

## The ABCs of Manuscript Submission



### Overview

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- Preparing for Submission
- The Submission Process
- Immediately following the submission

### Preparing for Submission

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- All aspects of preparing and submitting must be done ethically
- Your ethics and integrity are priceless assets
- Don't plagiarize or infringe on a copyright
  - Obtain all approvals needed
- Make sure you have the **advance** approval of all co-authors

### Preparing for Submission - Copyright

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- Copyright: legal protection to avoid duplication of published materials
- Owned equally by all authors
- Transferrable
  - In many cases transferred to the publisher for scientific papers
- Must have permission from the copyright owner if using copyrighted materials in your paper
  - Forms to obtain permission often provided by journal to which you are submitting

### Preparing for Submission – Manuscript Originality

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“Submission of a paper (other than a review) to a journal normally implies that it presents the results of original research or some new ideas not previously published, that it is not under consideration for publication elsewhere, and that, if accepted, it will not be published elsewhere, either in English or in any other language, without the consent of the editors.”

(General Notes on the Preparation of Scientific Papers,  
The Royal Society, London)

### Submitting for Publication

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- Submit to only one journal at a time
- Data cannot be published twice
  - Any republication, e.g. in another language, requires approval
- If unsure, consult with editor of journal to which you are submitting

### Submission: Your Target Audience

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- Who is your audience?
- What is the potential impact?
- Specialists vs. Generalists?
- Be realistic in your assessment

### Submission: Your Target Journal

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- What is the 'right' Journal?
- Investigate circulation and suitability of audience
- Check speed and frequency of publication
- Evaluate journal impact
- If unsure, discuss with editor before submission

### Consequences of Choosing the Improper Journal

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- Returned without review
  - Wasted time
- Reviewed - rejected as inappropriate
  - Wasted time
- Slow or poor review
  - Inappropriate revision(s) requested
- Reviewed and accepted
  - Not read or not widely read – no long-term impact of the work

### Submission: Author Guidelines

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- Specific to each journal
- Describe in detail the following:
  - How to submit
  - Review and publication processes
  - Content of interest and types of articles
  - Figure/Table guidelines and formatting
  - Conventions
    - Style
    - Format – text and references
    - Names, units, abbreviations

### Submission: Manuscript Prep

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- Follow journal format *exactly*
  - Font size
  - Page margins and paragraph spacing
  - Proper headers and subheaders
  - Page and line numbers
- Proofread: Check spelling, syntax, etc.
- Review and revise
- Have read by trusted colleague(s)
- Review, revise and proofread again

### Submission: Cover Letter

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- Address to Editor of Journal
- Indicate why your manuscript is 'right' for the chosen journal
- Identify corresponding author and include required information
- Suggest editors and reviewers
  - Don't leave this to chance...be proactive
- Add required additional info
  - If a revision include required info (e.g. response to reviewers)
  - Indicate whether a companion manuscript is being submitted

## The Submission Process

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- Largely electronic – follow journal instructions (usually at a journal website, not by e-mail)
- Have the following things prepared in advance:
  - Cover letter
  - Response to reviewers - if a revision
  - Manuscript file
  - Figures – correct format and resolution
  - Contact info for all authors
  - Contact info for recommended reviewers

## What happens next: Immediately following the submission

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- Submission checked for correct format and forwarded to editor
- Letter of receipt received (often e-mail)
- Manuscript reviewed by editor for appropriateness
  - Manuscript either returned without review or enters into the review process

## Manuscript Review

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- Reviewers selected
  - Either from the list of individuals you recommend and/or selected by editor based on expertise
- Manuscript distributed to reviewers
  - Usually 2 to 3 expert reviewers following detailed instructions
  - A volunteer-based process - ad hoc reviewers
- Length of time for review varies
  - Usually 14-30 days (fast) to ~60 days (avg.)
  - If review is taking a long time (>90 days), contact the managing editor

## After the review – Editorial Decision

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- Based on reviews, the editor comes to a decision
- Decision responses
  - Accept
  - Modify (minor or major revisions)
  - Reject