



Instructions to Authors **British Journal of School Nursing (BJSN)**

BJSN is a double-blind peer-reviewed journal that publishes a range of different articles including **research studies, clinical articles, professional issues, policy reviews** and **debate articles**. BJSN endorses and values inter-professional working and welcomes articles and correspondence from all professional groups.

The journal welcomes submissions from both experienced and first-time authors. The supportive review process often provides inexperienced authors with constructive advice on how to improve their articles. If you would like to discuss your ideas or propose an article, please [email](mailto:bjsn@markallengroup.com) the Editor, Caroline Voogd, or call on 020 7501 6758.

General advice

Here are some general points to keep in mind when writing an article for the journal:

- BJSN aims to present all articles, including basic research, in an easy-to-read informative style. Simplicity is key, so avoid jargon.
- Consider the key 'take-home' message from your article. It may be helpful to distil the essence of your article into four or five key points before you start and use these to guide your writing (see also below).
- Be very clear about what your article adds to the literature and current knowledge. If this is obvious, your article is more likely to be accepted.
- Organize your article in a logical manner. Use subheadings to guide the reader from topic to topic and maintain interest in the article.
- Think about including illustrations, diagrams and tables or boxes to attract the reader's eye and help clarify more complex parts of the discussion.
- If you have not written for publication before, it can be helpful to take advice from colleagues. Always proofread and check spellings carefully.

Submission

Your article should be submitted online at
<http://www.epress.ac.uk/bjsn/webforms/author.php>

Word length of articles and number of references

Review articles should generally be approximately 1800–2400 words, although this can be exceeded in special cases when agreed with the Editor, or when submitting original research. If you have any difficulties keeping to the title, length or other specifications of the article, as set down in the commissioning letter or these instructions, please discuss this with the Editor. Although it is important that review articles are fully referenced, no more than 30 should normally be used.

Permissions

You have to gain the necessary permission to reproduce figures/tables/artwork from other journals or books before submitting your article. Permissions can then be acknowledged at the end of the article.

Conflict of interest statements

Please also declare any conflicts of interest at the end of your article. These are any possible interests, financial or otherwise, which may embarrass the author or the journal if highlighted at a later date.

Copyright

Following acceptance of articles MA Healthcare will hold exclusive rights to articles.

Article

1. Articles should be double-spaced (including references) and formatted for A4 article and all pages should be numbered.
2. For purposes of confidentiality, author identification should appear only on the title page (see below).
3. When you have submitted your article you will receive an acknowledgement by letter or email stating that your article has arrived and has been sent for review.
4. All articles submitted for publication in BJSN are peer-reviewed before publication. The review process will take approximately 8 weeks. When the reviews are complete the Editor will contact you regarding the suitability of your article for publication.
5. If your article is accepted for publication you will receive proofs for correction at a later date before the article is published.

Title page

This should include:

1. Title of article.
2. The names of the authors (with first names).
3. Institutional affiliation of each author.
4. Full details of each author's current appointment and work address.
5. Name, and full contact details (address, telephone and fax numbers, email address) of the author responsible for correspondence.

Abstract

An abstract of between 100 and 150 words should give a brief outline of the content of the article.

Headings

Please use headings where relevant and appropriate as this makes the text easier to read and enhances clarity. Please indicate the relative 'weight' you give each one, i.e. main headings, sub headings etc.

Conclusions

Your conclusions should be succinct and logically ordered. Identify gaps in present knowledge and suggest future initiatives. Take care not to introduce new points here!

Key words

Please supply five to six key words that adequately summarize the major themes of your article. The key words will be used in database searches, so consider your choice carefully. They will appear in a box at the beginning of your article.

Figures and tables

Figures (illustrations, graphs, bar charts and photographs) and tables (information listed in a boxed off row-and-column format) are encouraged and are popular with readers. Remember, your article has to compete with other articles in the journal to catch the eye of the reader. An interesting item can turn a browser into a reader. As a rough guide, there should be a table or illustration every 600 words. It is helpful if authors can provide any photographs or slides they think suitable for their article. In the case of line drawings, our artists can transform rough drawings into finished artwork. Please clearly indicate the number of the figure or table in the text of the article as well as on the figure/table. Please ensure that all tables and figures are cited in the text and that permission has been granted to use them where necessary.

Figures

1. Colour and black-and-white photographs and slides are acceptable—colour pictures are encouraged.
2. Radiographs should be submitted as good quality photographs.
3. Photographs and slides can be supplied in hard copy or electronically. If supplied electronically, please ensure that the images are high-resolution. It is preferable that they each be sent separately (i.e. not embedded in a Word document or Powerpoint presentation).
4. Photographs should not have arrows drawn on them by hand. Please indicate the position of arrows or labels on an accompanying illustration.
5. Please indicate the details you particularly want to illustrate and the degree of cropping that can be made.
6. Each figure should have a label pasted on its back indicating the journal title, author's name, number of the figure and the top of the figure. Do not write on the back of figures or scratch/mar them by using paper clips.
7. Authors must gain the necessary permission to reproduce figures/tables/artwork from other journals or books BEFORE submitting their articles.
8. Figures should be numbered consecutively in order of their first citation in the text.

Tables

1. Type each table double-spaced on a separate sheet.
2. Place references and explanatory matter in footnotes, not in the heading.
3. Explain in footnotes all non-standard abbreviations that are used in each table.
4. If you use data from another published or unpublished source, obtain permission and acknowledge source fully.
5. Number tables consecutively in order of citation in the text.
6. Authors are responsible for checking the accuracy of number tables, statistical presentations, etc.

References

The Harvard system must be used. Provide full details of the **original source of the material used** (do not use 'cited in...').

In the text

1. For one or two authors, give surnames plus the year of publication:

- As Black (1987) and Black and White (1990) have shown...
As already reported (Black and White, 1987)...
2. For 3 or more authors, put the first author's name followed by 'et al':
e.g. As Black et al (1987) have shown...
 3. When several references are cited simultaneously the order should be chronological:
e.g. Ross, 1990; James, 1997; Levi, 1998...

In the reference list

1. Arrange references alphabetically by first author's name.
Black B (1987)...
Black B (1999)...
 2. Give the surnames and initials of all authors for references with *six or less* authors.
Black B, Green G (1995)...
Black B, White W (1993)...
Black B, White W, Green G, Brown B, Tan T (1993)...
Black B, Green G, Tan T (2004)...
Black B, Abel C, Tan T (1995)...
- The last three references above are in chronological order as they are all cited as Black et al in the text.

For *seven or more* authors print the first three and add 'et al' – are arranged chronologically:

- Black B, White W, Green G et al (2003)...
Black B, Green G, Tan T et al (2004)...
Black B, Brown B, Tan T et al (2005)...
3. The sequence for a standard journal article is: author(s) (year) Title. *Journal title* (abbreviated as in PubMed) **volume**(issue): first page–last page. For example:

Armstrong-Esther C, Hagen B, Sandilands M, Williams R, Smith C (2005) A longitudinal study of home care clients and their informal carers. *Br J Community Nurs* **10**(6): 284–91

4. The sequence, layout and punctuation for books are:

Personal Author:

Ellis H (1980) *Lecture Notes on Psychiatry*. 5th edn. Blackwell, Oxford

Editor:

Scott H, Brown B, eds (1973) *Living with Parkinson's disease*. Vol 5. Raven Press, New York

Chapter in Book:

Samuels B (1979) Pulmonary complications of AIDS. In: Rand A, Long B, eds. *Management of AIDS*. Butterworths, London: 387–95

5. Articles that have been submitted for publication but not yet accepted are *not* acceptable as references. They should be cited in the text as 'unpublished

observations'. (Smith XY, unpublished observations, with or without a date). Similarly, 'personal communication' should be inserted in the text in parentheses.

6. Articles that have been accepted for publication but not yet published may be included in the reference list: Abel HL (2002) The management of chronic asthma in the community. *Br J Community Nurs* (in press)

Abbreviations and units

1. Abbreviations are acceptable as long as they are defined at first mention.
2. SI units should be used, except for measurement of blood pressure (mmHg) and haemoglobin (g/dl).

Advice on submitting original research

Reviewers will be looking at the originality of your research, whether the methods are appropriate, and the overall strength and rigour of the work.

Your introduction should include relevant, up-to-date literature and support the need for the study. The aims of the study should be clearly stated. It is important to describe the theoretical underpinning of the methods used and explain why they are appropriate to answer the research question. Please provide power calculations if appropriate.

Data analysis steps should be clearly described, with supporting references if appropriate.

Give a full description of the sample, including how it was obtained and how the appropriate sample size was determined.

The discussion should provide critical analysis of the relevant literature and relate this to the findings of your study. Return to the aims and discuss the extent to which these have been met. Avoid overly descriptive articles and do not generalize where this is inappropriate. Relate the work to practice and make suggestions for further research.

The limitations section is a key part of the article and should be considered carefully.

A typical layout for a research piece would be: introduction, background, methods, results, discussion, limitations and conclusion, although this may not be appropriate for all types of research.

Guidance on statistics

Statistical advice should be sought before data collection. Please provide full results of any tests used, giving complete test results (test statistic, degrees of freedom, *P* value). Appropriate indicators of error or uncertainty, such as confidence intervals, should also be given. Include power calculations if appropriate and give the name and version of any software used.

Ethical approval

If the work involves the use of animal or human subjects, the author should ensure that the article contains a statement that all procedures were performed in compliance with relevant laws and institutional guidelines and that the appropriate institutional committee(s) has/ve approved them.