

How to Publish Your Research

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Introduction

- A few pointers before we start the “detail”
 - Try and publish with an experienced colleague
 - Always write clearly
 - Target the right journal
 - Respond to all reviewer comments
 - Target accredited journals (only)

Planning manuscript (1)

- Read and follow ALL of the guidelines for manuscript preparation listed for an individual journal

<http://www.rss.org.uk/site/cms/contentCategoryView.asp?category=90>

- Use an internal and external peer review service
- Critique your own work
- Be thorough with several rounds of editing

Planning manuscript (2)

- Select a descriptive title
- Ideally, your paper should advance a particular line of research
- Clear, concise, and grammatically correct English
- Write in a precise way, avoid long sentences

Target the right journal (1)

- Look at journals that have published articles on your topic previously
 - In your reference list, check where the reference papers have been published
 - Example: In writing your paper you are encouraged to review or reference papers in the area you are addressing previously published in the journal. This provides coherence and continuity for our readers.
- Look at journal acceptance/rejection rates
- Look at average time to publication as well as average time to acceptance/rejection notification

Target the right journal (2)

- Look at the publication rate (annual, semi-annual etc)
- Look at journal **impact factors**.
- Look at journal fees

Impact Factor

- What are they?

http://thomsonreuters.com/products_services/science/free/essays/impact_factor/

- How do I find out the impact factor of a particular journal?

<http://www.sciencegateway.org/rank/index.html>

http://sciencewatch.com/dr/sci/10/apr25-10_1/

- Why are they “important”?
- Should you bother about them?

Submitting a paper

- Follow procedure EXACTLY as laid out in the submission to author information
- Do not harass the editor in any way
- Keep checking the progress of the article (if online progression is available), otherwise be patient

Possible decisions

- There is no consistent format for a review response. However there are five “*general*” response
 - Accept (I believe that this is very seldom the case)
 - Accept with minor corrections (A very good outcome)
 - Resubmit after revisions (They are interested, but more work is required)
 - Reject but may resubmit (Still a chance, but needs a lot of work)
 - Reject (The final decision in the majority of cases)

Responding to reviewers

- Respond to each comment in EXACTLY the format required
 - If you need to address a structural change, state clearly where the change was done and how it was done.
 - Highlight the minor editorial changes
 - Let the editor know that you have addressed all comments. If you choose to challenge a comment, state it clearly and give supporting reasons

What to do if not accepted

- This is not the end of the world, one can look at the reviewers comments and then submit elsewhere.
- “Everyone” has papers that are rejected, this is all part of the learning cycle. An NRF rated scientist working at NMMU had their first 8 papers rejected.
- If after three outright rejections, it would seem that the article is not going to get published, do not waste time, put effort in elsewhere

Reviewing: An example (1)

Pythagoras (an SA accredited journal)

- Is the paper interesting – is it accessible and of interest to the (South African and AMESA) Mathematics Education community?
- Is the paper significant – does it make an original and substantial contribution to Mathematics Education?
- Is the paper appropriately contextualised in the research literature – does it take appropriate account of, and build on previous related work? Are the references adequate (and are they all necessary)?

Reviewing: An example (1 cont.)

- Is the paper structurally sound – is there a sound and well-communicated argument? (For a research paper – is there an appropriate match between the research question(s) and the methods and analysis used to answer the question? For a theoretical paper – is there an appropriate theoretical framework evident?)
- Does the title give a clear indication of the focus of the paper?
- Does the abstract summarise the paper adequately?
- Or the other way around: does the paper indeed deliver what the abstract promised?
- Is the language of the paper sufficiently fluent and clear?

Reviewing: An example (1 cont.)

- What is your recommendation with respect to publication?

Mark one box below with an X and then in 9 supply detailed reasons for your recommendation.

<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>

Accept *without changes*

Accept with *minor changes*, as I indicated

Reconsider after *major revisions*, as I suggested (re-submit, then re-review)

Reject – the paper is not acceptable to be published in Pythagoras

- Reasons for your recommendation above:

Accredited journals

- In South Africa there are **two accredited lists**
- International Science Index (ISI) list (Now referred to as the Science Citation Index)
- DoE accredited (national) list
- [http://www.nmmu.ac.za/default.asp?id=5549
&bhcp=1](http://www.nmmu.ac.za/default.asp?id=5549&bhcp=1)

Examples: Accredited international journals

- Journal of the Operational Research Society
 - <http://www.palgrave-journals.com/jors/index.html>
- Applied Stochastic Models in Business and Industry
 - [http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1002/\(ISSN\)1526-4025](http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1002/(ISSN)1526-4025)
- Restrictions: These are not freely available, a subscription is required

Example: Accredited local journals

- South African Statistics Journal
 - Volume 43(2), 2009
- Investment Analysts Journal
 - Vol 69, 2009
- These are freely available through the library subscription to SABINET

How does one evaluate a researcher?

- Number (and quality) of (subsidisable) articles published
- Number of citing's received (a measure of quality)
- NRF rating of researcher (measure of quantity and quality)

How does one evaluate a researcher?

- Number of doctoral and masters graduates supervised
- Number of invited addresses and conference papers given
- Editorial and scholarly peer reviewing duties
- External examining duties

Now for some fun

- Erdo's numbers
 - What is an Erdo's number?
 - What is my Erdo's number?
 - Are they really important?

The end

- Thanks for your attendance, go out and make us proud!!!