

WRITE A JOURNAL ARTICLE
GRS Webinar
Dr Jo Edmondston DEC 2020



 THE UNIVERSITY OF
WESTERN
AUSTRALIA

Webinar Sections

- Section 1. Developing a Publication Strategy
- Section 2. Pre-writing Considerations
- Section 3. Drafting & Editing
- Section 4. Navigating the Publication Process

<http://www.postgraduate.uwa.edu.au/students/resources/workshops/booklets>

http://www.postgraduate.uwa.edu.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0015/3009210/JournalArticleWshop.pdf

Range of resources listed in booklet – resource list & throughout booklet

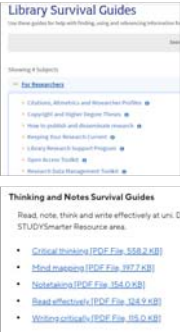





UWA Resources

Library – Researcher Support
<https://www.uwa.edu.au/library/using-the-library/research>

STUDYSmarter
<https://www.uwa.edu.au/students/study-success/studysmarter>

Careers Centre – Employability
<https://www.careers.uwa.edu.au>

Graduate Education Officers

The Graduate Education Officers provide a range of academic writing support, including writing spaces and writing retreats.

<http://www.postgraduate.uwa.edu.au/students/resources/events>



1. Developing a Publication Strategy

At UWA, we strongly support students to **publish during candidature** – but not to delay thesis submission due to publication.

There are **many good reasons** why you may wish to publish your research, many journals to choose from, and many different types of publications.

Take into account your **career aspirations** when developing a publication strategy and understand what is an important measure of **success in your chosen field**.

1. Developing a Publication Strategy

If you plan to publish your research, approach publication strategically. You could consider:

- Dividing your research into **publishable units**
- Including writing & submission in your **research timeline**
- Inviting someone to **mentor** you
- **Collaborating** with others (although your thesis must be your own work)
- Raising the **profile** of your publications
- Increasing the **impact** of your research
- Being **flexible** in your strategy to help manage change

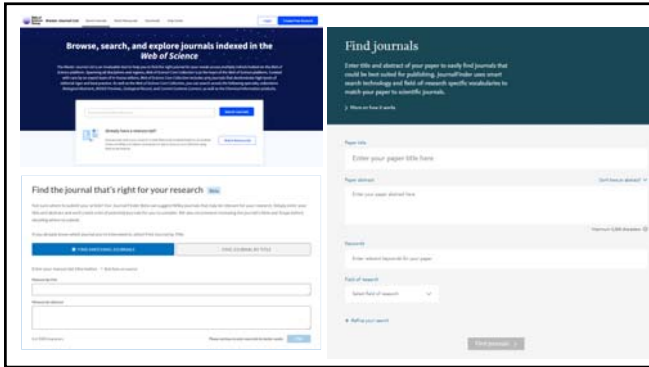
2. Pre-writing Stage – Journal Selection

Journal selection is likely to be part of your publishing strategy. **Selecting your target journal** prior to drafting your article may save you writing time as length, structure and readership varies across journals.

Some considerations:

- Do you need to publish in an **open access** journal?
- What journals are publishing papers in **your area**? (Citation index)
- What are the **high quality** journals in your area? (Journal impact factor)
- Does your research fit with the **scope** of the journal?

Talk to your supervisors / speak to your UWA librarian / use a journal finder.



2. Instructions to Authors

If you know which journal you are aiming for:

- read the instructions to authors (explicit rules)
- flip through some of the volumes (implicit rules)
- look for opinion articles / editorials about publishing in the journal

3. Drafting

Identify the general purpose of your paper.

Are you extending the boundaries of knowledge in your field?

Filling a gap in knowledge?

Exploring a controversy?

3. Drafting

Academic Phrasebank
<http://www.phrasebank.manchester.ac.uk/introducing-work/>

"The items in the Academic Phrasebank are mostly content neutral and generic in nature; in using them, therefore, you are not stealing other people's ideas and this does not constitute plagiarism."

Explaining the inadequacies of previous studies

Previous studies of X have not dealt with ...
 Researchers have not treated X in much detail.
 Such expositions are unsatisfactory because they ...
 Most studies in the field of X have only focused on ...
 Such approaches, however, have failed to address ...
 Previous published studies are limited to local surveys.
 Half of the studies evaluated failed to specify whether ...
 The research to date has tended to focus on X rather than Y.

Identifying a knowledge gap in the field of study

It is still not known whether ...
 ... much less is known about X.
 The nature of X remains unclear.
 Currently, there are no data on ...
 What is less clear is the nature of ...
 Very little is currently known about X in ...

Identifying a controversy within the field of study

A much debated question is whether ...
 One major issue in early X research concerned ...
 To date there has been little agreement on what ...
 The issue has grown in importance in light of recent ...
 One of the most significant current discussions in X is ...

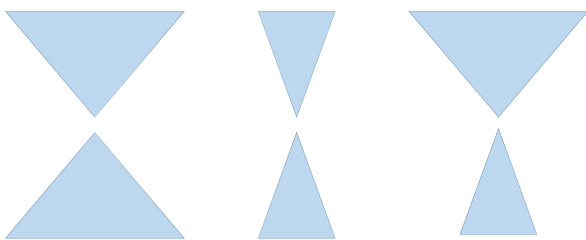
3. Consider scope & focus

Is your research general or specialised?
Is your audience general or specialised?



Think of your introduction and discussion sections of your paper as matching triangles (or funnels)

The width of the triangle represents the scope of your research and/or audience – the broader your research / audience, the broader the start and finish.



General

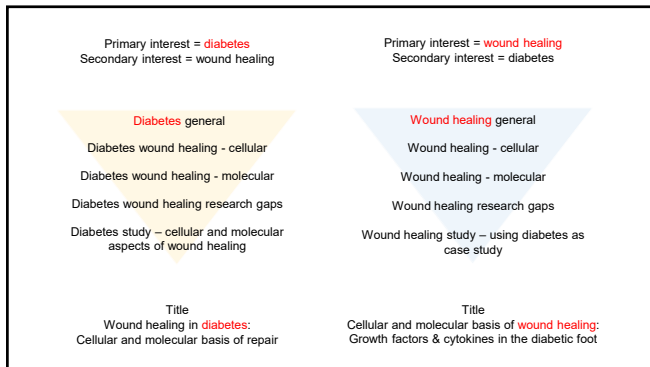
Specialised

General audience,
specialised
research outcome

3. Consider scope & focus

What is the primary focus of your study?





3. Dot point a Mini Abstract

Quickly dot point a **mini abstract**:

- What are you researching and why?
- How did you go about the research?
- What did you find?
- What do you want to say?



The aim of the mini abstract is to help you **understand your main message**. Discuss the mini abstract with your co-authors / supervisors to ensure **early agreement** about the general 'shape' of the paper. You can change / refine your message as you progress your writing.

3. Write a full, but very rough, draft

IMRAD – Introduction, Methods, Results and Discussion
(Your discipline / journal may name these sections differently)

Draft to **develop your understanding**

- Start with your **methods**, particularly if you find writing difficult
- Order your visual elements / key **results**
- Dot point your major findings, limitations, and future research direction(s) in your **discussion**
- Draft your **introduction, abstract and title** – ensure they support your main message

3. Drafting your Introduction

Roughly draft three sections for your **introduction**

1. describe the research area / background
2. indicate the inadequacy of understanding / gap / controversy
3. state the research problem / aims / questions / objectives / hypotheses

3. Model your writing on others

Strategic Language Re-use

Cargill & O'Connor. 2009.

Writing Scientific Articles:

<https://www.amazon.com.au/Writing-Scientific-Research-Articles-Strategy/dp/1118570707>

As part of a long-term research effort aimed at establishing a sustainable mixed farming system in the semi-arid and sub-humid regions of south-west China, this paper presents a detailed study on the water-use patterns and agronomic performance for some cropping systems with and without fallow crops in a semi-arid environment. The objectives of this study were to: (1) determine the grain and aboveground biomass production and water-use efficiency of individual crops grown in the rotation; (2) analyze the seasonal and inter-annual patterns of soil water storage and utilization as well as water stress for the four major rotation crops of winter wheat, corn, potato and maize; (3) determine the grain and aboveground biomass production and water-use efficiency for different rotation systems and evaluate the capacity of the rotation systems with and without fallow crops to utilize soil water storage in conjunction with seasonal precipitation; (4) establish whether the introduction of fallow crops into the wheat monoculture significantly influences the quantity of water stored in the soil that will be used by the subsequent wheat crop; and (5) discuss the characteristics of soil conservation for different rotation systems.

The frameworks or templates would look like this (or noun phrase).

As part of a long-term research effort aimed at [sw], this paper presents [sw]. The objectives of this study were to (1) determine [sw], (2) analyze [sw], (3) determine [sw] and evaluate [sw], (4) establish whether [sw] significantly influences [sw], and (5) discuss [sw].

3. Model your writing you find easy to read

- What is the **distribution of text** within articles in the journal? Are the articles focussed on results or discussion?
- Can you find a similar **descriptive or analytical title**?
- Can you find an **abstract** that provides a good overview of the entire paper?
- Can you find an article(s) that describe **similar methods** to yours?
- Can you find text, tables and figures that are similar to yours – what can you learn from the presentation of these **results**?
- Look at a number of **discussion** sections – Where do they start? How are the limitations phrased?

3. Editing

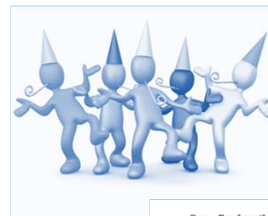
Commit to editing only when your message is clear to you

- Make the **mental switch** from drafting to editing
- Use an **editing checklist**

Keywords, titles and abstracts play a key role in the **discoverability** of an article – so ensure they are appropriate and support the main message of your article.

Read your introduction and discussion **'back-to-back'** – are they complementary?

4. Navigating the publication process



Prose, Psychopaths and Persistence:
Personal Perspectives on Publishing

David J. Parwell

School of Agricultural and Resource Economics, University of Western Australia,
Crawley WA 6009. Available to email: David.Parwell@uwa.edu.au

4. Navigating the publication process

Common reasons for **outright rejection** of an article (desk rejection):

- Lack of relevance to journal
- Non-adherence to instructions to authors
- Text match too high? A high similarity score does not necessarily indicate plagiarized text. Elsevier recommends an editorial expert interpret the report to determine whether there is any grounds for concern.

Common reasons for **rejection** related to quality of research and/or writing:

- Lack of focus or structure, poor indication of significance ('mystery format')
- Lack of consideration of readership
- Proofing problems, particularly missing references

4. Tips

- Prepare an **authorship agreement** at the beginning of the research and update throughout the process
- Upload a **clean copy** of your paper at submission that complies with all the instructions to authors
- Prepare to provide a **range of information** in addition to your paper – this can be time consuming
- Estimate the peer-review time based on the journal reporting of **turnaround times** – be patient within reason
- **Revise and resubmit** may not be a commitment to publish a suitably revised version
- Carefully craft **revision reports**

