

# Getting published in ageing research

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Editor-in-Chief

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# Different Perspectives

## ∅ Editor

- | Tries to implement the journal's 'mission'
- | Needs to consider the audience (readers)
- | Needs to maintain quality/standards
- | Aware reviewers are increasingly hard to find

## ∅ Author

- | Wants to get published

# AJA MISSION

- ∅ AJA is a multi-disciplinary peer reviewed journal, and the region's premier journal on ageing.

The journal provides current evidence on priority issues in ageing related to Australia and New Zealand, and increasingly to the Asia Pacific region.

- ∅ AJA publishes original work in any area of gerontology and geriatric medicine drawing out relevance for policy and practice to inform readers from a wide range of disciplines and professions.
- ∅ International submissions are welcomed, particularly from authors in the Asia Pacific region.

# AUDIENCE

- ∅ AAG (Australian Association of Gerontology)
  - ∅ ANZSGM (Australian and NZ Society for Geriatric Medicine)
  - ∅ ACSA (Aged and Community Services Australia)
  - ∅ ACOTA (Australian Council on the Ageing)
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# AJA structure

- ∅ An Editor-in-Chief (Susan Quine)

- ∅ 4 Associate Editors:

  - Helen Bartlett – gerontology

  - Yvonne Wells – gerontology (bk reviews)

  - Len Grey – geriatrics


  - Richard Lindley – geriatrics

    - (balanced background and methods –  
quantitative and qualitative)


# Editorial Process

- ∅ MS received by EIC via MC
- ∅ Can reject without sending for review
- ∅ Allocate to one of the Associate Editors as MS editor
- ∅ The MS editor may reject without sending for review
- ∅ MS editor selects 2 reviewers (who may or may not agree to review)

# Outcomes If sent out for review

- ∅ Reject outright (based on reviewers' reports)
  - ∅ Re-submit - Willing to re-consider if Major revision performed (along lines suggested by reviewers)
  - ∅ Accept subject to Minor revision
  - ∅ Accept without revision
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# Role of Reviewers- to assess:

- ∅ Importance of topic/question addressed
  - ∅ Quality of the research design, methods of data collection and analysis/interpretation
  - ∅ Originality of data, methods, analysis
  - ∅ Whether policy, practice or research implications have been drawn out
  - ∅ Intelligibility to audience
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# Constraints

- ∅ Limited space – 4 issues of AJA per year
- ∅ Av of 8 papers per issue (max 32 per yr)
- ∅ Acceptance rate of 30% (3 in 10)
- ∅ **Finances** (Size of issue eg more papers per issue and/or more issues per year, won't happen unless there are more subscribers to fund the additional production costs).

# Reasons for Reject without review

- ∅ MS inappropriate to Journals' scope/focus
- ∅ Unoriginal replications of well known findings (irrespective of quality)
- ∅ Obvious methodological limitations (eg small sample size, biased sampling procedure, inappropriate method)
- ∅ Poorly written

# General reasons why papers are rejected AFTER REVIEW

- ∅ Issue of limited importance, boring ‘so what?’
- ∅ Not appropriate for journal
- ∅ Data old and findings now irrelevant
- ∅ Methodological difficulties – doubtful results

# Scientific/Specific reasons why papers rejected

- ∅ Unclear research questions
- ∅ Poor or weak study design
- ∅ Sample biased or too small
- ∅ Statistics inappropriate or misapplied
- ∅ Conclusions unjustified (eg make causal conclusions from cross-sectional data)
- ∅ References outdated - authors not up to date with current debate on topic

# Presentational reasons why MS maybe rejected

- ∅ Poorly organised
- ∅ Badly written
- ∅ Careless errors, typos
- ∅ Needless/endless figures/tables
- ∅ Outdated or improperly cited references
- ∅ Uninformative ABSTRACTS or different from the text
- ∅ Pretentious, wordy, jargon-ridden titles

# Other reasons for rejection

## ∅ Salami slicing results from a single study

(eg separate submission of economic analysis and effectiveness analysis)

## ∅ Evidence that the MS has been submitted and rejected elsewhere

(eg using incorrect referencing style, not supplying Key Points, submitting an Unstructured Abstract when a Structured Abstract is specified)



# Author's Perspective – How to get published

- ∅ Familiarize yourself with potential journals
- ∅ Write specifically for the selected journal
- ∅ Know the journal audience/readership and write appropriately – do not assume knowledge

(NOTE: AJA has a broad audience)

- ∅ Many MS submitted suggest the authors have never read the journal or the IFA

# Tips on writing

- ∅ Make an outline before starting
- ∅ Read the IFA very carefully and comply with requirements (especially word length)
- ∅ Use plain language – avoid jargon
- ∅ Sell your paper – convey excitement
- ∅ Be succinct – space is precious
- ∅ Get feedback from supervisor(s) and peers and refine BEFORE submitting

# DIFFERENT TYPES OF MS

- ∅ Review – literature and/or issue
- ∅ Full length research article (3000 words)
- ∅ Brief research report (1500 words)
- ∅ Innovations in Aged Care (3000 words)
- ∅ Policy and/or practice update (3000 words)

# ABSTRACT

- ∅ It must tell the whole story – background, objective, methods, results, conclusion, implications (in AJA limited to 150 words!)
- ∅ Spend time on this – tell it well – sell the MS by making it:
  - Relevant/Interesting/understandable
- ∅ The Abstract will influence the Editor's decision

# TITLE

- ∅ Choose with care
- ∅ Should indicate contents and not be misleading (as titles are important in conducting data base searches)
- ∅ Should sound interesting
- ∅ Try not to be too clever
- ∅ Questions sometimes work to stimulate interest, followed by a phrase (after a colon) Eg 'Are ... systems improving: findings from a ...study in ....'


# DISCUSSION

∅ What should go in the Discussion?

∅ 4 main things



# DISCUSSION

- ∅ Principal findings – brief, organised according to objectives stated in Introduction
  - ∅ Methodological limitations (and strengths)
  - ∅ How results relate to previous research (cited in the Introduction), including an explanation for any differences noted
  - ∅ Implications for policy or practice and research (avoid the obvious “that more research is needed”)
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# AFTER SUBMISSION

- ∅ Prepare for rejection and don't take it personally!
- ∅ MS are rarely accepted without revision
- ∅ Respond to reviewers' feedback promptly and in detail – address every query/comment
- ∅ Resubmit
- ∅ If rejected again PERSIST - select another journal

# For more detailed PPT see

- ∅ Presentation by Prof Nicholas Mays: How to successfully publish your health services research in leading journals
- ∅ on the SAX Institute website:
- ∅ <http://www.saxinstitute.org.au/index.cfm>
- ∅ Quick links – ‘HARC past events, presentations and downloads’.