

The CERES (and EADI) system of valuation of research output

Some of the disciplines within our multi-disciplinary research school have a long standing internal valuation culture already, in others it has been almost impossible to come to an agreement about the valuation of publications, and of scientific output in general. After long and arduous discussions, and intensive consultations with CERES staff, the CERES Board has agreed to accept an integrated system of publications rating, and output valuation. It did so in June 2003. In 2006 the European Association of Development Institutes, EADI, has accepted the CERES rating system of scientific journals as a basis for its own performance valuation work at the European level.

The decision making about the rating of journals and publishers is an annual exercise, under the final authority of the Board of CERES, but based on proposals developed by the Publications Accreditation Committee, PAC. The governance arrangements of this committee are dealt with at the end of this document.

CERES has developed a **balanced system of research time valuation**, that fits the broad social science cultures in which CERES members participate.

- CERES uses seven major categories of publication rating: for books and journals A-E, for successful PhD graduations P, and for reports R. In addition some other activities can also be taken into account.
- To be in line with 'accepted practice' in the natural sciences, in psychology and economics, the ISI journal rating has been taken as a point of departure. For journals this gives the A and B categories. (for ISI = Institute of Scientific Information, see <http://isiknowledge.com>; for the current list we used the ISI-2004 citation index data, early 2007 a new (annual) update will be posted, based on ISI-2006).
- CERES uses eight major scientific 'domains', covering all social sciences. All relevant ISI journals in each of these domains are ranked and above a cut-off point of 33% in each domain the journals are ranked A; the other 66% are B. Some journals in medical, natural, technical and arts sciences are added as well, if they are relevant for social scientists as publication outlets.
The domains are:
 1. anthropology and ethnic studies (and arts)
 2. area studies, planning and development
 3. economics and management
 4. geography, demography, environmental and urban studies (and natural and technical sciences)
 5. political science, international relations, (international) law, public administration, history
 6. sociology, social issues, (social) psychology, gender studies
 7. psychology and health system studies (and medical sciences)
 8. education and communication research
- All other refereed journals, which are not (yet) ISI rated get a C.
- All non-refereed journals for mainly academic readers get D, all others E.
- For publishers no ISI system exists. CERES has developed its own rating system: for publishers who use a referee system ABC, further differentiated according to scientific status. Publishers, who do not use a referee system: D for mainly academic readers, E for mainly others.
- A further differentiation is made in books: monographs (three classes based on number of pages), edited volumes and book chapters; also for reports three classes based on the number of pages have been differentiated.
- It matters if publications were published alone ('single authors') or by more than one author ('multiple authors').
- Each type of publications within the rating system gets CERES credits: from 18 credits for a single author A-level monograph to 0,3 credits for a small multi-authored report. One CERES credit is the equivalent of what can be expected as output of 100 working hours.
- In addition the CERES Board has added other categories of activities for which 'CERES credits' can be 'earned':
 - for book reviews in A, B or C journals: 0.3 credits;
 - for other book reviews (in D journals): 0.1 credits
 - for scientific film and video productions (with professional distributors): 5 credits
 - for working papers (often published by own organisations): 0.3 credits
 - acquired NWO, KNAW or EU funds for a research programme: 1.5 credits

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- Membership of KNAW, NWO organisation (e.g. WOTRO or MAGW Board or programme committee): 1 credit
- CERES PhD course co-ordination: 0.3 credits
- contribution to CERES PhD training: 0.1 credits per 10 hours
- CERES summer school organisation: 0.5 credits
- Main editor of A, B, C Journal or Book Series: 1.0 credit;
- Member of an editorial board of an ISI-rated journal or of a book series published by an A- or B-rated publisher: 0.5 credits; same other journal or book series (C, D, E): 0.3 credits
- CERES organisation: Director and Adjunct-Director (0.4 fte) 6 credits; Board Chair 0.5 credits; member of CERES Board 0.2 credits; member of directorate (0.2 fte) 3 credits; working programme convenor 1 credit; working programme chair 0.2 credits; member of a WP management team 0.2 credits.

Some activities are still valued as pm activities: conference papers (if not published in proceedings), conference visits, newspaper articles, television or radio performances, non-refereed internet contributions, and products of virtual collective writing.

So we get:

- I refereed journal articles and book publications:
 - A: journal articles with an ISI rating and a relatively high citation index; and refereed book publications published by the world top of publishers
 - B: other journal articles with an ISI rating and refereed book publications published by the world's semi-top of publishers
 - C: other refereed journal articles, and refereed book publishers published by other publishers
- II non-refereed journal articles and book publications
 - D: published for an academic public
 - E: mainly published for a non-academic public
- III P: successful dissertation projects, for which the supervisor(s) get credits
- IV R: reports for external parties (often on a consultancy basis)
- V O: other activities.

The valuation of this output differentiates between journal articles, edited book volumes, books (differentiated between >300 pp, 100-300 pp and <100 pp), and book chapters, and it also differentiates between single-author contributions (S) and multi-author contributions (M). For successfully supervised PhD dissertations a differentiation is made between single supervision, and supervision with more than one supervisor. For reports a differentiation is made between >100 pp, 25-100 pp and <25 pp, and also between single and multiple authors.

Summary of the CERES valuation structure

CERES credits

Category	A		B		C		D		E	
single or multiple authors	S	M	S	M	S	M	S	M	S	M
Journal articles	5	4	4	3	3	2	2	1	1	0.7
Edited book volumes	7	5	6	4	4	2	2	1	1.5	1
Books >300 pp.	18	13	15	11	12	9	8	6	4	3
Books 100-300 pp.	15	10	12	8	9	6	6	4	3	2
Books <100 pp.	12	7	9	5	6	3	4	2	2	1
Book chapters	4	3	3	2	2	1	1	0.7	0.7	0.5

Successfully supervised PhD theses, number of supervisors

P	4	2	2	3 lead	3 other and 4	1
Reports (Single or Multiple authors)	>100 pp.		25-100 pp.		<25 pp.	
R	3		M	S	M	S
O (other activities)	3		2	2	1	0.5
						0.3
	see detailed overview, given before.					

Evaluation and monitoring of research output and performance of CERES members.

The valuation system is based on a minimum annual *input* norm of 300 hours of research time per CERES member.¹ 100 hours are counted as 1 CERES productivity unit, and minimal annual input per member is, therefore, equal to 3 CERES units. Over a period of 5 years – the standard CERES reference period – a CERES member is expected to put in the equivalent of at least 15 CERES units into his/her research.

For the average CERES member, the minimum *output* in terms of research is set at 5 articles in refereed scholarly journals over a period of 5 years, or, on average, 1 article per year. Articles in refereed journals are used as benchmark (CERES category C) and earn 3 units each (on the basis of single authorship). Recognising that there is a wide variety of journals, a classification of journal articles has been developed which leads to the allocation of more units per article for articles published in journals recognised by the *ISI Web of Knowledge* (see <http://www.isinet.com>), and of fewer units for articles published in non-refereed or popularising journals.²

It has proved much more difficult to devise a mechanism to evaluate research output in book form, due to the much lower degree of transparency regarding the procedures of academic publishers in comparison to academic journals, and the absence of a mechanism that is equivalent to the *ISI Web of Knowledge*. For this reason, publishers that apply a referee system have been chosen as the benchmark (category C). These are typically university presses and well-known academic publishers. More credits are allocated to publications with a limited set of top academic publishers and other leading academic publishers. Fewer credits are allocated to publications with publishers who do not use a referee system, as well as popularising books for a general (i.e., non-scholarly) audience. The Publications Accreditation Committee has been created to advise on, among other things, the ranking of publishers.

As an incentive for CERES members to choose highly ranked journals and publishers for their publications, a 'quality' norm has been added to the quantity-oriented norm of 15 units per 1 research fte over a five-year period. The evaluation system requires from CERES members that they earn at least two-thirds (or 10 units per 1 research fte) from a combination of successful PhD supervisions – category P – and from publications that are ranked in category C or higher.

Recognising that CERES members perform research-related activities that do not necessarily lead to publications, the evaluation system also awards units for a variety of accomplishments.³

- reports for external agencies;
- succesful supervision of PhD projects (for all supervisors in a team);
- acquisition of research programmes and projects;
- teaching as part of the CERES PhD training programme, organisation of CERES summer schools, etc.;
- contributions to the CERES research organisation;
- editorial work for journal boards and book series.

¹ This norm is based on the assumption that the average working year per full time equivalent amounts to 1,500 hours, and that the minimum share of research time is around 0.2 fte.

² The exact number of units allocated for journal publications is organised by domains: currently: 1. anthropology and ethnic studies; 2. area studies, planning and development; 3. economics and management; 4. geography, demography, environmental and urban studies; 5. social issues, social sciences interdisciplinary, sociology, and women's studies; 6. political science, international relations, international law, public administration and history; 7. (social) psychology and health system studies; 8 education research. Within each domain, a division is made between A and B category journals on the basis of the impact score that is listed by the *ISI Web of Knowledge*; the 33rd percentile is used as the cut-off point between category A and B. In addition there are C, D and E level journals, not included in the *ISI Web of Knowledge*.

³ These are counted as part of the total academic output but not as part of the 'quality' units, which comprise high-quality publications only, with one exception: units acquired for successful PhD supervision are included in the 'quality' units.

The governance of the CERES/EADI evaluation system: the Publications Accreditation Committee.

With the introduction of the new valuation system in 2003 also a Publications Accreditation Committee (PAC) was created to advise on the ranking of publishers and of journals that are not part of the *ISI Web of Knowledge*. The PAC advises on the yearly updating of the evaluation system regarding, in particular, the inclusion of journals and publishers.

The PAC has been appointed by the CERES Board and consists of CERES and non-CERES members who are widely seen as experts in specific areas of the work of CERES and who hold a high reputation among peers.

CERES publication rating is a dynamic process, with annual evaluation and updating procedures, communicated via the CERES website, and it is linked with intensive internal and external reassessments. As mentioned before, the publication rating system developed by CERES is also used by our EADI colleagues in Europe, and included in the EADI website as well.

In 2007 the CERES research valuation system will be evaluated in cooperation with EADI and invited scholars from other research schools in the Netherlands.

Decisions about the valuation system as such, and about the rating of journals and publishers are made by the CERES Board, composed of representatives of Utrecht University, the University of Amsterdam, Wageningen University and Research Centre, the Free University in Amsterdam, the Radboud University in Nijmegen, the Institute of Social Studies, two representatives of CERES PhD candidates, and a board member representing the practitioners community in the field of international development studies, currently the President of the Royal Tropical Institute in Amsterdam (and also chair of the Development Policy Review Network, DPRN, see www.dprn.nl).

The CERES Board decides annually (in June) on the basis of an update prepared by the Publications Accreditation Committee, which represents invited senior members from among the CERES community, representatives from the EADI committee for journal assessments, and invited representatives of all other relevant research schools in the Netherlands. The CERES office prepares the work of the PAC, and coordinates all communication. Every year an updated list of rated journals and publishers is posted on the CERES website. It is the intention to organise a major evaluation of the system during the 2007 round.

The following people have been members of the PAC in 2003-2006:

a) From among the CERES community of senior scholars:

Dr Alberto Arce (Sociologist, Wageningen University); Prof. dr Michiel Baud (Historian, Centre for Latin American Studies and Documentation, Amsterdam); Prof. dr Ton Dietz (CERES scientific director, and University of Amsterdam), Prof. Dr André Droogers (Anthropologist, Free University Amsterdam); Dr Dick Foeken (Human Geographer, African Studies Centre Leiden); Prof.dr Bert Helmsing (Economist, Institute of Social Studies, The Hague); Dr Paul Hoebink (Political Scientist, Radboud University Nijmegen); Dr Wil Hout (Political Scientist, Institute of Social Studies The Hague, PAC chair); Prof. dr Frans Hüsken (Anthropologist, Radboud University Nijmegen); Prof. dr Hans Knippenberg (Political Geographer, University of Amsterdam); Prof. dr Peter Leisink (Management and Policy Studies, Utrecht University); Prof. dr Ton Robben (Anthropologist, Utrecht University); Prof.dr Richard Robison (Political Economist, Institute of Social Studies, The Hague); Dr Max Spoor (Economist, Institute of Social Studies, The Hague); Prof. dr Christine Sylvester (Gender Studies, Institute of Social Studies, The Hague); Drs Lolita van Toledo (Policy Advisor CERES (PAC secretary); Dr. Tandam Truong (Sociologist, Institute of Social Studies); Prof. dr Linden Vincent (Water and Irrigation Studies, Wageningen University).

b) EADI is represented by Prof. dr Filip Reijntjens (Political scientist/Africanist IOB University of Antwerp, chair of EADI journal ranking committee).

c) From among other research schools in the Netherlands

Prof. dr Jan Willem Gunning (Economist, Free University Amsterdam, Tinbergen Research School); Prof.dr Tom de Jong (Education specialist, Twente University, ICO Research School),); Prof. dr Arie Kuyvenhoven (Economist, Wageningen University, Mansholt Research School); Prof.dr. Denise de Ridder (Psychologist, Utrecht University, Psychology and Health Research School) and Prof.dr. Just

Vlak (Production ecologist, Wageningen University, Research School Production Ecology and Resource Conservation). Contributions also came from among researchers in the Amsterdam School for Social Science Research ASSR, the Interuniversity Centre for Social Science Theory and Methodology ICS, the Netherlands Urban and Regional Studies Research School NETHUR, the Centre for Asian, African and Amerindian Studies CNWS in Leiden, the SENSE Research School for Socio-Economic and Natural Sciences of the Environment, the Research School for Policy Research NOB, the Research School for Human Rights, and the Research School of Communications Research NESCoR. They will all be invited to participate in the evaluation of the system in June 2007.