

# 2014

## Introducing Journals



**Harper Adams**  
University



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### WHAT IS A JOURNAL?

Journals are published regularly in the same way that magazines are. They may appear weekly, monthly, quarterly or at any other interval the publisher chooses.

They contain a number of articles, written by different people which are all related to the title of the journal. Typical journal titles are the British Journal of Nutrition, Dairy Farmer, Accounting and Business Research, and the Veterinary Journal.

### WHY USE A JOURNAL?

- as they are published so regularly they contain more up-to-date information than books
- most research is published in journals, so this is useful for your academic study
- they contain information often on very specific topics
- your assignment brief may tell you to use academic journals

### DO YOU NEED A BOOK OR A JOURNAL OR THE INTERNET?

If you are looking for an introduction to a subject or general information a book is the best place to look. They are also more likely to contain historical information than a journal.

If it is a specialist subject area or you need research on a topic the best source is likely to be journals

If you need statistics or a report by an organization it is worth searching the Internet.

### TYPES OF JOURNAL

There are two types of journal – academic and professional or trade. It is important that you understand the difference.

#### ACADEMIC JOURNALS – PEER-REVIEWED JOURNALS

Academic journals are written for scholars and professionals in the field. They assume a level of subject knowledge and usually contain reports of research. They are one of the major ways that academics have of making their research work public.

It is easy to spot an academic journal:

- they usually have fewer, longer articles than professional journals
- articles usually begin with an abstract or summary of the article

- articles usually contain references at the end showing the books and journals the authors have used in their work
- they rarely contain photographs or advertisements

Academic journals are particularly useful for your assignments because they usually contain facts and research which are backed up by evidence. They normally tell you the writer's qualifications and where they work so you can check that they are experts.

Sometimes you may be asked to use **peer-reviewed journals**. Many academic journals are peer-reviewed. This means that before an article is published it is read by another independent academic or expert who makes suggestions to improve the quality of the article. It is then revised by the original author before being published. This helps ensure the high quality of research appearing in a journal.

#### PROFESSIONAL OR TRADE JOURNALS

Professional or trade journals are written for the general public and/or the general worker in the field. It may also be called a popular journal.

It is easy to spot a professional or trade journal:

- they look more like magazines and usually consist of shorter articles than academic journals
- they are often printed on glossy paper.
- they contain photographs and advertisements.
- they are often published very frequently – weekly or fortnightly.

They are useful because they are easier to read than academic journals and often provide practical information. They can cover current events and very new developments.

However, you need to be careful with popular journals however as they:

- ✗ are often written by journalists, who are not necessarily experts in the field
- ✗ rarely include author details – making it difficult to know if they are experts
- ✗ rarely provide references so you cannot tell how reliable the information is
- ✗ may contain opinions rather than facts, or present information that is not supported by evidence
- ✗ are aimed at the general reader – and may therefore not be detailed enough for academic research

### MORE ABOUT JOURNALS – UNDERSTANDING THE VOCABULARY

You may also see the words **serial** or **periodical**. These words are sometimes used instead of a journal.

If you see the details of a particular article it may be in the format:

Manning, L. and Soon, J.M. 2013. GAP framework for fresh produce supply. British Food Journal, Vol.115 (6), pp.796-820.

In this case the article was published in 2013; it is called GAP framework for fresh produce supply and it was published in the journal called British Food Journal.

Vol. in the example above is short for **volume**. Publishers often choose to group the different issues of a journal into volumes. Typically a volume may last for a year. So if a new journal starts publishing in May 2010 all the issues of the journal will be part of volume 1 until May 2011 when volume 2 issue 1 will be published.

If the journal is published every month there will be 12 issues in the volume and issue 4 is the one published in April. In the example above the issue number is (6) Using the volume and issue number system usually makes it easier to find a particular issue of a journal

### FINDING JOURNALS

If you already have the details of a particular article you just need to find out if we subscribe to it.

We have some print journals upstairs in the library but there are far more available to you electronically.

You can find both types if you search **Find it @ Harper** on the library home page

You can type in a journal title to see if you have access, or some key words to find articles on a specific topic.

You can find more information on searching **Find it @ Harper** in the [Finding information](#) section of the library website.