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Fall 11-22-2022

### Scholarly Communication: Checklist for Submitting Your Work for Publication.

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#### Recommended Citation

Garofalo, Mary, "Scholarly Communication: Checklist for Submitting Your Work for Publication." (2022).  
*General Research*. 6.  
[https://digitalcommons.kean.edu/general\\_research/6](https://digitalcommons.kean.edu/general_research/6)

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Scholarly Communication: Checklist for Submitting Your Work for Publication  
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Kean University

## **Ready, Set, Publish**

As you are writing up your manuscript for publication, it would be a great idea to understand what basic elements of research are required to make your manuscript cohesive to reviewers and editors (Lin & Chiu, 2021). Using your dissertation as a guide, it would be important to include the following in your manuscript:

1. Purpose of your research;
2. Research questions guiding inquiry and thesis statement, if applicable;
3. Discussion of relevant literature around your topic;
4. How your research fits into the rest of the literature on your topic;
5. Description of the ethical considerations of your research (IRB);
6. Theoretical/ conceptual framework;
7. Description of methods (so that one would be able to essentially replicate your research and get the same findings);
8. Clear description of your data collection and analysis;
9. Clear discussion of findings;
10. Connection between your research questions and findings;
11. Connection between your findings and the implication of your findings in relation to policy and practice.

Once you have chosen the academic publication you are looking to submit your manuscript to, it is important that you examine your manuscript for appropriate format, writing style, and reference style.

1. Prep your article;
2. Format your article;
3. Be clear about references and in-text citations;
4. Usually tables and charts are submitted separately;
5. Write a cover letter;
6. Revise and resubmit using the checklist, if applicable.

## **Prepping your Article**

Your abstract is the first thing that readers see regarding your article. You should write your abstract with your particular audience in mind. It would be important to review your abstract after you have chosen the journal you are submitting to. That way you can revise your abstract to the particular audience of the journal. Usually, the submission instructions give the author(s) an idea of word limit for the abstract. They usually ask for key words, as well. These keywords should be

the terms most closely related to your research, and also could be used to bolster your article's optimization in terms of organic ranking on search engines, like Google Scholar.

Additionally, be sure to abide by the main document word limit and/or page limit. You should check the submission guidelines to see if your references count towards the word limit or not. You may be required to cut down your words and/or pages to fit the submissions criteria. That ultimately means reformatting the manuscript to highlight the most important and significant findings. It is critical that you read and re-read your article to make sure it is accurately presenting your findings, especially if you are cutting your words to fit the submission parameters.

As with any publication, it is critical that you continue to review and revise your manuscript for mechanical errors, as well as any easily rectified mistakes. The editorial staff should not be wasting time on correcting your writing mechanics or the clarity of your writing. This revision is especially important after you cut the manuscript to the appropriate word count. You need to be sure that you are still clearly communicating the design, implementation, results, and implications of your research. Lastly, you will most likely be submitting your article using your ORCID id. Through ORCID, editors can see your research profile and where else you have published or submitted (Teixeira da Silva, 2021).

## **Formatting your Article**

Formatting your article means reviewing the submission guidelines for formatting including reference style. Submission guidelines will indicate which reference style the journal requires. The four most commonly used citation styles are:

1. [MLA](#)- usually used for the Humanities;
2. [APA](#)- used for education, psychology and the hard sciences;
3. [Chicago/Turabian](#)- usually used for the Arts, Business, and History;
4. [IEEE](#)- used for engineering, computer science, and information technology.

Sometimes international journals use different stylistic elements, such as a title page including biographical information about the author. When in doubt, defer to the submission directions of the journal.

Be sure to check headings, subheadings, and if the journal requires endnotes, footnotes, reference pages, in-text citations, and the like. It is not uncommon for a journal to abide by one or more of these reference styles. Once again, read the submission guidelines to be clear about the formatting expectations of your manuscript (Ryan, 2018).

## **Tables and Figures**

Often, journals require you to submit your title page, abstract, and tables/charts/graphs separately. Meaning, the submission process requires you to remove graphics from the body of your manuscript and submit your visual representations on a separate document, formatted in the appropriate reference style (Lin & Chiu, 2021). Usually, you are required to provide a

description of each visual and connect the visual to your manuscript. Be sure that your graphics are accurate and well-described.

## **The Cover Letter**

Arguably the cover letter is a priority piece of your initial submission in that it establishes the credibility of the author, helps ensure the positive presentation of your research, and establishes a positive rapport with the editorial team (Gump, 2014). It would be helpful to use letterhead from the university or institution that you are working from or that has sponsored and/or approved your research. In your initial cover letter with your first submission, you begin your letter with the following:

1. Editor's Name, Title, Institution, Address;
2. Submission date;
3. Salutation (i.e. Dear Dr. Johnson; or To Whom it May Concern).

The body of your letter should include the following:

1. Introductory paragraph naming your article and introducing the author(s) in terms of their background;
2. The impetus of the study, where the findings have been presented in terms of conference presentations;
3. Why the research presented is important, and, most importantly, why the research is in line with the journal's readership and values;
4. Gratitude for the opportunity to submit to the journal;
5. Closing and signature of author(s).

## **R and R Checklist**

There are a few possible outcomes from the submission of your manuscript. According to van Teijlingen et al. (2012):

1. Your manuscript is accepted for publication;
2. Your manuscript is conditionally accepted with the condition that you make certain minor changes (R and R);
3. You are invited to resubmit your paper with the condition that you make certain major changes (R and R);
4. Your paper is rejected.

If you receive an R and R (revise and resubmit), whether for minor or major changes, you should resubmit the manuscript with all of the comments, suggestions, edits, and changes required. You are also required to submit a document systematically addressing ALL of the changes delineated by the editorial team (see [Reviewer Matrix example](#)). You will also be requested to resubmit a cover letter addressing the changes and how you fixed the manuscript.

When you have completed your R and R, your new cover letter should include the following (van Teijlingen et al., 2012):

1. Same heading and salutation as the first cover letter;
2. Gratitude for the critique and the opportunity to R and R;
3. Address the editorial team's critique in terms of the general takeaways and what you did to address those concerns;
4. Discuss how else you improved the manuscript;
5. Express gratitude for opportunity to resubmit the manuscript with improvements;
6. Closing and signature of author(s).

Once your manuscript is resubmitted, it is once again a waiting game. The editorial team will respond to your resubmission based on the frame detailed in the resubmission instructions. Please remember that most manuscripts go through SEVERAL R and R's before they are accepted for publication. Additionally, it is important to know that you may be asked to complete several cycles of R and R, and still be ultimately rejected. Take heart! There is a journal out there for your work. At the very least, your revisions have made your manuscript even stronger. That means the next journal you submit to (only after you have been rejected) will have a better manuscript to consider for publication. Remember: you cannot submit your manuscript to more than one journal at a time. You must wait until the final decision on your manuscript to then submit to a new journal.

## References

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