

**FACULTY OF PSYCHOLOGY AND EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES**  
THE EDUCATION & TRAINING RESEARCH UNIT  
CENTRE FOR INSTRUCTIONAL PSYCHOLOGY AND TECHNOLOGY  
DEKENSTRAAT 2, BOX 3773  
BE- 3000 LEUVEN



KATHOLIEKE  
UNIVERSITEIT  
LEUVEN

OUR REF.

YOUR REF. November 1 2012  
LEUVEN,

To whom it may concern

I write this letter to support the position of the Italian Association in Mathematics Education with respect to the evaluation criteria that have been proposed by the MIUR for research in mathematics education.

I have been and I am still member of several research journals in the domain (e.g., Educational Studies in Mathematics, Mathematical Thinking and Learning) and I am a member of the editorial board of several other research journals in the more general field of learning and instruction (such as Educational Research Review, Learning and Instruction, Human Development, and the Cambridge Journal of Education). Moreover, I am Series Editor (together with Wolff-Michael Roth) of "New Directions in Mathematics and Science Education" published by Sense Publishers, and member of the Advisory Board of the EARLI book series "Advances in Learning and Instruction".

I would like to draw your attention to the fact that only a smaller part of the journals in the field of (psychology of) mathematics education are not evaluated at all by the statistical indices such as the "Web of Science", and some, such as the two math ed journals mentioned above, have just recently been included in this electronic database. Being a very regular reviewer for many journals, both in and out the field of (psychology of) mathematics education, I can testify that also for some of the math ed journals that are not or only very recently inserted in the "Web of Science", the seriousness of the reviewing procedure and the strictness of the scientific criteria have been are still are very high. Sometimes even considerably higher than for journals that are (already for a long time) part of the "Web of Science", if I may say.

For evident reasons, the fact that so few math ed journals are already for a longer time part of the "Web of Science" has a direct impact on the relatively small number of citations, since most citations are in math ed journals that were or still are excluded. Moreover, in the domain of math ed, books and chapters in books, as well as contributions in proceedings (such as the proceedings of the International Group for the Psychology of Mathematics Education) play a much more important role and are valued much more highly than in other scientific domains such as experimental or developmental psychology, for instance. Therefore citation indices in the "Web of Science" are only a very partially useful tool for evaluating research in mathematics education, which needs to be complemented with and corrected by other assessment forms.

Finally, let me mention that I have regularly contacts with various math ed scholars from Italy and that I consider the level of the math ed research in Italy generally of a high international quality. I think it is important that the Italian scholars in the domain of (psychology of) mathematics education can continue to play their significant role on the international scene, and, thus, that they will continue to get the necessary support from their national funding agencies.

Sincerely,

Lieven Verschaffel

Prof. Dr. Lieven Verschaffel  
Center for Instructional Psychology and Technology

**PROF. DR. LIEVEN VERSCHAFFEL**  
TEL. 0032/(0)16 32 62 58 FAX 0032/(0)16 32 62 74  
E-mail: [Lieven.Verschaffel@ppw.kuleuven.be](mailto:Lieven.Verschaffel@ppw.kuleuven.be)  
<http://ppw.kuleuven.be/english/etrg/CIPT/>