

Practitioner Research in Higher Education Journal

Author and Peer Reviewer Guidelines

1. Introduction

The Practitioner Research in Higher Education journal publishes research and evaluation carried out by and with practitioners working in higher education. This includes research and evaluation in HE in FE contexts and in work-based learning activity. The journal is available open access online at <http://194.81.189.19/ojs/index.php/prhe>

Two broad types of paper are published:

Practitioner Research Papers: these may focus on developing theory and practice through analysis of empirical data or on furthering understanding of practitioner research in higher education.

Evaluation of Practice Papers: in these reports the authors will demonstrate how their evaluation of practice has led to new ways of working. These may be empirical studies, but are more pragmatic than systematic research projects; however, they must be underpinned by critical engagement with the literature. In other cases, a paper may critically engage with a body of theory or research literature but make reference to case studies to illustrate and reinforce the argument.

2. Anonymous peer review

Initially an editor will consider a paper in terms of its relevance for the journal. If the paper is considered to be potentially relevant and publishable then it will be forwarded for anonymous peer review. An anonymous version of each submitted paper is scrutinised by two peer reviewers. The journal aims to provide supportive feedback and the feedback from reviewers and editors will provide ways in which to improve your paper even if it is not accepted for publication. Reviewers are asked to critically evaluate the paper and the project underpinning it but also to respect the author(s) and their work and use sensible and supportive language in their feedback.

Reviewers will comment against each of the following prompts:

- Is the title clear and relevant?
- What is the main focus of the paper and is it relevant to PRHE?
- What are the strengths of the paper and of the research / evaluation?
- How might the paper be improved? Are there any major problems?

- Are there problems with citation and referencing that require action? and make a recommendation as follows:
 - The paper should be accepted for publication subject to minor revisions
 - The paper should be accepted for publication subject to major revisions
 - The paper should be rejected

3. Submitting your paper

To submit a paper for consideration by the editor please send it as an email attachment to the editorial assistant, Linda Shore at linda.shore@cumbria.ac.uk

Check your script against the author guidance set out below before submitting it to the journal. This will save a good deal of work for the editorial team and for you as the author.

Please note: If your paper is accepted for publication, it is assumed that you agree to the article also being placed in the University of Cumbria's digital repository 'Insight'.

4. Amending your paper

If your paper is accepted subject to revisions, then it is important that you minimise the time and cost for the peer reviewers and editors by detailing carefully your response to the feedback and the amendments that you have made.

At the top of the text in your resubmission insert a table, as below. In the left hand column set out your interpretation of the feedback from reviewers and editors. For each aspect of feedback in the centre column briefly describe your amendments (or your reason for not changing your text). In the right hand column give the page number and paragraph number (from the top of the page) of your amendments in the revised version of the paper.

Feedback comments	Amendments made	Page and paragraph numbers
1		
2		
3		
4		
etc		

As you are completing amendments and completing the amendments table it is helpful to reviewers if you highlight any sections with substantial changes to the text in red ink. This simple method is the most effective, please do not use track changes or post-its.

5. Guidance

Please provide an abstract of no more than 150 words, it should not normally include any citations.

The main paper will normally be up to 5000 words in length. This word count does not include the references but authors are required to avoid excessively long lists of references by only citing work that is directly relevant to their argument.

Please write for an international audience. Use Plain English and avoid unnecessary acronyms or excessive local detail. Give clear signals within the text and use side headings to help identify the structure of the paper for the reader.

The Harvard system should be used. See the exemplar references in the next section. Only those sources actually cited within the paper should be provided as references in alphabetical order of authors at the end of the paper. Citation and referencing needs to be accurate and complete. Papers will not be considered if the format of the references does not comply with our guidelines.

You must include a clear statement about ethical approval obtained for your project; for example this may have been gained within an institutional ethical approval process. If your research or reflective account relates to a taught course, you need to state clearly that your report was given ethical clearance within the arrangements provided by the programme.

Diagrams and illustrations will only be accepted where the editor is convinced that they add considerable value to your paper. In this case, consider carefully the font size required within the diagram and use an existing copy of the journal to estimate the constraints. Any photographs, tables, charts or diagrams should be numbered as Figure 1, Figure 2 etc. in the order to which they are referred. They should be submitted as separate word files and named again using the name of the first author e.g. smithfigure1.doc / smithfigure2.doc etc. The editor will insert the diagrams within the body of the manuscript during formatting. The chart or diagram must be ready for reproduction without retouching and all lettering, graph lines and points must be sufficiently large and bold to permit reproduction when the diagram has been reduced to a size suitable for inclusion in the publication. Do not use any type of shading on computer-generated illustrations.

The **captions** for all of the figures should comprise a brief title and a description of the illustration. These may be inserted within the text next to a space representing the ideal placement of the diagram but please be aware that due to the planning of the page layout, the editing team and publisher may need to move these.

6. Template for submitted papers

Page 1:

Author names and affiliations

Title (Arial 14)

Abstract

Maximum of 200 words, no citations (Arial 12)

Keywords

Up to six keywords (Arial 12)

Page 2 onwards:

Title (Arial 14)

Introduction (Arial 12 bold)

Main body of text (Arial 12)

Other side headings (Arial 12 bold)

Use side-headings as appropriate (Arial 12)

Acknowledgements

You may wish to acknowledge funding agencies (Arial 12)

References

You should only include texts that are cited in your paper and these should include all forms of publication including websites. Please list in alphabetical order by first author's surname. Even working within Harvard the punctuation of references does vary, please see the example reference list below and follow the conventions used.

Case, S.M. and Swanson, D.B. (2002) *Constructing test questions for the basic and clinical sciences*. Available at:

www.nbme.org/publications/item-writing-manual.html (Accessed December 2006)

Clegg, K. and Bryan, C. (2006) Reflections, rationales and realities, in Bryan, C. and Clegg, K.(ed.) *Innovative Assessment in Higher Education*. London: Routledge:216-227.

- Cowan, J. (2010b) Virtual relationships – behind a veil?, *Academic Identities for the 21st Century: the 2nd international conference*. Glasgow: University of Strathclyde, 16-18 June. Glasgow: Centre for Academic Practice and Learning Enhancement: 53–59.
- Dill, D.D. (1999) Academic accountability and university adaptation: the architecture of an academic learning organisation, *Higher Education*, 38 (2):127-154.
- Disability Rights Commission (2002) *Code of practice for providers of post-16 education and relevant services*. Stratford upon Avon: DRC.
- Dunn, L., Morgan, C., O'Reilly, M and Parry, S. (2004) *The Student Assessment Handbook: New directions in traditional and on-line assessment*. London: RoutledgeFalmer.
- Gibbs, G. (2010) *Using Assessment to Support Student Learning*, [Online]. Available at:
www.leedsmet.ac.uk/100317_36641_Formative_Assessment3Blue_WEB.pdf (Accessed 29 February 2012).