Getting started with SciVal: a quick user guide

This guide shows you how to access SciVal, gives a quick orientation of the modules, shows how to set up a researcher or group profile, and reminds the user about responsible use of metrics.

1. Accessing SciVal

Access to SciVal is available on and off campus (via VPN) at https://www.scival.com

The first time you use SciVal you will have to register a username and password, unless you already have access to other Elsevier sites (like Scopus or ScienceDirect).

When registering use your institutional email address as the username, and create a unique password using a mixture of upper and lower case letters, numbers or special characters.

2. Modules & Entities

SciVal is organised into 5 modules which can be accessed from the home page, or direct from the top navigation bar. Each module provides a different view of the data:

- Overview: provides a high-level review of available metrics
- Benchmarking: compare one entity with another
- Collaboration: show current and potential collaboration
- Trends: investigate research topics in depth
- Reporting: create customisable reports

The information in each module can be filtered by date and entities. An entity can be an institution, researcher/s, publication sets, countries or topics. Each entity has to be created by the user, apart from the default which is the University of Edinburgh.

Online user guide

The SciVal manual is available as a link at the bottom of the Home page or direct from this URL: https://www.scival.com/help/index.html
3. Setting up a researcher or group profile

In order to view metrics for an individual or group's publications, you need to create a definition of the entity you wish to profile. Click on (1) ‘My SciVal’ on the top navigation bar, then select (2) ‘Add new’ to open up a drop-down menu, and click on the entity you wish to create.

Follow the on-screen instructions to set up the entity. For a researcher, you can search by name which will import author data from Scopus, including name variants, likely affiliations, and associated publications.

Once an entity is created, it can then be used in the modules. You can then build up a query by applying various filters. In this example from the Benchmarking module, the date and 3 metric filters are used.

4. Tips for using metrics

When using research metrics, you should always bear in mind these three key points:

- Try to use more than one metric to build up a richer picture: citation counts will only tell part of the story, but if you include the number of Outputs in Top Citation Percentiles, you might start to get a better idea of an institution's research profile.
- Normalise if you want to compare: try to base judgements on a level playing field so account for any differences in subject area, year of publication, and document types.
- When making decisions, always use quantitative metrics in combination with qualitative inputs, such as expert knowledge or peer review.

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