Writing for Publication Workshop

Early Clinical Career Fellowships
Writing for Publication Masterclass 6

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Aims

What do you hope to achieve by attending this Masterclass on Writing for Publication?
Objectives of the workshop

By the end of this session we will have:

• Discussed the importance of writing for publication
• Reflected upon your own writing behaviour
• Identified a topic for potential publication
• Identified potential journals to target
• Considered the processes involved in preparing an article for publication
• Developed an outline of an abstract
Why go to all the effort?

Why should Early Clinical Career Fellows invest time and energy in writing for publication?

What are the potential benefits?
Reflect on your own personal history

What types of reports/articles do you currently have to write?

What things help you to be productive in your writing?

What things hinder you in your writing?
Writing behaviours

Snacking and gorging
On your marks!

Choose a topic for you consider worth sharing with others
Snacking
Free writing

- 5 mins to free write -

- Discuss
Who do you want to tell?
Brown’s 8 questions

1. Who are your intended readers?
2. What did you do?
3. Why did you do it?
4. What happened when you did that?
5. What do the results mean in theory?
6. What do the results mean in practice?
7. What is the key benefit for the readers?
8. What remains unresolved?
Snacking
Structured writing

• 5 mins to do some structured writing -

• Discuss
Writing for publication

The process

• How do you go about getting a paper published?
• What are the things you need to think about in the process of submitting your paper to a journal?
The Theory

• Once you have an idea for a paper you need to find the right journal

• It is best to write your article with a specific journal in mind

• If you match the contents of your paper to the preferences of the journal's editors and readership it will increase the likelihood of publication
Choosing the Journal to Target

• At a basic level
  – Depends on your topic
  – Who your audience is

• For example
  – Writing for newly qualified nurses – generic journal such as *Nursing Standard*
  – Science of nursing – nursing research or academic journals
Read the Notes for Contributors/Author Guidelines

• this will give you
  – the aims of the journal
  – clear guidance on the format and structure of papers e.g. correct referencing

• meaning your paper
  – will reflect the aims of the journal
  – comply with their guidelines
Identifying Suitable Journals

• Search for similar subject papers online to see where they were published

• Ask advice
  – Colleagues, tutors, mentors, supervisors are a good source of advice

• Get to know the journals in your field
  – Your most likely source of potential publication but you may have to think creatively
Thinking Laterally

- Evaluation of HNC for Radiography Assistant Practitioners

- There is no dedicated AHP education journal
- But there is a journal for healthcare support workers which has an education section – *British Journal of Healthcare Support Workers*

- *Radiography* is the journal of the College of Radiographers but a scan of journal contents revealed they do not publish papers on APs in radiography

- Solution - write a paper from the perspective of radiographers of their experiences of mentoring on the HNC
Other Factors to Consider

• Prestige of the journal

• Impact factor – a measure of how often papers are cited from this journal

• Speed of publication
Having Identified Potential Journals then Research them

• Read the journal’s editorial policy
  – is your work in keeping with their field of interest?
  – who is their intended audience?
• Scan the contents of recent issues to see what sorts of articles they publish
  – Some publish on a broad range of topics
  – others restrict themselves to highly specialised areas
• Some journals will publish short articles while others prefer longer ones

• What are their submission requirements?
  – make sure you can meet them - e.g. word limit

• Before you write anything contact the editor to assess:
  – the suitability of your subject to the journal
  – their interest in your work
  – many journals actively encourage this approach
Get a Feel for the Journal

*Cancer Nursing Practice* – Author Guidelines

• “Cancer Nursing Practice aims to inform and to encourage critical reflection among those nurses caring for patients with cancer by publishing articles with *clear implications for practice*”.

• “We welcome contributions to the various sections of the journal, including opinion, resources, features, continuing professional development and careers. Articles should be informative, have something new to say or offer a fresh approach to an old subject, challenge current practice or review current thinking”.
Encouragement for New Authors

• Some journals actively demystify the writing process and actively encourage submissions from new authors

• “Cancer Nursing Practice also seeks to encourage new authors: do not think writing for publication is too difficult or that no one will want to read what you have to say. You may have several reasons for wanting to publish. You may want to share knowledge and advance your field of practice, to disseminate key findings or opinions, or to contribute to policy debates”.

• “In all cases, it is advisable to contact the editor to discuss your ideas”.

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Journal Styles

In writing, follow the journal’s rules for contributors

• Observe word limit

• Charts, diagrams, tables, illustrations are correctly formatted and carefully labelled and captioned.

• Manuscripts are correctly formatted and referenced e.g. Harvard, Vancouver style

• Authors’ contact details are provided as requested e.g. qualifications, job titles, etc.

• The content follows structure guidelines e.g. I M R a D

• Subsidiary content is included
  – e.g. Key Points, Practice Points, acknowledgements and conflict of interest statement
Writing Style

• Writing style should follow guidance as well:

• *Cancer Nursing Practice*
• “To make your article interesting and readable, keep your style straightforward and avoid the use of jargon and abbreviations. An abbreviation needs to be written in full the first time it is used with the acronym in brackets afterwards. Be concise”.

• “Readers may be from across the 4 home countries in the UK and overseas - be explicit about whether you are referring to, for example, policy or legislation, in one country”.

• i.e. you may have to explain the particular context relating to Scotland
Mechanics of Submitting

• Journal websites will have instructions on how to submit an article
  – Either submit a Word or text file electronically
  – Or others will have an online submission site

• Once you have registered and uploaded your article you will receive an article identification number
  – Allows you to track the progress of your article through the peer review process
  – Be careful to load all files e.g. usually figures and tables are uploaded separately

• You will normally get an acknowledgement of your submission
  – If not get in touch to check they have received your paper
In Summary

- Careful submission will increase your chances of publication
- Identify likely journals
- Conduct careful research to see that the journal will match the content and message of your intended paper
- Contact the editor
- Carefully follow guidelines for writing e.g. content, format, writing style
- Submit the paper according to instructions
Feedback on your Writing

- Seeking and receiving feedback
- Negative feedback
- Positive feedback
- Dealing with feedback
- Providing feedback to others

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Seeking feedback on your writing

• Receiving feedback is important and is likely to improve your writing

• Consider the timing of seeking feedback

• Be clear about the type of feedback you want

• How will you handle the feedback you receive?
Feedback

How do you like to receive feedback?

Spend 5 mins either by yourself or with a partner thinking about some feedback you have received on any aspect of your work performance.

Was it a good experience? WHY? If not, what would have made it better?

Did you alter your performance as a result of this feedback or did you ignore it? WHY?
Negative feedback

• Negative feedback can have the opposite effect to the desired outcome i.e. can inhibit rather than improve performance (Ilgen & Davis, 2000)

• When exposed to uncomfortable or threatening information, tendency of recipient is to deny, distort or avoid it (Kluger & DeNisi, 1996)

• Recipients can stop trying or abandon promising work in the face of repeated negative feedback (Mikulincer, 1994)

• Can de-motivate and prevent learning

“Rewriting is the essence of writing well – where the game is won or lost” (William Zinsser, 2001)
Positive feedback

• Great to receive positive feedback particularly if it comes from an authoritative source or from someone you respect

• Take note of the lessons to be learnt – what you do well is as important to know about as what you need to improve on

• Focus on what it is that makes a particular piece of writing good

• Positive feedback can support learning (Kluger & DeNisi, 1996)
Dealing with feedback

• Consider seeking feedback on your writing from a colleague or manager before you submit to a journal. What specific feedback are you seeking? This may depend on the stage of your draft and what feedback you have already received.

• Think of feedback as a tool to develop your learning. Writing is a skill that can be developed and mastered.

• Criticism can enhance the authority, rigour, robustness and professionalism of your writing (Murray & Moore, 2006). It challenges your ideas and views.

• Stop and listen and if necessary question to understand better. Take time out to consider the comments (particularly if they are negative).

• Remain in control of your work and the feedback particularly if you receive different advice.

• Keep things professional (even if you disagree). Try not to take it personally.
Journal feedback

Three outcomes:
Accept / Reject / Accept with amendments

Usually get a copy of the reviewers’ comments

Try to address all or the main concerns. You will need to indicate where you have made changes in your paper and how you have addressed the issues raised. If you do not agree with a comment(s), state why in your response to the editor but you may also need to clarify / expand that area in some way.
Providing feedback

• Ask the writer what type of feedback they would find useful and to tell you the stage of the paper (both should agree the purpose of the feedback)

• The feedback must be acceptable to the recipient i.e. respectful and in such a way that acknowledges how it might make them feel

• The content of the feedback must be useful i.e. specific areas where the paper could be improved rather than general comments

• Be honest and point out both the strengths and the weaknesses of the paper

• Higher order concerns include whether the writing addresses key questions, is argued in a logical manner and is well organised and clear.

• Lower order concerns include stylistic choices, forms of expression, grammar, punctuation and layout (although if these are excessive, they may affect judgement of a reviewer)
Support mechanisms

Who do you have to support you taking your writing forward?

Locally
Academically
Professional Body
Reflect back on what you hoped to achieve from attending this workshop

Did you learn anything new?

Any further actions you need to consider?

Are there any questions for us?