

Scientific writing can be challenging especially for researchers in their early career. This Lib4RI-Info provides a short overview of important topics to note while writing and publishing your article, such as a personal checklist to tick while writing, constructing the paragraphs of the main article sections, grammar tricks and a publication process overview. A cover-letter template is provided for your convenience and a fast submission of your article, as well!

Contact & help desk

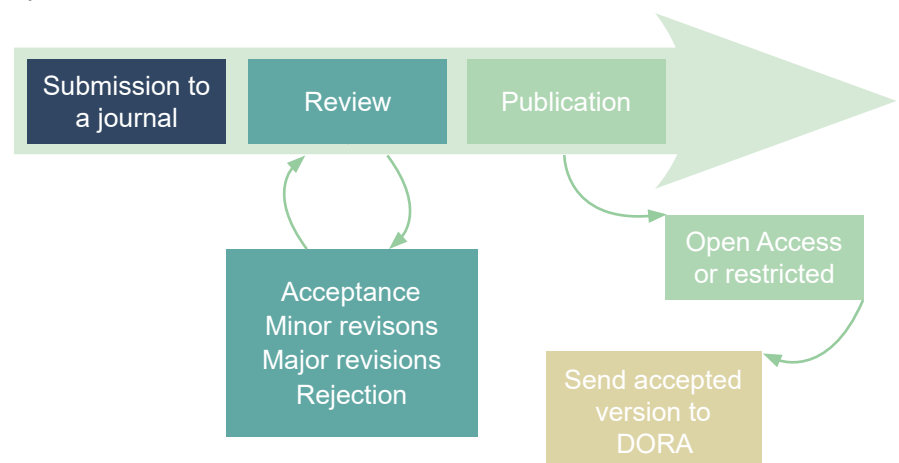
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Publication process

Overview

After submission of your publication to a journal, you will receive a first notification from the editor regarding if your article meets the standards to undergo peer review. The review process includes the thorough check of 2-3 reviewers that read, evaluate and proof your article for its consistency and correctness. Based on their comments, the editor decides for direct acceptance, minor revision, major revision or rejection. Finally, after revision and acceptance, your document is published online as an open access or restricted access article.



Article structure, grammar & style

Main sections

Each article part plays a role in sharing your scientific output with the community and for almost all journals the topics below have to be covered in the main sections of the articles. In addition, different tenses are used for different sections of your article.

Section	Topic	Tense
Title	Short & attractive, but makes your paper stand out	Present simple
Keywords	General but also specific to your research	Present simple
Abstract	Focus of paper Main methods and results	Present simple
Introduction	Why did I do this research?	Present simple
	What is the problem?	Past perfect
	Where is the gap?	Present simple
	Objectives	Present simple
Main body	Detailed explanation of methods / experiments / measurements	Past simple
	Description of figures/results	Present simple
Discussion	Thorough explanation/evaluation of results	Present simple
	Criticism of own work	
	Other applications of your work	
	Comparison with other studies	Past perfect
Acknowledgments	Funding, help, codes	Present simple

Coherency within a paragraph....

...through its structure

- spatial or temporal
- general → specific
- specific → general
- least important → most important
- familiar → unfamiliar
- simple → complex
- certain → uncertain

...through relational devices

- parallelism («First, second, third»)
- repetition of words and expressions (use in moderation!)
- transitional expressions (however, thus, nevertheless, on the other hand, in contrast, therefore, consequently, as a result),

Useful phrases

- Wallwork, Adrian: [English for Writing Research Papers](#), Springer 2016.
- The University of Manchester: [Academic Phrasebank](#).

Academic writing style

Tip:

- These DOs and DON'Ts are mainly meant for the scientific writing style in the natural sciences.
- Use articles from your field as a point of reference as well.

DO

- keep it short and simple
- be stingy with words
- have one idea per sentence
- use the active form
- use positive phrases
- use concrete terms

DON'T

- write in «sophisticated style»
- use too many adjectives & adverbs
- use unnecessary constructions
- nominalise
- use empty modifiers
- use tautologous modifiers

Techniques for paraphrasing

- change vocabulary, e.g. by using thesauri for synonyms
- change word order
- exchange active / passive
- change word class
- combine techniques
- retain meaning, key words, and phrases

Submission process

Cover letter

When submitting your article it is advised to write a cover letter to state your case why your article should be considered for publication in this journal.

1. summarize the main goals / objectives/results/conclusions of your research and why it is important],.... [...], [...].

2. Show why your article fits to this journal.

3. This sentence needs to be adjusted to the journal's needs. Some ask for such a statement, others not, or ask for a statement of pre-publication.

[Add your Name and contact details on the top right]

[Add the Editors name and journal name on the top left and just below the date.]

Dear [editor's name]

I am excited to submit our publication with title ["..."] for consideration for publication in your journal [...] as a [...] article type".

In our study, we [1.] are a few of the reasons why I believe that our article fits the scope of "journal name" [2.].

To the best of my knowledge, we have no conflicts of interest, financial or otherwise. In addition, as the corresponding author I confirm that all co-authors have been informed and agree to the submission of this article. [3.].

If you require any further information, do not hesitate to contact me. I am grateful for your time and consideration.

Your sincerely,

Reviewers reply

During the review process you need to reply to each comment of the reviewers. Below you find some suggestions for sentences to use in your reply.

Topic	Phrases / response
Start	We thank reviewer 1 for his/her revision. We have addressed his/her comments below.
Adapting document according to reviewers comment	We have incorporated your comments by...(add page number and line numbers)
Not agreeing with reviewers comment	The sentence may be confusing; if you see on page..., we explain that... You have raised an important point; however, we believe that...
Avoiding further studies/experiments	This is a good suggestion. Unfortunately, we do not have the means....
Admitting mistakes	We thank reviewer 1 for this observation. Indeed it is a mistake...

After publication

If your publication is restricted, **we can set the accepted version of your article Open Access** (usually after embargo) in the institutional repository [DORA](#) (by email to dora@lib4ri.ch). The accepted version is the last word or PDF file that you send to the journal, after all the corrections have been applied to the document and it has been accepted from the editor, but has still no formatting from the journal.

Personal Checklist

Publication Process

- Author Guide Did I read the journal’s guide to authors and follow its guidelines?
- Submission Did I share the submitted and accepted version of my publication with my co-authors?
- Review Did I answer to every reviewers comment and marked the changes in my document
- Open Access Did I check [OA possibilities](#) / requirements of my institution and funder? Did I send my publication to [DORA](#)?

Structure & content

- Article parts Is my article clearly structured? Did I include all main article parts?
- Sections Does every section of the article fulfil its intended purpose?
- Objective Are my objectives clearly defined?
- Authors Did I use correct affiliation and order of authorship following the guidelines of my institution?
- Content Is the information correct and accurate?
- Logic Is my chain of reasoning clear?

Style

- Plagiarism Is my writing free of [plagiarism](#)? Did I [do a plagiarism check](#)?
- Phrasing Are my words and phrases appropriate?
- Coherency Is my writing smooth and clear?
- Brevity Is my writing concise?

Orthography, grammar & formating

- Spelling Are all words spelled correctly?
- Grammar Are all tenses and punctuation marks used correctly?
- Formatting Did I adhere to all formatting guidelines provided by the publisher?
- Citations Did I cite all my sources correctly? _____

Revision
might
need
several
rounds