles. The editor is in principle interested in an invitation to join the new SciELO-South Africa platform of free-online, high-quality, fully indexed South African journals.

Panel's consensus view:

- i. The journal should continue to be listed on the DHET list of accredited journals. (See Appendix C.)
- ii. The editor and publisher should be invited to consider joining the evolving SciELO-South Africa platform.
- iii. The editor and publisher should be encouraged to use the outcome of the present review in making application for indexing by WoS.
- iv. The editor should seriously consider making improvements, such as introducing a selection of core academic features and a competitive editorial board selection process.
- v. In addition, the Panel believes that the journal belongs to the category of promising journals, but attention needs to be paid to editorial issues and the scholarly profile needs to be improved.

APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE SENT TO THE EDITORS OF THE JOURNALS BEING PEER REVIEWED

Please type in a short answer, just after each question, and send us your consolidated response as an MS Word document.

(a) Editorial process-related criteria (generally based on the *National Code of Best Practice in Editorial Discretion and Peer Review for South African Scholarly Journals* developed by ASSAf):

- For how many years has your journal been published?
- Have there been significant interruptions in publication?
- How many peer-reviewed original papers have you published during the last three years:
 - Articles?
 - Letter-type articles?
 - Reviews?
- How many manuscripts (of all three types) were received in the same period?
- Approximately how many manuscripts of all three types were rejected without peer review?
- What proportion of papers of all three types that you published had at least one author with a non-South African address?
- How many peer reviewers are usually approached for EACH submitted manuscript?
- How many peer reviewers were used in total, in any ONE of the last three years?
- What proportion of these had non-South African addresses?
- Are peer review reports accessibly retained in your records?
- What is the average period between receipt of a manuscript and its publication
 - in print?
 - on the web?
- What is the publication frequency of your journal, per year?
- Are issues of your journals pre-scheduled to appear on given dates?
- If scheduled, do the issues in fact appear regularly on the scheduled dates?

- How long have you been editor/chief editor of this journal?
 - Were you appointed competitively (i.e. following advertisement and a selection process)?
 - For what period?
 - Do members of your editorial board
 - handle peer review of individual manuscripts?
 - advise on editorial policies/practices?
 - Are they appointed competitively (i.e. following advertisement and a selection process)?
 - for a given period?
 - from inside and outside the country?
 - to provide specific topical expertise?
 - Do you have published editorial/policy guidelines?
 - Is there a conflict-of-interest policy?
 - Have your editorial/policy guidelines been aligned with the ASSAf *National Code of Best Practice*?
 - Do you publish *errata* in all cases where these have become apparent?
 - Does your journal contain enrichment features such as
 - editorials?
 - "News and Views"?
 - topical reviews?
 - book reviews?
 - correspondence on published articles?
 - What is the percentage of pages in each issue that represents peer-reviewed original material?
- (b) Business-related criteria:**
- What is the regular print run of your journal?
 - Who is the publisher?
 - Is production and distribution outsourced?
 - Do you carry advertising which is
 - paid?
 - unpaid?
 - Do you receive financial sponsorship(s)?

- What is the number of paying subscribers?
- How many of the subscribers are organisations as opposed to individuals?
- If your journal appears online,
 - is it free online (open access)?
 - is it part of a commercial (pay-to-view and/or pay-to-subscribe) e-publication service?
 - is it part of a non-commercial e-publication mechanism (e.g. Medline)?
- What is your journal's (average) total income per annum?
- What is your journal's total expenditure per annum?
- Have you had offers to purchase from multi-national publishers?
- What are your copyright arrangements?

(c) Bibliometric assessments:

- Is your journal indexed in Thomson Reuters: Web of Science and/or the IBSS?
- Have Web of Science journal type impact factors (e.g. Google Scholar or Scopus) ever been determined for your journal?
- If articles are not in English, are 'front details' like titles, authors, addresses, and English abstracts mandatory?
- Has your journal ever been independently peer reviewed before?

(d) General:

- Would you (and your publisher) in principle be interested in being considered for inclusion in ASSAf's proposed SciELO-South Africa as a free-online, open-access journal (the project description recently was circulated to all editors) ?
- Have you any other information or comments that may be useful to the Panel?

APPENDIX B

REQUESTS TO INDEPENDENT PEER REVIEWERS:

1. Do the hard copies of the last 2-3 years of issues of the journal reflect:
 - 1.1 high national/international disciplinary reputations/standing of the editor-in-chief/ associate editors/members of the editorial board?
 - 1.2 a high/good (general/average) quality of the articles accepted/published?
 - 1.3 a (contextually) adequate/good number of articles per annum?
 - 1.4 an (adequate/good) sample of the best work done in the country in the discipline/field?
 - 1.5 a focus on local/regional kinds of materials/problems?
 - 1.6 publication of articles by authors from across the country, and internationally?
 - 1.7 useful additional scholarly features like editorials, topical reviews, book reviews, scholarly correspondence, etc?
 - 1.8 proper (English-language) abstracts for all articles?
 - 1.9 suitable publication of errata?
 - 1.10 good citation practice?
 - 1.10 good presentation, layout, style and copy-editing interventions?
 - 1.10 suitability as a general ongoing stimulus for local graduate students/young academics in the discipline concerned?
 - 1.11 some kind of comparability with leading international journals in the field?
2. Please list your suggestions for an improvement programme for the journal?

Appendix C – Social Sciences: Evaluation of journals according to DHET accreditation criteria and policy

No	Journal name	ISSN number	Frequency	Issues submitted	URL	Editor	Editorial policy	Editorial board beyond single institution	Peer review	Majority of contributions beyond single institution	Proof of library holdings	Publisher	Purpose of the journal (to disseminate research)	ASSAF comments
1	Tydskrif vir Geesteswetenskappe	0041-4751	Quarterly	* not requested	http://www.journals.co.za/ej/ejourakgees.html	Prof RC Gribe/ Prof Jacques van der Elst	Yes	Yes - national and international	Yes	Yes	Yes - 13	South African Academy for Science and Arts, 574 Zierovogel Str. Arcadia, 0007 Tel: 012 328 5082; Fax: 012 328 5091; E-mail: akademie@akademie.co.za	Yes, the articles are mostly original, challenging and well-written. About 40-50 articles appear per annum, spread over quarterly issues, with some thematic symposia. There is a focus on local content, but much of this is internationally 'connected', and not parochial.	1. The Tydskrif vir Geesteswetenskappe should be reconceptualised as an important humanities journal in South Africa, published in Afrikaans with abstracts and metadata in English; the possibility of an English online version combined with a printed Afrikaans version should be explored. 2. The journal should continue to be listed on the so-called DHET 'list' of accredited journals (over and above its entitlement to this, under policy as an WoS-indexed periodical). 3. The editor and publisher should be invited to consider joining the new ScELO South Africa free online collection. 4. In addition, the Panel believes that attention should be given to the recommendations for improvement suggested by the reviewers. 5. This journal and the above review should be taken into account in the forthcoming Grouped Peer Review of the South African Journals in the Humanities.
2	South African Review of Sociology	2152-8586 (print) 2072-1978 (online)	Biannually (from 2010 three times a year)	* not requested	http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/rssr	Editorial collective: Prof Peter Alexander; Dr Shireen Ally; Dr Marcelle Dawson, Dr Bridget Kenny	Yes	Yes - all national	Yes	Yes	Yes - 11	New publishing arrangements with Routledge and UNISA Press, Taylor & Francis IIR Training House, Ground Floor, 3 Sturdee Avenue, Rosebank, 2196, Johannesburg, South Africa. Unisa Press, Unisa PO Box 392, UNISA, 0003 Tel +27 12 429 3081. Fax +27 12 429 3449	Yes, the journal does not appear to attract the best sociological research conducted by local or foreign-based sociologists. Most of the (few - 15-20 per annum, in two issues) articles are nevertheless of good quality, and would probably match that of articles published in leading sociological journals in Europe and the USA. The quality of the articles is more or less the same as those appearing in the best social science journals in the country. Most articles are written by academics based in South African universities.	1. The journal should continue to be listed on the so-called DHET 'list' of accredited journals. 2. The publisher/editor should be invited to consider joining the evolving ScELO South Africa platform, despite the involvement of a commercial multi-national publisher. 3. The editor and publishers should be encouraged to use the outcome of the present review in making application for indexing by WoS. 4. The editor should seriously consider the recommendations for improvement of the journal made by the reviewers above. 5. In addition, the Panel believes that the South African Review of Sociology should be strengthened and expanded, with wider coverage of all areas of the discipline and related areas, and enhanced international involvement in authorship and peer review. Enrichment through inclusion of scholarly features such as book reviews, correspondence, and debates would also enable it to become a flagship sociology journal in South Africa.

Appendix C – Social Sciences: Evaluation of journals according to DHET accreditation criteria and policy

No	Journal name	ISSN number	Frequency	Issues submitted	URL	Editor	Editorial policy	Editorial board beyond single institution	Peer review	Majority of contributions beyond single institution	Proof of library holdings	Publisher	Purpose of the journal (to disseminate research)	ASSAI comments
3	Social Dynamics: A Journal of the Centre for African Studies	0253-3952 (print) 1940-7874 (online)	Biannually	* not requested	http://www.informaworld.com/smppl/title-db=all-content=1791476125-tab=summary	Dr Susan Levine and Dr Meg Samuelson	Yes	Yes - Editorial Board and International Advisory Board	Yes	Yes - but editors are frequent contributors to the journal while they are still editors; there are no clear and transparent arrangements for transfer of the editorial discretion to an independent party in such cases.	Yes - 7	Taylor & Francis-Routledge Publishers and Centre African Studies, University of Cape Town, Private Bag, Rondebosch, 7701	Yes, it considers itself to be 'a forum for interdisciplinary work relevant to the study of Africa'. As such, it contains some of the best work done in certain fields of African studies, but not in others: the journal currently has a relatively high proportion of literary articles. Other contributors vary over a very wide range of disciplines: politics, psychology, philosophy, fine art, sociology, humanities, etc. Despite the wide range, the articles tend to be 'secondary' - i.e. based on readings, rather than being empirical and based on primary research or field work. There is regrettably a complete absence of economic-development coverage, and the journal contains no articles that provide any insight into the economic problems and challenges facing Africa as well as the reasons for these challenges. It also lacks incisive analysis on political problems in Africa, in spite of the fact that poverty and hunger are widespread in Africa and the continent has a poor track record in democracy.	1. The journal should continue to be listed on the so-called DHET 'list' of accredited journals (over and above its entitlement to this, under policy as an WoS-indexed peer-odical) 2. The publisher/editor should be invited to consider joining the evolving ScELO South Africa platform, even though the journal is owned by a multinational publishing company. 3. The editor should seriously consider the recommendations for improvement of the journal made by the reviewers. 4. In addition, the Panel believes that Social Dynamics could narrow its field of interest and increase its rate of publishing good peer-reviewed articles. The journal should have discussions with the other two journals in the social science field to look at the feasibility of having a single, national flagship journal in sociology. The journal should make the process of appointing editors and editorial board members competitive and transparent.

Appendix C – Social Sciences: Evaluation of journals according to DHET accreditation criteria and policy

No	Journal name	ISSN number	Frequency	Issues submitted	URL	Editor	Editorial policy	Editorial board beyond single institution	Peer review	Majority of contributions beyond single institution	Proof of library holdings	Publisher	Purpose of the journal (to disseminate research)	ASSAF comments
4	African Sociological Review	1027-4332	Biannually	* not requested	http://ajol.info/index.php/asr/index	Prof Olajide Oloyede	Yes	Yes - national and international	Yes	Yes	Yes - 8	CODESRIA, Faculty of Humanities, Rhodes University, P.O. Box 94, Grahamstown, 6140, E-mail: f.hendricks@ru.ac.za	Yes in recent issues there has been a surprising emphasis on economics and trade in post-apartheid Africa, but the content otherwise deals (in declining order) with 'state of the discipline' issues, culture/language, organisational/occupational and labour matters, and globalisation. The types of articles represented vary from those reporting empirical data mainly of a qualitative nature (68%), secondary historical matters also largely qualitative, original quantitative data analyses, and secondary data examined in quantitative terms. Also surprisingly, the social science of HIV/AIDS is hardly included.	1. The journal should continue to be listed on the DHET accreditation 'list'. 2. The publisher/editor should be invited to consider joining the evolving SciELO South Africa platform (required discussion with CODESRIA). 3. The editor and publishers should be encouraged to use the outcome of the present review in making application for indexing by WoS. 4. The editor should seriously consider the recommendations for improvement of the journal made by the reviewers. 5. In addition, the Panel believes the journal should use its editorial board to help it build on its already established but very small African/continental base to achieve greater significance and international positioning in its field, including indexing in both WoS and IBSS.
5	South African Journal of Psychology	0081-2463	Quarterly	* not requested	http://www.journals.co.za/ej/ejour_sapsyc.html	Prof Kobus Maree and Anthony Pillay	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes - 13	PsySSA, P.O. Box 989, Houghton, 2041	Yes. Articles represent a good sample of the best work done in the country in the discipline and its sub-disciplines, but not necessarily the best work. Articles range from methodological issues in research, to philosophical issues related to the discipline of psychology, to issues of psychological measurement and psychological assessment, to issues related to behavioural and clinical treatment and services issues. The range of topics is in fact very wide: this is counter to some extent by the use of special editions on specific topics. The content includes political and social commentary on race, gender, and politics. It is, however, less representative of applied research that is nationally based, or which is policy-driven.	1. The journal should continue to be listed on the so-called DHET 'list' of accredited journals (over and above its entitlement to this, under policy as an WoS-indexed periodical). 2. The publisher/editor should be invited to consider joining the evolving SciELO South Africa platform. 3. The editor should seriously consider the recommendations for improvement of the journal made by the reviewers. 4. In addition, the Panel believes that the SAJ of Psychology can increase the number of papers it attracts and publishes, from both local and international sources, and become much more of an 'obligatory read' for students, practitioners, and policy-makers through a deliberate plan to increase enrichment features.

Appendix C – Social Sciences: Evaluation of journals according to DHET accreditation criteria and policy

No	Journal name	ISSN number	Frequency	Issues submitted	URL	Editor	Editorial policy	Editorial board beyond single institution	Peer review	Majority of contributions beyond single institution	Proof of library holdings	Publisher	Purpose of the journal (to disseminate research)	ASSAF comments
6	PINS: Psychology in Society	1015-6046	Semi-annually	* not requested	http://www.pins.org.za/	Prof Graham Hayes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes - 10	PINS, Box 17285, Congella, 4013	Yes, there is a marked focus on meta-issues and on critical investigation, and most papers are either qualitative or theoretical. The journal gives a good sense of what is going on in this niche field.	1. The journal should continue to be listed on the so-called DHET 'list' of accredited journals. 2. The publisher/editor should be invited to consider joining the evolving ScELO South Africa platform. 3. The editor should seriously consider the recommendations for improvement of the journal made by the reviewers. 4. In addition, the Panel believes that the journal should consider 'joining' the main national Journal of Psychology in order to exert more influence on the discipline than it can from its present 'niche' positioning. This would be healthy, taking into account the fact that its articles published are intellectually stimulating and of good quality, with a focus on meta issues. Amalgamation would also mean there would also be many more articles. The impact of critical material on students and young staff would also be enhanced. The international impact of the journal's content, would be greater if it were part of the mainstream.
7	South African Journal of Industrial Psychology	0258-5200 (print) 2071-0763 (online)	Triannual plus infrequent 4th special issue; now a rolling publication	* not requested	http://www.sajip.co.za/index.php/sajip	Prof Gert Roodt	Yes	Yes - National Advisory Board is national and international	Yes	Yes	Yes - 9	AOSS (Pty) Ltd, Postnet Suite 55, Private Bag X22, Tygervalley, 7563; Tel: 021 9754684; Fax: 021 9753448; email: info@openjournals.net; www.openjournals.net	Yes, the articles are representative of the latest developments in the field, as a very specific area of psychology. The journal does tend to represent a sample of the best work done in the country in the discipline, particularly as it relates to research within South African academic departments. The articles do start towards work based on text administration, and the use of questionnaires to collect data.	1. The journal should continue to be listed on the so-called DHET 'list' of accredited journals. 2. The publisher/editor should be invited to consider joining the evolving ScELO South Africa platform. 3. The editor and publishers should be encouraged to use the outcome of the present review in making application for indexing by WoS. 4. The editor should seriously consider the recommendations for improvement of the journal made by the reviewers. 5. In addition, the Panel believes that the editor and editorial board should be appointed competitively. In addition, the journal should endeavour to reach a wider audience, and increase the number of articles published. It should also consider actively promoting the submission of articles by international authors. The journal could be enhanced by the publication of theoretical and analytical content, and should provide 'enrichment' features of various kinds to enhance its usefulness.

Appendix C – Social Sciences: Evaluation of journals according to DHET accreditation criteria and policy

No	Journal name	ISSN number	Frequency	Issues submitted	URL	Editor	Editorial policy	Editorial board beyond single institution	Peer review	Majority of contributions beyond single institution	Proof of library holdings	Publisher	Purpose of the journal (to disseminate research)	ASSAI comments
8	Social Work: A Professional Journal for the Social Worker	0037-8054	Quarterly	* not requested	http://sun025.sun.ac.za/portal/page/portal/Arts/Departments/social_work/journals/tab4	Prof Sulina Green	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes, but it is important to note that editors (including deputy, sub and managing editors) should generally not be permitted to publish in their own journals unless very clear and transparent arrangements exist for transfer of the editorial discretion to an independent party.	Yes - 8	Department of Social Work, University of Stellenbosch, PO Box 223, Stellenbosch, 7599, Tel: 021 8082070/2069, Fax: 021 8083765	Yes, slightly more than half the articles in any given volume have empirical data; the others are policy or opinion pieces, and very occasionally there is a special contribution (book reviews, essays or memorial lecture). The papers represent a mix of policy, opinion, literature reviews, research implementing qualitative methods (focus groups and surveys were common), and only a few implementing quantitative methods with experimental designs. There are almost no national-level studies, and very few have an international flavour or comparison. This journal does appear to be relevant for student publication.	1. The journal should be listed on the so-called DHET 'list' of accredited journals. 2. The publisher/editor should be invited to consider joining the evolving SciELO South Africa platform. 3. The editor and publishers should be encouraged to use the outcome of the present review in making application for indexing by WoS. 4. The editor should seriously consider the recommendations for improvement of the journal made by the reviewers. 5. In addition, the Panel believes that the journal is very important in South Africa's socio-economic development context, and needs to become a major voice in this field and all its applications in society.
9	SAHARA Journal of Social Aspects of HIV/AIDS Research Alliance	1729-0376	Quarterly	*not requested	http://www.sahara.org.za/index.php/Journal/SAHARA-J.html	Prof Karl Peltzer	Yes	Yes - national and international	Yes	Yes	Yes - 4	SA Medical Assoc Health & Medical Publ Group, 21 Dreyer St, 4th Floor, Sandclare Bldg, Claremont, 7700; HMPG, email: robert@capemedia.co.za	Yes, articles are generally good, based on sound empirical research. Articles follow the medical model, with a clear explanation of the methodology employed, the results, and discussion of the main evidence. They generally form part of the burgeoning literature on HIV/AIDS prevention and prevalence. The research reported may thus enable generic methodologies to be developed and replicated in different country cases, but the lack of comparative work limits the ability to develop theoretical and conceptual frameworks in the field. The focus is appropriate, however, and very topical, providing multi-faceted perspectives on HIV/AIDS prevention programmes in a range of country contexts. This literature is not theoretically rich, however, but an evidence base is building up and the journal articles of this journal contribute to the growth of the field.	1. The journal should continue to be listed on the so-called DHET 'list' of accredited journals (over and above its entitlement to this, under policy as WoS - indexed periodical). 2. The publisher/editor should be invited to consider joining the evolving SciELO South Africa platform. 3. The editor should seriously consider the recommendations for improvement of the journal made by the reviewers. 4. In addition, the Panel believes that the journal should include formal, position-taking editorials, and generally become a dominant scholarly resource and forum in its extensive field.

Appendix C – Social Sciences: Evaluation of journals according to DHET accreditation criteria and policy

No	Journal name	ISSN number	Frequency	Issues submitted	URL	Editor	Editorial policy	Editorial board beyond single institution	Peer review	Majority of contributions beyond single institution	Proof of library holdings	Publisher	Purpose of the journal (to disseminate research)	ASSAF comments
10	Commonwealth Youth and Development	1727-7149	Biannually	* not requested	http://www.unisa.ac.za/Default.asp?Cmd=ViewContent&ContentID=20115	Prof Linda Cornwell	No, only editorial guide-lines	No - all drawn from UNISA Advisory Board - international	Yes	Yes	Yes - 2	UNISA Press, UNISA PO Box 392, UNISA, 0003	No, articles are descriptive reflections on youth teaching and training programmes, reflecting on various measures to assess efficacy, such as interventions with course participants or completion statistics. The commissioned papers in particular reflect on approaches and frameworks to youth development, and recommend future principles, improvements or changes to guide good practice. The articles cover a range of settings, but the empirical focus of each convention is localised to a single setting.	1. The journal should NOT be listed on the so-called DHET 'list' of accredited journals. 2. The publisher/editor should NOT be invited to consider joining the evolving SciELO South Africa platform. 3. The editor should seriously consider the recommendations for improvement of the journal made by the reviewers above. 4. In addition, the Panel believes that the journal should consider approaching some of the mainstream South/Southern African sociological journals with a view to discuss forms of cooperation that would help address the problems identified by the reviewers and the Panel.
11	African Journal on Conflict Resolution	1562-6997	Biannually	* not requested	http://www.accord.org.za/publications/a/cr.html	Mr Yasu Gounden (Editor) and Prof Jannie Malan (Managing Editor)	Yes	Yes - national and international	Yes	Yes	Yes - 6	African Centre for the Constructive Disputes (ACCORD): AC-CORD House, 2 Golf Course Drive, Mount Edgecombe: Tel: 031 5023908; Fax: 031 5024160	No, the style of the contributions is comparable to international relations material; analogous to sophisticated journalism in that most of the contributions do not report on primary research, but rely on secondary material and recent policy documents to debate issues in the field. The focus is more on policy issues than on theoretical understandings of phenomena. The articles are, however, well written in this sense, despite the fact that the substance of the contributions remains quite thin in most cases. The journal aims to contribute to intellectual development of the field of conflict management on the African continent, and it appears only partially to succeed in this ambition.	1. The journal should NOT be accredited by the DHET until it has substantially improved its scholarly standing. 2. The journal should also NOT yet be invited to join the SciELO-SA platform. 3. The editor and publisher should implement the suggestions for improvement made by the peer reviewers, especially those that relate to increasing the scholarly content of articles, enriching the content with significant features such as book reviews and correspondence, etc., and increasing the number of peer-reviewed articles. The editorial mechanism should be strengthened.

* Reviewers reviewed the last three copies of a journal available at the time of reviewing, either via print or electronic

Appendix C – Social Sciences: Evaluation of journals according to DHET accreditation criteria and policy

No	Journal name	ISSN number	Frequency	Issues submitted	URL	Editor	Editorial policy	Editorial board beyond single institution	Peer review	Majority of contributions beyond single institution	Proof of library holdings	Publisher	Purpose of the journal (to disseminate research)	ASSAf comments
12	Africa Insight	0256-2804	Quarterly	* not requested	http://ajol.info/index.php/ai	Mr Solani Ngobeni, Managing Editor	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes - 11	Africa Institute of South Africa, PO Box 630, Pretoria 0001, South Africa; Tel: 012 3286970 / 012 304 9700; Fax: 012 323 8153; email: ai@ai.org.za	Yes, the articles published in this journal have a strong focus on policy issues, without tackling the important debates that take place in depth in journals published outside South Africa. As a result, the articles have a strongly parochial nature, focussing on narrow questions that do not resonate with a broader literature. The subject matter of articles is very diverse. Some studies entail primary research, but just as many are debate pieces that draw on secondary material for their evidence. The special issues that focus on specific topics such as sport or youth generally contain articles of greater research and academic depth; the articles in these issues are also better organised thematically, it does provide an excellent place for young staff and graduates to publish their work. The subject matter is rather apolitical for an African Studies journal. The study probably provides a good introduction to the field of African study.	1. The journal should continue to be listed on the so-called DHET 'list' of accredited journals. 2. The publisher/editor should be invited to consider joining the evolving SciELO South Africa platform. 3. The editor and publishers should be encouraged to use the outcome of the present review in making application for indexing by WoS. 4. The editor should seriously consider making improvements, such as a selection of core academic features, and also introduce competitive editorial board selection processes. 5. In addition, the Panel believes that the journal belongs to the category of promising journals, but attention needs to be paid to editorial issues and the scholarly profile needs to be improved.

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A. Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf) Publications

A. ASSAf Consensus Study Reports

2010

Report on Peer Review of Scholarly Journals in the Social Sciences and Related Fields

Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf)

Academy of Science of South Africa

Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf), (2010). Report on Peer Review of Scholarly Journals in the Social Sciences and Related Fields. [Online] Available at: DOI <http://dx.doi.org/10.17159/assaf/0032>
<http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.11911/72>

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