

# Writing for Publication



**Many people may never have thought of writing an article for publication. Indeed for some, being asked to write a piece for a journal could be one of the most daunting requests made of them. This article has been written in order to provide 'pointers' for novice writers which may then stimulate them to write for publication. Reasons for writing such as, promotion of excellent patient care, sharing of good practice, opening debate, professional networking, dissemination of research, self promotion and improvement of promotion prospects are excellent motivating factors (Kneale & Santy 2000). Driscoll & Driscoll (2002) also advocate that some practitioners will have written academic assignments and all practitioners will use writing skills in everyday practice for example writing reports, critical incidents, patient care episodes and records/reflections for personal portfolios. These skills can therefore be utilised and enhanced in order to produce articles for publication, remember everyone has something to offer.**

When thinking about writing it is useful to read what others have written as this may identify gaps in the literature and it may provide a focus for your writing. It is also important for novice writers to write about what they know and write because they want to. This is supported by Kneale & Santy (2000) who identify three main activities for successful writing: listening, reading and writing. Listen to what is going on around you, listen to colleagues, patients and carers, and listen to advice from others. Read what else has been written on the topic, read to see styles of writing/articles and read the authors instructions/guidelines provided by the publishers. Write with passion that shows awareness & understanding of the subject, write in an appropriate manner and write to have a sense of personal achievement. If you have an idea talk to someone who has written academic work, an educationalist or someone who has published. Remember most people have started somewhere so they are usually understanding of novice writers' anxieties so they will be able to provide support and guidance.

There are a variety of forms of publication, care/case studies can focus on the total care/treatment episode of a patient or focus on a specific aspect of care/treatment. Explanation of and rationales for care/treatment interventions are provided and supported by reference to relevant literature. Reports are based on fact, they are usually short and succinct, stating what happened, who to, where, when, why and how. Discussion of the issues raised within the report and their application to future practice are usually provided. Opinion articles need to be topical, and express the authors' passionate opinion on that topic. Literature reviews try to answer questions through systematic analysis of literature, for example research studies, opinion articles, case studies and reports. Findings from the literature are then presented thematically with conclusion and recommendations for practice. Research reports are written presentations of research studies and the findings. They are usually formatted in a specific sequence: introduction with rationale for the study, research problem, question or hypothesis, aims and objectives, literature review, research methodology including sample, data collection and ethical issues. These are followed by the results, discussion, conclusion, limitations of the study and recommendations for practice. (Burns & Grove 1997). Article and book reviews, here the reviewer reads the piece and then summarises the content as a whole or summarises it by chapter/section. They then give their opinion and identify if the piece is of general or specific interest or essential reading.

Once a decision has been made as to the type of article you want to write it is good practice to be logical in the planning of that piece. Knowledge of the wordage expected for the article, which will be included in the authors instructions/guidelines provided by the publisher, is an important aspect of planning because you can allocate a number of words for each section and this can make the

task of writing less daunting. Cook (2000) also identifies four key aspects of planning. Firstly be clear about the aim of the article, this clarity will help define the sections, provide focus for your initial literature review and enable you to keep focused when writing the piece. Secondly decide on the section headings, most pieces will have an introduction, development and conclusion. However, the development section may include a number of sub headings which again may help you to keep focused on the aim of the article. The sub-headings will make the activity of writing less daunting because you feel like you are writing the article in smaller sections. Thirdly expand on those sections headings, here you extend your literature review, write the content for each section and support your issues and viewpoints with reference to the literature. It is important at this stage to ensure that you have kept an accurate record of all references within the article, as this will prevent hours of searching in your gathered literature for a missing reference. Finally take any necessary action, this is where you make any final adjustments to the article, for example providing additional references to literature and checking the accuracy of your references/reference list, ensuring accuracy of spelling and grammar, and getting critical feedback from a colleague or peer who is familiar with publishing work. Other factors I have found useful when writing articles/assignments are find the right place to write, have regular breaks and little treats whilst writing, regularly save work to disk/memory stick, use a library and the skills of the librarian and get support from family and friends.

Santy and Kneale (2000) identify that the decision of where to send your article is dependent on knowing your target audience and whether it is of local, national, international, general or specific, research, management or educational interest. They go on to point out that a letter to an editor with an outline of your idea allows you to establish if it is appropriate for that journal. A further option is to send a draft copy of your final version for approval to your chosen journal; however you must have adhered to that journal's authors instructions/guidelines. When an article has been submitted for publication most journals will send an acknowledgement that they have received the article. The article then undergoes a review process and reviewers comments are returned to the editor. This process may take up to twelve weeks to complete. The editor will then inform the author that the article has been unconditionally accepted, accepted subject to satisfactory amendments with details of what those amendments are, or that the article is rejected with reasons for the rejection. It is important not to become disillusioned or down-hearted because of rejection, indeed many authors have suffered such a set-back, try to be positive and re-write the article with a slightly different emphasis then re-submit. I would agree with Kneale & Santy (2000) that 'writing is a combination of inspiration and perspiration in varying amounts at different times' (p 185), however if you can persevere, the satisfaction of seeing your name in print is extremely rewarding.

## REFERENCE:

- Burns N Grove S K 1997  
The Practice of Nursing Research:  
Conduct, Critique and Utilisation.  
W B Saunders Philadelphia
- Cook R 2000  
The writer's manual a step by step guide for nurses  
and other health professionals.  
Radcliffe Medical Press, Abingdon, Oxon, UK.
- Driscoll J, Driscoll A, 2002  
Writing an article for publication: an open invitation.  
Journal of Orthopaedic Nursing, No 6 144-152
- Kneale J Santey J 2000  
Orthopaedic nurses writing for publication.  
Journal of Orthopaedic Nursing, No 4 185-190

# Guidelines for Authors



## Content

The main objective of the magazine is to publish material which relates to the specialism of orthopaedics and trauma; however material which has a wider clinical, political and/or professional appeal will be considered for publication.

This magazine publishes full articles, research reports, reports, brief notices, article/book-reviews, opinion letters, letters to the editor, quizzes, word searches and crosswords.

## Manuscript Format

All text should be typed (in English) using 12pt or 14pt font in Arial or Times New Roman and double line spaced with a margin of no less than 2cm around the whole text. The maximum length for any manuscript is 5000 words. We recommend text be written and saved in a Word document format. Doing so will allow our Editorial team to verify the word count and allow the production team to turn your manuscript (if accepted) into a publishable format.

## Title Page

Every manuscript must have a title page this should include (as a list):-

- The title of the manuscript
- First name, initial and surname of author/s
- Maximum of five degrees and/or qualifications for each author
- Current appointment of author/s
- Name, current address, telephone number, fax number and e-mail address of the corresponding author
- Word count of the manuscript

## Abstract

A 200/250 word abstract summarising the content of your manuscript should be provided on a separate sheet following the title page.

## Structure

Research manuscripts should follow the usual layout; such as title page, abstract, introduction, background/literature, research design and methodology, results, discussion, conclusion, recommendations and references.

Other manuscripts may have introduction, development (headings should identify meaningful sections) and conclusion.

## Abbreviations

Abbreviations should be used sparingly and only if a lengthy name or expression is repeated throughout the manuscript. When used, the abbreviated name or expression should be written in full at first usage followed by the accepted abbreviation, in brackets.

## References

**The accuracy of the references provided is the authors' responsibility.**

Referencing should follow the Harvard style and a brief summary is provided below.

References within the text should cite the authors' names followed by the date of publication, in chronological order, e.g. (Smith 1989, Collier 1996, Love 2000).

Where there are multiple authors, the first authors name followed by et al will suffice e.g. (Jones et al 2005), but all authors should be cited in the reference list.

Page numbers should be given in the text for all direct quotes e.g. (Love 2000, p. 4.)

## Reference list

The text should be followed by an alphabetical list of all the references within your manuscript.

When a paper is cited the reference list should include authors surnames and initials, date of publication, full title of paper, full name of journal, volume number and first and last page number e.g.

Love C 2000 Bandaging Skills for Orthopaedic Nurses, Journal of Orthopaedic Nursing, 4, 89-91

When a book is cited the reference list should include authors' names and initials, date of publication, full title of the book and edition, followed by the publisher and town, county/state (and country if necessary) of publication e.g.

Tortora G, Grabowski S 2000 Principles of anatomy and physiology, 9th ed. John Wiley & Sons, USA.

## Reproduction of borrowed material

Written permission to reproduce material published elsewhere; e.g. illustrations, identifiable clinical photographs, tables or figures; should be obtained from the original publishers and authors and submitted with the manuscript. Contributors are responsible for any copyright fee involved.

## Copyright

All rights reside with the author/s. We will identify the author/s as the copyright holder/s unless specifically directed otherwise.

## Submission of manuscript

Manuscripts should be submitted on a 3.5 inch floppy disk or hard compact disk along with a hard copy to:

**Castaways UK**  
**P.O. Box 725**  
**Halifax**  
**HX1 9AF**

Alternatively manuscripts can be e-mailed to:  
**chair@castaways.org.uk**

In the interest of both author/s and readers of the magazines The Editor has manuscripts peer - reviewed and revisions to the manuscript may be recommended.