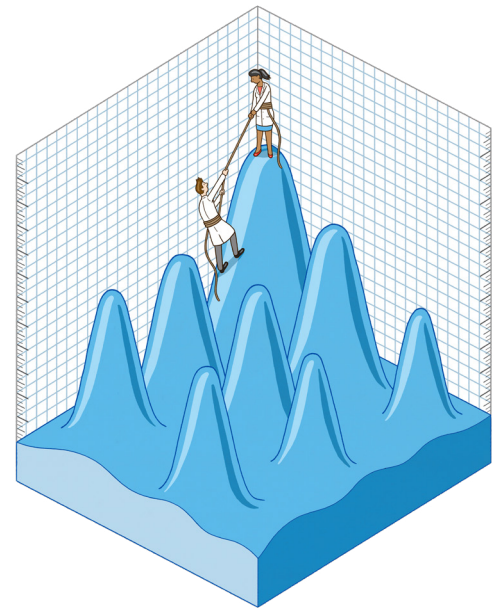


# 5 steps to optimize citation data for university rankings



Liz Bober, Library Assessment Officer at Case Western Reserve University, shares the 5 steps she followed to optimize her university's citation data using Scopus. The library goal was to have an impact on the university's position in the Times Higher Education (THE) and Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) rankings. It worked! To date, Case Western has moved up an impressive **39 spots** in THE and **51 spots** in QS rankings.<sup>1</sup>

Variations may occur from incorrect spellings, name changes and wrong addresses.

## 1. Investigate data and methodology used by ranking bodies

- Do research on the ranking bodies' websites
- Download the free [Elsevier ebook](#) on university rankings
- Review the ranking bodies' associated data files to see:
  - Citation and publication windows
  - Adjustments or weighting
  - What is included, e.g., article types
  - Or excluded, e.g., self-citations



**30%**  
of ranking equation  
dependent on citations



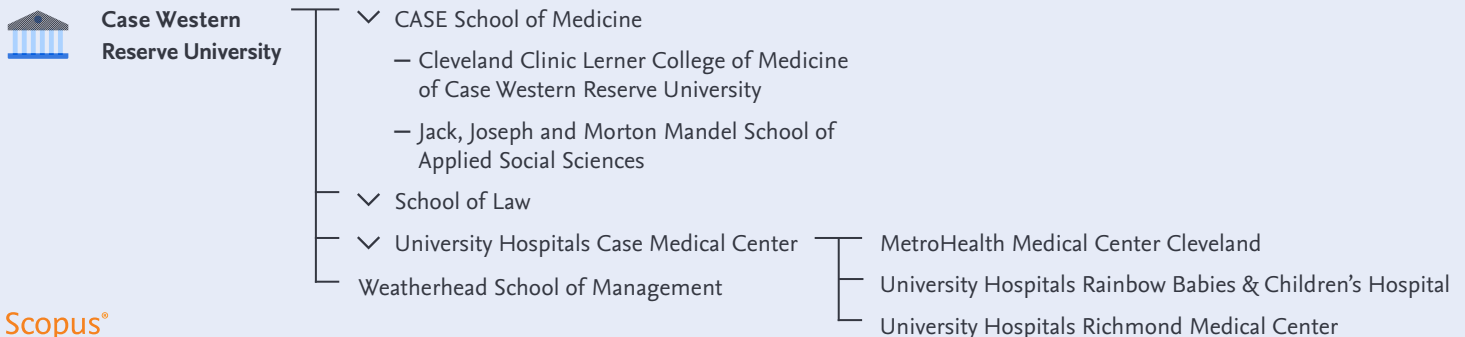
**20%**  
of ranking equation  
dependent on citations

## 2. Determine and edit your affiliation hierarchy<sup>2</sup>

- Find all variations of affiliation names in the Scopus Institution Profile Wizard (IPW)<sup>3</sup>
- Limit IPW access to project lead(s)
- Agree the correct names and hierarchy with stakeholders. For example:
  - Colleges
  - Professional schools
  - Institutes
  - Major affiliations
  - Hospitals and medical centers
- Consolidate affiliation names
- Adjust hierarchy in Scopus using the IPW

These labor-intensive steps will help to ensure your institutional profile includes the full breadth of research from associated researchers.

Affiliation hierarchy (This is a small snippet to illustrate variations.)



An ORCID iD is a unique researcher identifier. When linked to an ORCID iD, the Scopus author profile recognizes that Jimmy Jones, Jim Jones and James Jones are actually the same person.



### 3. Review and consolidate researcher profiles<sup>2</sup>

- Review all known affiliations for your researchers in Scopus
- Verify if documents in Scopus are affiliated correctly
- Liaise with researchers to update their profiles using Scopus author profile wizard
- Have clear “what’s in it for them” messaging when you reach out

**ORCID**

- Encourage them to register for an ORCID iD
- Help them open an ORCID account and link it to their Scopus author profile

At Case Western, research services (liaison) librarians offer to sit with faculty members to open ORCID accounts and add them to their Scopus author profiles.

### 4. Build in a maintenance and training process

- Introduce quarterly clean-ups to maintain data quality
- Partner with research administration to promote researcher training and create buy in with deans and other administrators
- Train researchers regularly, including new hires, on their Scopus author profile and ORCID iDs

You will invest significant time and effort to get to the point where your data is optimized. It's then important to dedicate resources to keeping it that way.

### 5. Communicate the impact of your work

- Highlight the data optimization work in communications to stakeholders
- Feature case studies from researchers that reflect improvement in their profiles, including *h*-index and author output
- Showcase visually the rise in citations and rise in rankings through infographics

Many international students use rankings to select where to study, and some institutions want to collaborate with institutions of a certain rank. Therefore, this is a high-value service to key stakeholders.

1. Citation data is a significant input into what is used in ranking calculations, but Liz recognizes that improvements in other areas have an impact as well and all areas need to improve to see increases in overall rankings.
2. These steps may have worked for Case Western, but may not work for other institutions depending on size, university hierarchy and university goals.
3. Access to the Scopus Institution Profile Wizard is restricted to named authorized users selected by the institution.

#### Source:

The information in this how-to guide came from the webinar “Optimizing Scopus research data points for Times Higher Education rankings” with Liz Bober, Library Assessment Officer at Case Western Reserve University. We thank Liz for sharing her experience and know-how.



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