

## Executive summary

This report describes research undertaken by LISU at Loughborough University on behalf of Oxford Journals, to investigate trends in the prices of biomedical and social science journals between 2000 and 2006 for a selection of eight commercial publishers and three university presses. The methodology used was developed from that used for a previous report (White & Creaser, 2004). Prices were examined in conjunction with the number of pages and impact factor of each journal. It is appreciated that these are not the only determinants of journal price, and that further research may be desirable to investigate the effects of the various pricing models in use.

The detail of the methodology, in particular the application of the criteria for including titles in the analysis, differed from that adopted in the 2004 work, as a result of the discussion and comment which followed its publication. It is therefore not possible to make any detailed comparisons between the two sets of results, which differ in their detail although not in their overall patterns.

There is little consistent evidence of associations between price, impact factor and number of pages. Data relating to some publishers for some subject areas show significant correlations, most frequently between price and number of pages. There are also some significant associations between price and price per page, and between price and impact factor, but this is not widespread, and can generally be attributed to a small number of titles with exceptional pricing.

Some of the key statistics relating to price and price increases are:

### Biomedical titles

- Median journal prices ranged from £198 (Cambridge University Press) to £859 (Elsevier) in 2006
- Increases in the median journal price between 2000 and 2006 varied from 42% (Oxford Journals) to 104% (Sage).
- Median price per page ranged from 31p (Oxford Journals) to £1.06 (Wiley) in 2006
- Increases in the median price per page between 2000 and 2006 varied from 8% (Wiley) to 75% (Taylor & Francis).
- The proportions of titles identified without an impact factor in 2005 varied from 16% (Elsevier) to 74% (Sage)
- Median price per point of impact factor ranged from £186 (Oxford Journals) to £552 (Springer) in 2006
- Changes in the median price per point of impact factor between 2000 and 2006 varied from a fall of 25% (Wiley) to an increase of 79% (Cambridge University Press).

### Social science titles

- Median journal prices ranged from £119 (University of Chicago) to £513 (Wiley) in 2006
- Increases in the median journal price between 2000 and 2006 varied from 47% (Elsevier) to 120% (University of Chicago).
- Median price per page ranged from 13p (University of Chicago) to 93p (Wiley) in 2006
- Increases in the median price per page between 2000 and 2006 varied from 20% (Elsevier) to 91% (Sage).
- The proportions of titles identified without an impact factor in 2005 varied from 27% (Elsevier) to 69% (Cambridge University Press). Several publishers had relatively few titles included in the analyses of impact factor for social science titles
- Median price per point of impact factor ranged from £110 (University of Chicago) to £775 (Springer) in 2006
- Changes in the median price per point of impact factor between 2001 and 2006 varied from a fall of 20% (Elsevier) to an increase of 83% (Springer).

These results should be considered in conjunction with the broad economic climate over the period. Averaged over all subjects and all publishers (not just those covered by this report), journal prices are estimated to have increased by 39% between 2000 and 2006, while the retail price index has risen by 16% over the same period.

The report gives full details of the methodology used, and the context to the research, as well as a broad comparison of the publishers included, and detailed results for each.