

UCL/CAHPR writing for publication webinar



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1

Plan for the session

- **Getting started** – what kind of paper? For which journal? Who is your audience?
- **How to write** – sentence and paragraph structure. Why punctuation, good grammar and proofreading matter
- **Keeping going** – time management, getting into the habit of writing, common traps, barriers and pitfalls
- **Abstracts**, keywords, titles, referencing
- The **submission** process
- Responding to **reviewer comments**

2

Getting started

- Why are you here?
- What is stopping you from using this time to get started?
- What information do you think you are missing at the moment?
- How are your confidence levels right now?

3

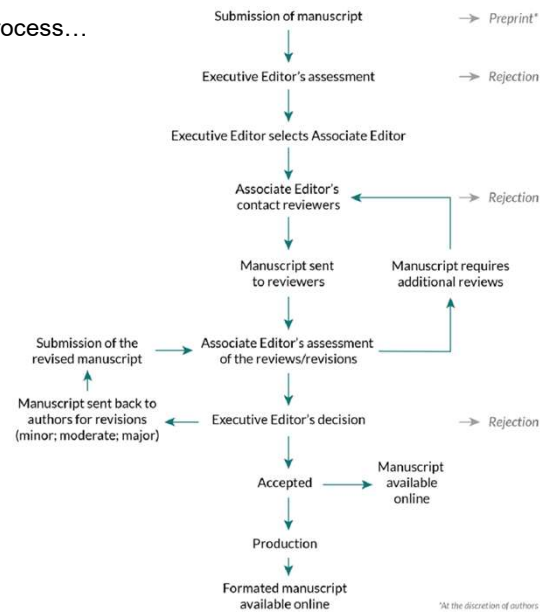
Which journal?

- Who are you writing your paper for?



4

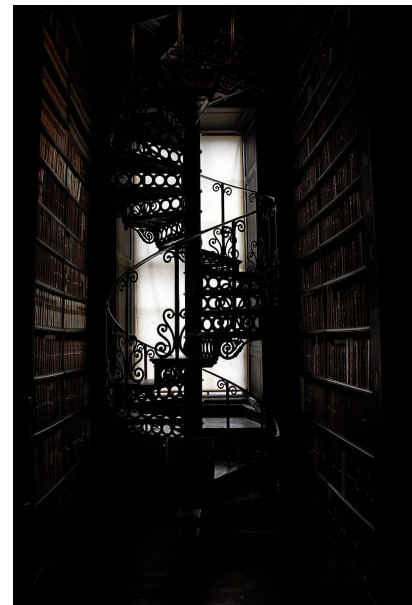
The manuscript submission process...



5

Which journal?

- You are writing to get published. By an editor
- Think about the type of paper and likely audience
- Pay close attention to author instructions
- Consider the following...
- Which journals do you read?
- Consider your study design
- Check submission fees/open access policy
- Think about your timeline
- <https://jane.biosemantics.org/>



6

What are editors looking for?

According to Richard Smith, former editor of the BMJ:

- Excitement, wow factor
- Importance
- Originality
- Relevance to the journal's audience
- True
- Clearly written
- Engagingly written

7

What are editors REALLY looking for?

How likely is the paper to be cited in the future?

8

AUTHOR INSTRUCTIONS ARE REALLY HELPFUL

Use them!

9

Authorship should be based on a substantial contribution to:

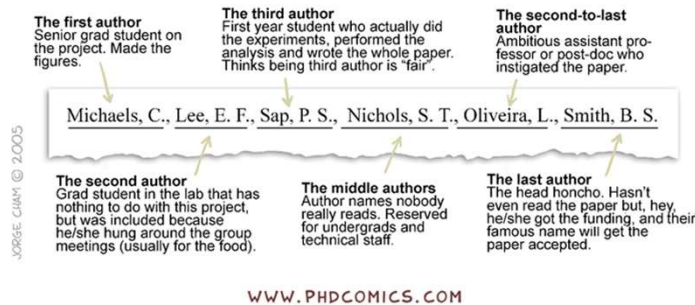
1. Conception and design, OR analysis and interpretation of data.
 2. Drafting the article or revising it critically for important intellectual content.
 3. Final approval of the version to be published.
- All these conditions must all be met. Participation solely in the acquisition of funding or the collection of data does not justify authorship.
 - We want authors to assure us that all authors included on a paper fulfil the criteria of authorship. In addition we want assurance that there is no one else who fulfils the criteria but has not been included as an author.

10

ORDER of authors is important!

Discuss this early, and get agreement from all authors.

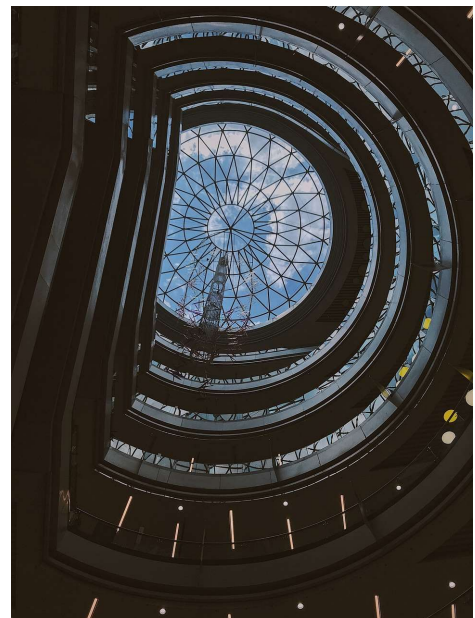
THE AUTHOR LIST: GIVING CREDIT WHERE CREDIT IS DUE



11

Structuring your paper

- Title – length, structure and content
- How many authors?
- Keywords
- How many sections altogether?
- Titles of sections – headings and subheadings
- Length of sections – how many paragraphs per section
- Methodological detail
- Tables and diagrams
- Conclusion – length and content
- How many references?



12

Signposting

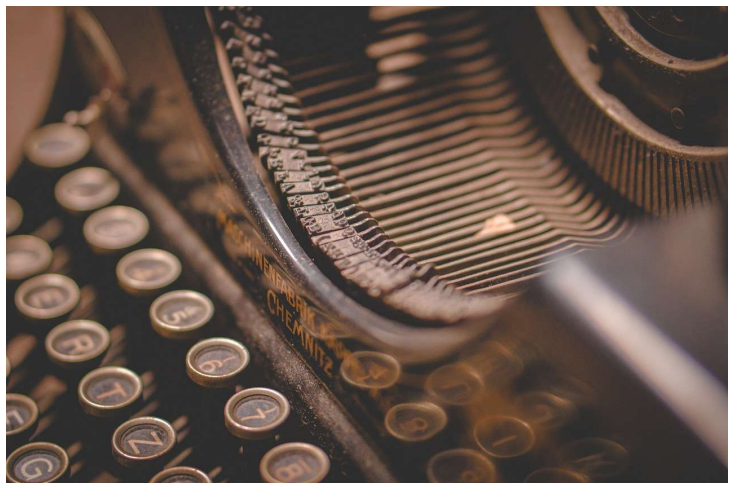
- Make sure that readers know where they are, where they are going and why



13

Writing style

- Short words
- Short sentences
- Short paragraphs
- No jargon
- No abbreviations
- Avoid figures of speech and idioms
- Prefer active to passive



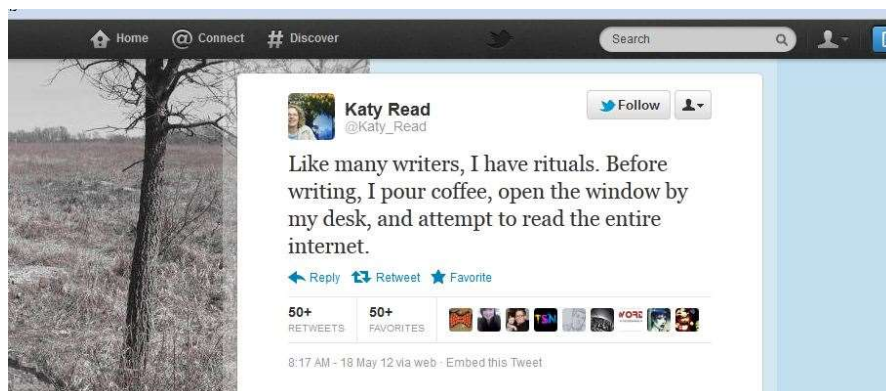
14

Writing concisely

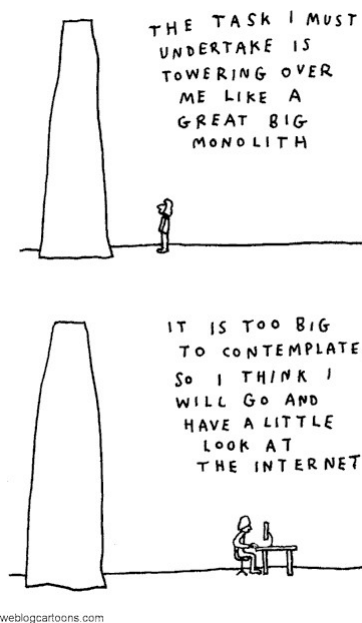
- One of the best things you can do for yourself to improve your writing is to learn how to cut out words that are not necessary.

15

What stops you writing?



16



17

Other bits...writing the abstract

- Stand-alone: makes sense independently of the paper.
- Might be deciding factor in whether people read your paper: needs to grab attention.
- Different journals will have different requirements for abstracts.
- Needs to include: purpose (why?), methods (how?), results (what you found) and conclusions (and so what?).

18

Keywords

- Keywords help people to find your paper.
- How to choose keywords:
 - What keywords are used in related literature?
 - General? Or specific?
- If you were searching for your paper on Google, what words would you use?

19

Other bits...

- Titles
- Referencing
- Formatting, reviewing, reading and rereading
- Cover letter

20

Peer review recommendations

- Publish as is
- Publish with minor amendments
- Publish with major amendments
- Reject

21

Why do papers get rejected?

- Not paying attention to author guidelines.
- Bad writing – hard to follow, poor spelling and grammar.
- Not interesting to journal's audience.
- Does not say anything that has not been said before.
- The research being reported appears weak.

22

Responding to reviewers

- Outrage, noise, unladylike rejoinders.
- Incomprehension.
- More outrage.
- One or two of these comments might make sense.
- There's a bit of truth in that one.
- I'll just have a go at doing what they said to do here.
- Actually the paper is a whole lot better for all of these revisions.

From: <http://www.slideshare.net/ingermewburn/write-that-journal-article-in-7-days-12742195>

23

Responding to reviewers

- Address each point clearly and carefully.
- Write a detailed covering letter showing clearly how you have changed the paper to take account of the reviewer's comments. If you disagree with the change proposed, explain why.
- Don't be grudging. Do the work!
- Don't be rude, no matter how cross you are and how ignorant you think the reviewer is.
- What do you do if you are asked to do a major re-write?

24

Conclusion

- Its hard work but rewarding
- Find someone to help with proofreading
- Cover letters are important
- Spend the time looking at which journal is best
- Reviewing takes time
- Enjoy the process!