

Writing a paper to be published on the Journal of e-Learning and Knowledge Society

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Abstract

Publishing your results is a vital step in the research lifecycle and in your career as a scientist. Publishing papers is necessary to get your work seen by the scientific community, to exchange your ideas globally and to ensure you receive the recognition for your results. The following information is designed to help you write the best paper possible by providing you with points to consider, from your background reading and study design to structuring your manuscript and figure preparation. Please use no more than 250 words of text for abstract using the paper format model and avoid to insert references in the abstract section. However arrange title, authors, abstract, disciplines and keywords to fit in one single page. Use the first page only for title, authors and abstract (the cover) and submit it separately respect to main body of the manuscript. The abstract has to be copied in the submission form, too.

For the review phase, please, use a second cover without authors. This second cover has to be included in the Article Text and will be removed on the final accepted version of the paper. Please read carefully all the instructions, use this model to write your manuscript and do not forget to read the Notes on References and the Typesetting sections at the end of this document.

KEYWORDS: Insert up to 5 keywords separated by commas

DOI

<https://doi.org/10.20368/1971-8829/xxxx>

CITE AS

Leave this space empty

1. Introduction

In Je-LKS manuscript format we mostly follow and report the Springer Author and Reviewer guideline (Springer, 2019).

Publishing your results is a vital step in the research lifecycle and in your career as a scientist. Publishing papers is necessary to get your work seen by the scientific community, to exchange your ideas globally and to ensure you receive the recognition for your results. The following information is designed to help

you write the best paper possible by providing you with points to consider, from your background reading and study design to structuring your manuscript and figure preparation.

Making informed decisions about what to study, and defining your research question, even within a predetermined field, is critical to a successful research career, and can be one of the hardest challenges for a scientist.

Being knowledgeable about the state of your field and up-to-date with recent developments can help you:

- Make decisions about what to study within niche research areas;
- Identify top researchers in your field whose work you can follow and potentially collaborate with;
- Find important journals to read regularly and publish in;

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- Explain to others why your work is important by being able to recount the bigger picture.

How can you identify a research question?

Reading regularly is the most common way of identifying a good research question. This enables you to keep up to date with recent advancements and identify certain issues or unsolved problems that keep appearing. Begin by searching for and reading literature in your field. Start with general interest journals, but don't limit yourself to journal publications only; you can also look for clues in the news or on research blogs. Once you have identified a few interesting topics, you should be reading the table of contents of journals and the abstracts of most articles in that subject area. Papers that are directly related to your research you should read in their entirety.

2. Structure of the manuscript

Once you have completed your research it is time write it up into a coherent and concise paper which tells the story of your research. Researchers are busy people and so it is imperative that research articles are quick and easy to read. For this reason papers generally follow a standard structure which allows readers to easily find the information they are looking for. In the next part of the course we will discuss the standard structure and what to include in each section.

Starting from 2020 Je-LKS strictly follows the IMRaD structure.

IMRaD refers to the standard structure of the body of research manuscripts (after the Title, Authors and Abstract in the manuscript cover):

- Introduction
- Materials and Methods
- Results
- Discussion and Conclusions

This standard structure:

- Gives a logical flow to the content;
- Makes journal manuscripts consistent and easy to read;
- Provides a “map” so that readers can quickly find content of interest in any manuscript;
- Reminds authors what content should be included in an article;
- Provides all content needed for the work to be replicated and reproduced.

Although the sections of the journal manuscript are published in the order: Title, Author(s), Abstract, Introduction, Materials and Methods, Results, Discussion, and Conclusion, this is not the best order for writing the sections of a manuscript. One recommended

strategy is to write your manuscript in the following order:

1. Materials and Methods
2. Results
3. Introduction
4. Discussion and Conclusions
5. Title
6. Abstract

Materials and Methods can be written first, as you are doing your experiments and collecting the results. Write Introduction and Discussion and Conclusions sections next, once you have had a chance to analyse your results, have a sense of their impact and have decided to publish your work.

Write your Title and Abstract last as these are based on all the other sections.

Following this order will help you write a logical and consistent manuscript. Use the different sections of a manuscript to ‘tell a story’ about your research and its implications.

You can insert sub-sections within each main section if you need to specify different and separate fields. Do not include sub-sections in the Introduction and in the Conclusions sections.

3. Title, Abstract and Keywords

3.1 The importance of Title

The title of your manuscript is usually the first introduction readers (and reviewers) have to your work. Therefore, you must select a title that grabs attention, accurately describes the contents of your manuscript, and makes people want to read further.

An effective title should:

- Convey the main topics of the study;
- Highlight the importance of the research;
- Be concise;
- Attract readers.

Writing a good title for your manuscript can be challenging. First, list the topics covered by the manuscript. Try to put all of the topics together in the title using as few words as possible. A title that is too long will seem clumsy, annoy readers, and probably not meet journal requirements.

Think about why your research will be of interest to other scientists. This should be related to the reason you decided to study the topic. If your title makes this clear, it will likely attract more readers to your manuscript. TIP: Write down a few possible titles, and then select the best to refine further. Ask your colleagues their opinion. Spending the time needed to do this will result in a better title.

3.2 Abstract and Keywords

The Abstract is:

- A summary of the content of the journal manuscript;
- A time-saving shortcut for busy researchers;
- A guide to the most important parts of your manuscript's written content.

Many readers will only read the Abstract of your manuscript. Therefore, it has to be able to stand alone. In most cases the abstract is the only part of your article that appears in indexing databases and so will be the most accessed part of your article; making a good impression will encourage researchers to read your full paper.

A well written abstract can also help speed up the peer-review process. The abstract needs to contain enough information about the paper to allow referees to make a judgement as to whether they have enough expertise to review the paper and be engaging enough for them to want to review it.

Your Abstract should answer these questions about your manuscript:

- What was done?
- Why did you do it?
- What did you find?
- Why are these findings useful and important?

Answering these questions lets readers know the most important points about your study, and helps them decide whether they want to read the rest of the paper. Make sure you follow the proper journal manuscript formatting guidelines when preparing your abstract.

Je-LKS set a maximum word count for Abstracts to 250 words, and no citations are allowed. This is to ensure that the full Abstract appears in indexing services.

Keywords are a tool to help indexers and search engines find relevant papers. If database search engines can find your journal manuscript, readers will be able to find it too. This will increase the number of people reading your manuscript, and likely lead to more citations.

However, to be effective, Keywords must be chosen carefully. They should:

- Represent the content of your manuscript;
- Be specific to your field or sub-field.

4. Introduction, Methods and Results

4.1 Introduction

The Introduction should provide readers with the background information needed to understand your study, and the reasons why you conducted your experiments. The Introduction should answer the question: what question/problem was studied? While writing the background, make sure your citations are:

- Well balanced: If experiments have found conflicting results on a question, have you cited studies with both kinds of results?
- Current: Every field is different, but you should aim to cite references that are not more than 10 years old if possible. Although be sure to cite the first discovery or mention in the literature even if it older than 10 years.
- Relevant: This is the most important requirement. The studies you cite should be strongly related to your research question.

TIP: Do not write a literature review in your Introduction, but do cite reviews where readers can find more information if they want it.

Once you have provided background material and stated the problem or question for your study, tell the reader the purpose of your study. Usually the reason is to fill a gap in the knowledge or to answer a previously unanswered question. For example, if a drug is known to work well in one population, but has never been tested in a different population, the purpose of a study could be to test the efficacy and safety of the drug in the second population.

The final thing to include at the end of your Introduction is a clear and exact statement of your study aims. You might also explain in a sentence or two how you conducted the study.

4.2 Materials and Methods

This section provides the reader with all the details of how you conducted your study. You should:

- Use subheadings to separate different methodologies;
- Describe what you did in the past tense;
- Describe new methods in enough detail that another researcher can reproduce your research or if the research - as in many social sciences - cannot be reproduced provide datasets and scripts to reproduce the analysis;
- Provide a full description on how data were collected (how, when, why, how many, ...);
- Describe established methods briefly, and simply cite a reference where readers can find more detail;
- State all statistical tests and parameters.

4.3 Results

In the Results section, simply state what you found, but do not interpret the results or discuss their implications.

- As in the Materials and Methods section, use subheadings to separate the results of different experiments or research phases.
- Results should be presented in a logical order. In general this will be in order of importance, not necessarily the order in which the experiments were performed. Use the past tense to describe

your results; however, refer to figures and tables in the present tense.

- Do not duplicate data among figures, tables, and text. A common mistake is to re-state much of the data from a table in the text of the manuscript. Instead, use the text to summarize what the reader will find in the table, or mention one or two of the most important data points. It is usually much easier to read data in a table than in the text.
- Include the results of statistical analyses in the text, usually by providing *p-values* wherever statistically significant differences are described.
- Make good use of figures and tables in your manuscript! However, avoid including redundant figures and tables (e.g. two showing the same thing in a different format), or using figures and tables where it would be better to just include the information in the text (e.g. where there is not enough data for a table or figure).

5. Discussion and Conclusions

Your Discussion and Conclusions sections should answer the question: What do your results mean?

In other words, the majority of the Discussion and Conclusions sections should be an interpretation of your results. You should:

- Discuss your conclusions in order of most to least important.
- Compare your results with those from other studies: Are they consistent? If not, discuss possible reasons for the difference.
- Mention any inconclusive results and explain them as best you can. You may suggest additional experiments needed to clarify your results.
- Briefly describe the limitations of your study to show reviewers and readers that you have considered your experiment's weaknesses. Many researchers are hesitant to do this as they feel it highlights the weaknesses in their research to the editor and reviewer. However doing this actually makes a positive impression of your paper as it makes it clear that you have an in depth understanding of your topic and can think objectively of your research.

- Discuss what your results may mean for researchers in the same field as you, researchers in other fields, and the general public. How could your findings be applied?
- State how your results extend the findings of previous studies.
- If your findings are preliminary, suggest future studies that need to be carried out.
- At the end of your Discussion and Conclusions sections, state your main conclusions once again.

6. Figures, Tables and Lists

Figures and tables (display items) are often the quickest way to communicate large amounts of complex information that would be complicated to explain in text. Many readers will only look at your display items without reading the main text of your manuscript. Therefore, ensure your display items can stand alone from the text and communicate clearly your most significant results.

Display items are also important for attracting readers to your work. Well designed and attractive display items will hold the interest of readers, compel them to take time to understand a figure and can even entice them to read your full manuscript.

Finally, high-quality display items give your work a professional appearance. Readers will assume that a professional-looking manuscript contains good quality science. Thus readers may be more likely to trust your results and your interpretation of those results.

When deciding which of your results to present as display items consider the following questions:

- Are there any data that readers might rather see as a display item rather than text?
- Do your figures supplement the text and not just repeat what you have already stated?
- Are you sure they show only significant results and are not redundant?
- Are you considered to add an Appendix file with more tables and figures?
- Have you put data into a table that could easily be explained in the text such as simple statistics or *p* values?

TABLE TITLE (OPTIONAL)

Column Title 1	Column Title 2	Column Title 3	Column Title 4
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6.1 Tables

Tables are a concise and effective way to present large amounts of data. You should design them carefully so that you clearly communicate your results to busy researchers.

Follow these rules for a well-designed table:

- Always insert tables in a text frame with text above and below the text frame;
- Prefer to set the table at the top or at the bottom of the page;
- Consider to insert the table in on a full page width if the table has more then two columns. Fit the table within a single column if it has only one or two columns;
- Insert a clear and concise legend/caption below the table and progressively number the tables;
- Divide data into categories for clarity;
- Sufficient spacing between columns and rows
- Units are provided
- Font type and size are legible (Always use the text styles!)
- Center table in the page;
- If possible set the tables at the top or at the bottom of the page close to the referencing text;
- In the text refers to table with its number (Es. as we see in Table 1,...).

In the previous page is an example how to include a table and how to reference it as Table 1. Please use always Times New Roman as font.

6.2 Figures

Figures are ideal for presenting:

- Images
- Data plots
- Maps
- Schematics

Just like tables all figures need to have a clear and concise legend caption to accompany them. As for tables insert a progressive number, set the figure centered in the page, prefer to put it at the top or at the bottom of the page.

- You can use color figures for the on-line version but remember the printed journal is in black and white so take care all figures must be expressive in gray-scale;
- Always insert figures in a text frame with text above and below the text frame;
- Prefer to set the figures at the top or at the bottom of the column/page;
- Consider to insert the figure on a full page width if it is larger then one column. Fit the figures within a single column if it can fit well in a single column;
- Insert a clear and concise legend/caption below the figure and progressively number the figures;
- Please verify that the figure remain readable when fitted in the page;

- The authors might be required to deliver images in separate files (JPG format at 300 dpi).

Following is an example how to include a figure and how to reference it as Figure 1. Please use Times New Roman as fonts for the caption and use the paragraph style.



Figure 1 - Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Praesent eu pede in lectus vulputate porttitor.

6.3 Lists

Bulleted list

- Loren ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit
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Numbered list

1. Loren ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit
2. Loren ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit

After a list you are allowed to insert a paragraph space.

Datasets and reproducibility

If your paper refers to an empirical research please upload – during the submission phase - all the elements usefull to reproduce the results of your research including full datasets. Datasets or data analysis scripts have to be submitted in a separate file format with a complete legend.

Take care to be compliant with EU-GDPR.

Datasets will be published as an addendum to the main paper.

If datasets will be not submitted the paper will be rejected.

Acknowledgements

This usually follows the Discussion and Conclusions sections. Its purpose is to thank all of the people who helped with the research but did not qualify for authorship.

Acknowledge anyone who provided intellectual assistance, technical help (including with writing and editing), or special equipment or materials.

Use this section to provide information about funding by including specific grant numbers and titles.

Use this section to provide – if necessary – attribution of different paragraphs or research stages to the authors.

Citations and footnotes

Avoid to use footnotes to explain the main text and/or to insert references. Use footnotes only in the cover page to include the corresponding authors.

Je-LKS uses the APA standard for citation/reference. So to cite a reference item in the text use the first author and the year of publication. If you cite more than one reference item let them be separated by semi-colon. If in your reference list there are more than one item with the same author in the same year label them with a, b, c,... (Johnson A. et al, 2018; Smith F., 2015a; Smith F., 2015b). If you have two authors cite both. If you have more than two authors cite only the first and then insert 'et al.' (Johnson A. et al., 2018).

When referring to a previously cited work, please use op.cit., or, if just cited, Ibidem.

Try to avoid direct text citation and prefer citation to references (Harasim 1990, p. 23) but if you consider to insert a citation use the following style:

“Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Praesent eu pede in lectus vulputate porttitor. Nullam fermentum, mauris aliquet rutrum nonummy, velit odio iaculis pede, non scelerisque risus velit non enim. (Harasim 1990, p. 23) “

References

Harasim L. (1990), *Online education: perspectives on a new environments*, New York, Praeger.

Johnson A., Raath M. A., Moggi-Cecchi J., Doyle G. A., eds (2018), *Humanity from African Naissance to Coming Millennia*, Firenze, Florence University Press.

Smith F. (2015a), Is computer-mediated communication intrinsically apt to enhance democracy in organisations?, *Human Relations*, 47 (1), 45-62.

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Notes on References

As references have an important role in many parts of a manuscript, failure to sufficiently cite other work can reduce your chances of being published. Every statement of fact or description of previous findings requires a supporting reference.

TIP: Be sure to cite publications whose results disagree with yours. Not citing conflicting work will make readers wonder whether you are really familiar with the research literature. Citing conflicting work is also a chance to explain why you think your results are different.

It is also important to be concise. You need to meet all the above needs without overwhelming the reader with too many references—only the most relevant and recent articles need to be cited. There is no correct number of references for a manuscript, but be sure to check the journal’s guidelines to see whether it has limits on numbers of references.

TIP: Never cite a publication based on what you have read in a different publication (such as a review), or based only on the publication’s abstract. These may mislead you and readers. Read the publication itself before you cite it, and then check the accuracy of the citation again before submitting your manuscript.

You should reference other work to:

Establish the origin of ideas

When you refer to an idea or theory, it is important to let your readers know which researcher(s) came up with the idea. By citing publications that have influenced your own work, you give credit to the authors and help others evaluate the importance of particular publications. Acknowledging others’ contributions is also an important ethical principle.

Justify claims

In a scientific manuscript, all statements must be supported with evidence. This evidence can come from the results of the current research, common knowledge, or from previous publications. A citation after a claim makes it clear which previous study supports the claim.

Provide a context for your work

By highlighting related works, citations help show how a manuscript fits into the bigger picture of scientific research. When readers understand what previous studies found and what puzzles or controversies your study relates to, they will better understand the meaning of your work.

Show there is interest your field of research

Citations show that other researchers are performing work similar to your own. Having current citations will help journal editors see that there is a potential audience for your manuscript.

DO NOT INSERT REFERENCE ITEMS NOT CITED IN THE MAIN TEXT!

Je-LKS uses the APA reference format. You can find more details at the following link:

<https://pitt.libguides.com/c.php?g=12108&p=64730>

Always insert DOI link if the reference item has one.

Use the reference format and style to write the reference list.

Typesettings and manuscript submission

Remember. The manuscript will be published in a camera ready process. So it's your own responsibility to strictly follow the typewriting rules and use the file format. If the format do not adhere to the editorial rules it will be refused for publication.

Here some general rules:

- Submit always the paper in one of the following formats: Word or ODT;
- Use Times New Roman font;
- Use this document as model to write your manuscript;
- Do not include additional vertical spaces between paragraphs;
- Do not use bold or underline text except for paragraph and sub-paragraph titles (use the document styles);
- Use the pre-defined styles to mark the different styles for text, paragraph titles, abstract, and so on. They are marked as JELKS in the document style list;

- Set two different files: the Cover (containing title, author(s) and abstract); the Article Text (repeat title and abstract and omit authors for the review process). The Article Text has to be anonymized! Submit two different files: one as Cover the other as Article Text. Only the Anonymized Article Text will be sent to the reviewers;
- Anonymize the article text removing self-citations and authors;
- Do not write anything in the header, in the footer and in the DOI/CITE box. They will be completed by editors.
- Limit the article text to 40.000 characters including spaces;
- Limit the abstract to 250 words;
- Tables and figures have to be included within the main text and fully formatted with the article text. We can require – if needed – separate files;
- Avoid double spaces;
- Use Enter key only to change paragraph;
- Do not use automatic syllabication, private style-sheets or macro;
- Put always one space after punctuation marks; do not insert spaces before punctuation marks, open brackets or close brackets;
- Write the following words in this form: e-learning, e-tutor , online;
- Avoid inserting URL inside the text. Eventually insert the URL as a reference item following the APA standards;
- Limit use of long lists of points or multiple levels of lists;
- In the manuscript insert only the e-mail of the corresponding author in the first page footnotes;
- When submitting the paper carefully insert all the authors with complete Given Name (First Name), Family Name, Affiliation and the Department (in the biography) and the e-mails of all authors;
- We encourage to insert ORCID for each author;
- We accept only manuscript written in English and we do not provide any proof-reading service;
- IMPORTANT: all the information about the authors you include in the submission form will be shown on the on-line page. Take care of that since it's shown to public and it'll be used by reference databases.