

## **Instructions for Authors**

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All manuscripts should be submitted as MS word files or RTF files and should be sent to the Editor, Journal of Institutional Research (JIR) at <jir@aair.org.au> JIR publishes manuscripts of theoretical or practical interest to those engaged in educational research, evaluation or policy development and analysis, including economics, population, financial, and political analyses of education policies; planning and quality management; syntheses of previously completed policy studies, evaluation and change management theories, and methodologies; results of significant evaluation and improvement efforts; retrospective views of evaluation studies, and book reviews related to educational evaluation and policy issues.

**Key topics include:** higher education policy and practice; quality management in higher education; evaluation of university teaching, learning and curriculum design; academic leadership and management; institutional research and evaluation; knowledge management; and research and practice involving the use of higher education statistics. A range of methodological approaches—empirical, reflective, quantitative, qualitative—are accepted.

The Editorial Staff welcome articles on original research findings and informed opinion in education and related fields. Articles submitted for publication must meet three criteria: One, the article must contribute to knowledge, theory, and practice; Two, the article content must be accurate and scholarly; and Three, the article must conform to the editorial guidelines of the *Journal*.

Consistent with the aims and scope of JIR, special consideration for publication will be given to proposals that possess one or more of the following qualities or characteristics:

1. Sound investigations of educationally-relevant theoretical propositions or conceptual frameworks.
2. Research that integrates education with academic disciplines such as anthropology, economics, philosophy, political science, psychology, and sociology, or examines educational issues from perspectives offered by these disciplines.
3. Evaluations of educational programs and/or practices with widespread international interest and/or significance.
4. Advanced methods and procedures which are clearly explained.

## MANUSCRIPT PREPARATION GUIDELINES

### *Content*

Accepted for publication are papers on Institutional Research—***planning, coordination, collection, organisation, compiling and dissemination of information concerning the characteristics and performance of the institution.***

- Institutional Research planning and assessment activities
- Institutional Research educational and organisational studies, reports and summaries
- institutional studies, reports and databases designed to support recurring decision needs of the institution
- comprehensive and authoritative information about the institution
- techniques of institutional research, research methodologies and the design and execution of information systems and surveys

in at least one of the following categories:

*Research:* Reports important results from own experience or research; describes problem clearly; provides baseline data; explains what researcher has done and why; and provides results.

*Integration:* Integrates research of others in meaningful way; compares or contrasts theories; critiques results; and/or provides context for future exploration.

Papers appearing in JIR may be interdisciplinary or specific to one or a group of disciplines, and may address a general or specific audience.

### **Review Process**

Manuscripts are reviewed first by the editorial staff. Those that are appropriate for the journal are sent to at least two experts in institutional research and practice and/or teaching scholarship, particularly in the writer's discipline or subject area. All reviews are "blind," that is, without identifying the author(s) to the reviewers. Reviewers are encouraged to write comments for the author(s). Editorial feedback and/or reviews are provided to authors for all manuscripts.

Articles may be rejected or accepted outright, or accepted with a request for revision. In some cases, articles requiring major revision (such as including an additional year's results) are not officially accepted or rejected, but will be reconsidered when revised.

## MANUSCRIPT REQUIREMENTS

**Title Page:** Prepare a title page that includes the manuscript title, authors and affiliations, contact information for the corresponding author, and author acknowledgements, if relevant. The author names should only appear on the title page and manuscripts should be submitted with author names blinded to facilitate the review process.

A 250-word abstract should follow the title page and precede the text of the manuscript. It should have as a heading the title of the manuscript, but not the names of the authors. In a research paper, the abstract should include statements of the problem, the method, the data, and the conclusions. In a review or discussion article, state the topics covered and the central thesis. Standard abbreviations may be used freely if the meaning is clear. Use complete sentences, and do not repeat information that is in the title.

**Use of Language:** Please remember that you are writing for an international audience. National colloquialisms and idiomatic use of language should be avoided to the extent possible. Word choices and sentence constructions that might imply bias against persons on the basis of gender, racial or ethnic group membership, disability, sexual orientation, or age should be avoided.

**Style:** All manuscripts should conform to the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (Fifth Edition). The entire document should be double spaced and left justified, submitted in Times New Roman 12 point font. Use no more than three levels of heading and have pages numbered consecutively. Authors should prepare an abstract and 3-5 key words. The manuscript should be prepared in MS Word (.doc) or rich text format (.rtf) and include: the text, references, endnotes (if necessary), appendix(ces), tables, and figures. References, endnotes, tables, and figures must be on separate pages. Figure legends should be typed on a separate page. Figures may also be placed into separate files. Indicate the approximate placement of each table and figure within the text. Authors should use Australian spellings with the Macquarie dictionary as the reference source and all references to authors within the manuscript should be blinded.

**Subheads:** Articles are frequently improved by the judicious use of subheads. However, avoid the use of "Introduction" for a lead section.

**Tables, Graphics and Charts:** The use of graphic media such as Tables, Graphics and Charts are encouraged to clarify points discussed in articles.

- **Tables:** If tables are used, use the Table feature in the word processing program. DO NOT use Tabs to align material to create tables. Tables and figures should be numbered, titled, and cited. The text should indicate where the table(s) should be inserted.
- **Graphics:** Graphics should be submitted in separate graphics files. The journal requests graphics be in JPEG (.jpg) format. Graphics should be included as

separate files and referenced within the document in brackets as "[insert graphic here: picture1.jpg]."

**Hyperlinks:** Authors may include hyperlinks to web-based resources and sites related to their articles. Authors may incorporate their e-mail addresses in hypertext within their articles if they desire. Hyperlinks should be included in the article text in the word processing format.

**Word Limits:** The full manuscript (including references, appendices, and tables) should not exceed 5,000 words in length. In addition, authors should prepare an abstract limited to 250 words. Manuscripts that substantially exceed the stated word limitations will be returned to the author(s).

**Originality of the Manuscript:** Authors submitting manuscripts to **JIR** should not simultaneously submit them to another journal, nor should manuscripts have been published elsewhere in substantially similar form or with substantially similar content. Authors who have submitted manuscripts to other journals based on the same data are asked to state this in their covering letter.

**Obtaining Permissions:** Obtaining permission for any quoted or reprinted material that requires permission is the responsibility of the author.

**Submission of a manuscript implies commitment to publish in JIR.**

**Copyright:** It is a condition of publication that the authors vest copyright in their articles, in JIR. This enables us to ensure full copyright protection and to disseminate the article, and the journal, to the widest possible readership in print and electronic formats, as appropriate. Authors may use the article elsewhere after publication without prior permission from JIR, provided that acknowledgment is given to the journal as the original source of publication, and that JIR is notified so that our records show its use is properly authorised.

Research articles should have a clearly organised order of presentation. The following elements and their order is a guide and is not intended to be prescriptive.

*The problem:* Present the nature, scope and significance of the problem.

*Related research:* Present and discuss related research selectively, and include references essential to clarifying the problem under examination.

*Rationale:* Define the variables and state the hypotheses. Explain the rationale behind each hypothesis.

*Method:* Describe the sample, sampling procedures, variables, data-gathering instruments (if well known, their description may be omitted), and statistical procedures.

*Results:* Summarise the data and their statistical treatment. Consider rival hypotheses and the importance of related studies and educational theory. Present summary data

(means, standard deviations, frequencies, correlation coefficients, etc.) in tabular or graphic form. Report means, standard deviations, degrees of freedom, and sample sizes. Report statistics to 2 decimal places. Discussion of these data should be interpretive.

*Discussion:* Summarise your findings, and state the support or nonsupport of the original hypotheses. Compare your results with the work of others. Describe any theoretical or practical implications of the results. Suggest improvements on your research or propose new research questions.

References are cited by names and year in the text and listed alphabetically in the reference list. Be sure that all references listed are cited in the text, and all those cited are listed. Check that spellings of names and years in the text agree with the list. References should be styled according to the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (Fifth Edition).

## EDITORIAL PROCESS

### The criteria used to guide the review process are:

- The paper says something of interest to the JIR readership;
- The paper provides an important critical and/or analytical insight;
- The paper is succinct and coherent;
- The conclusion is well supported and persuasively argued;
- The paper demonstrates methodological soundness;
- The issue/problem is well situated in an appropriate literature;
- Overall, the paper reads well and will engage a broad higher education audience.

Each reviewer evaluates the proposal in terms of seven criteria. They are:

- **Scholarly nature:** the manuscript's subject matter and its topic is appropriate for publication in a scholarly journal and would be of interest to the JIR readership
- **Significance:** the manuscript advances the state of knowledge in its field or improves understanding of its topic and provides an important critical and/or analytical insight
- **Methods:** the methods used to conduct the research are fundamentally sound.
- **Discussion:** the discussion corresponds with the results and is relevant, meaningful and thorough.
- **References:** The issue/problem is well situated in an appropriate literature, properly presented, up to date, adequate in scope.
- **Presentation:** English language usage, grammar and spelling is appropriate, organisation is logical and easy to follow, paper is succinct and coherent. The conclusion is well supported and persuasively argued;

For each criterion, the proposal is rated on a 5-point scale (Excellent; Good; Fair; Poor; Not appropriate for the journal).

**Accepted manuscripts:** JIR reserves the right to edit manuscripts and consult with authors on questions of substance. Keep an exact copy of your manuscript so that if a question arises, the editors can refer you to specific pages, paragraphs, or lines for clarification. Manuscript galleys are sent to authors for review.

Manuscripts are accepted for consideration with the understanding that they are original material and are not under consideration for publication elsewhere. The review process normally takes four months.