## Research Publications: Keywords

## Increasing the Discoverability and Visibility of Research

Thinking strategically about the **keywords** submitted with a journal article can significantly enhance the **discoverability** and **visibility** of your research – leading to greater **readership**, **recognition** and **impact**.

Keywords are becoming increasingly important:

- **Discoverability**: Researchers search for publications using keywords in search engines as the prime way to identify relevant literature. Effective keywords optimise this potential readership.
- **Visibility**: Keywords enable the dynamic identification of research within an increasingly interdisciplinary and fast-paced research culture. Accurate keywords enhance how a publication is identified, grouped, recommended and classified.
- **Publishing**: Publication models are evolving. Keywords optimise discoverability as journals, and journal subject classifications broaden into more diverse outputs and routes.
- **Reputation**: Institutional rankings now incorporate keyword searches to identify research in new & developing fields, and keyword analysis enables institutions to identify unique research strengths.

Keywords are also a way of indicating if your publication is related to a **Research Theme**, the **UN Sustainable Development Goals**, or is in a **new emergent field**.

Most journals enable authors to submit a number (usually 4-8) of keywords with their articles (in addition to the title & abstract). Utilising these keywords is strongly recommended.

Keywords should:

- Accurately convey the **key concepts** and compliment the main topic of your research.
- **Balance** the specificity of the research topic with more general terms used in the subject literature; this will open your work to a more diverse readership.
- **Phrases** of 2-3 words (eg: 'circular economy'; 'sustainable tourism policy') are often more effective than single-words, which can be too equivocal.
- Use **variants** of the terms or phrases used in the title. Rather than duplicate words already in the title, keywords are an opportunity to use alternative terms which your readers might use.
- Keywords should be selected with **discoverability** and **visibility** in mind.

Example:

- **Manuscript title***: Increases in levels of sediment transport at former glacial-interglacial transitions*
- **Poor keywords:** climate change, erosion, plant effects
- **Better keywords:** quaternary climate change, soil erosion, bioturbation

Publishers recommend that researchers test out their proposed keywords in search engines and indexing services to ascertain if these keywords would place their publication alongside comparable work.

Resources:

- Keywords for the **Sustainable Development Goals** as used by the THE Impact Ranking. These have been carefully chosen to reflect the **precise language** of the UN declaration.
- Publisher advice on the optimisation of keywords from Elsevier, Springer, Wiley and IEEE.

Finally, using the standard institutional name format enables indexing services & institutional rankings to correctly identify our research: **Name** | **Department** | **Faculty** | **Institution** | **City** | **Country**

Example: *Professor Max Lu, Department of Chemical and Process Engineering, Faculty of Engineering & Physical Sciences, University of Surrey, Guildford, United Kingdom*