



## FOR AUTHORS & REFEREES

- **GUIDE TO AUTHORS**
- **SUBMISSION GUIDELINES**
- **EDITORIAL & PUBLISHING POLICIES**
- **GUIDE TO REFEREES**

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### Guide to Authors

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#### Aims and scope

*Palgrave Communications* is an open access online-only journal dedicated to publishing high quality original research. The scope of the journal reflects Palgrave Macmillan's strengths in the humanities, the social sciences and business. In addition to our multidisciplinary position, we particularly welcome interdisciplinary research, which fosters interaction, creativity and reflection between the rich disciplines that our project encompasses.

We aspire to be the definitive peer-reviewed outlet for open access academic research in and between our subjects. *Palgrave Communications* is open to all theoretical and methodological perspectives.

We are committed to providing an efficient service for both authors and readers. A streamlined peer-review system, together with the support of an eminent Editorial Board, allows us to make rapid and fair publication decisions. Prompt dissemination of accepted papers to Palgrave Macmillan's wide readership and beyond is achieved through a program of continuous online publication. Published manuscripts are enhanced by innovative web technologies, including an enhanced article template and article level metrics.

#### Content types

##### **Article**

Articles describe original research. Articles may range in length from short communications through to more in-depth studies. Regardless of the length, an Article represents novel and important research.



We do not impose word length limits, but suggest articles should be no more than 8000 words (excluding abstract, tables, figure legends and references).

Articles are peer-reviewed and include received/accepted dates. Where it is relevant authors must include a statement about any competing financial interest before publication.

### **Review**

A Review is an authoritative, balanced and scholarly survey of recent developments in a research field. Although Reviews should be recognized as scholarly by specialists in the field, they should be written with a view to informing non-specialist readers. Thus, Reviews should be presented using simple prose, avoiding excessive jargon and technical detail.

Reviews may range in length, and while we do not impose word length limits, we do suggest Reviews should be no more than 8000 words (excluding abstract, tables, figure legends and references).

Where it is relevant authors must include a statement about any competing financial interest before publication.

### **Editorial**

Editorials represent the opinion of the Journal on a topical matter of interest to the readership. This section is commissioned only.

### **Comment**

Comments, above all, should offer a focused argument on a specific issue. In doing so they may take different forms, including personal, agenda-setting and provocative analyses or syntheses offering calls for action and/or novel perspectives on topical issues. Authors are encouraged to write in a colourful, authoritative voice, at a level accessible to the journal's global, multi- and inter-disciplinary readership; ideas and arguments should be underpinned by reference to the surrounding academic literature. Papers that merely summarise the findings of large research projects, or are adapted versions of previously published papers, cannot be considered. Authors should keep within a word range (excluding references) of ca. 2000-4000 words (excluding references).

Authors should [visit the Submission Guidelines](#) for more detailed information.

### **Costs**

*Palgrave Communications* is an open access publication. To provide this service, all expenses, including peer review, production, and online hosting and archiving, are recovered via an article-processing charge (APC).

Visit our [open research site](#) for further information about APC pricing and our free OA funding support service.

### **Editorial Board**

*Palgrave Communications* has a distinguished and extensive [Editorial Board](#), which reflects the broad scope and standing of the Journal — academics and researchers from a broad spectrum of the community. Editorial board members are ambassadors for *Palgrave Communications*. They will review papers and suggest reviewers as appropriate. Decisions to publish or not on *Palgrave Communications* are made by reference to our reviewers' recommendations, and in some instances with further reference to our Editorial Board.



## Contact information

For general editorial enquiries relating to *Palgrave Communications*, including manuscript submission queries, and for enquiries relating to the Editorial Board, please contact [palcomms@palgrave.com](mailto:palcomms@palgrave.com).

## Online submission

All submissions must be made via our online [submission system](#). Authors can upload manuscript files (text, figures, and videos) directly to our office and check on the status of their manuscripts during the review process. In addition, reviewers can access the manuscript (in a highly secure fashion that maintains referee anonymity) over a direct internet link, which speeds up the review process. Please consult our technical information on file formats and tips for using the system effectively.

When submitting your manuscript, please note that there are restrictions on the types of files that you are able to upload. This will enable a faster production process. Accepted article and figure types are as follows:

1. For Article Text — txt, doc, docx, tex
2. For Figures — eps, tif, and jpeg

If your paper does not include formulas, we strongly encourage you to submit your paper in txt, doc or docx rather than tex.

## Submission policies

Submission to *Palgrave Communications* is taken to imply that the submitted manuscript has not already been published elsewhere. If similar or related work has been published or submitted elsewhere, then the authors must provide a copy with the submitted article. Authors may not submit elsewhere while the manuscript is under consideration at *Palgrave Communications*.

The primary affiliation for each author should be the institution where the majority of their work was done. If an author has subsequently moved, the current address may also be stated. Springer Nature remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.

If the manuscript includes personal communications, please provide a written statement of permission from any person who is quoted. E-mail permission messages are acceptable.

Please visit the [visit the Guide to Referees](#) for further information on the peer review process.

The corresponding author is alerted when a proof of the paper is ready. Contributors will be able to correct major errors or inaccuracies in the title or author list, but *Palgrave Communications* reserves the right to limit the scope of changes.

*Palgrave Communications* reserves the right to reject a paper even after it has been accepted if it becomes apparent that there are serious problems with the content or with violations of our publishing policies.

For information relating to submission of a competing financial interests statement, pre-publication publicity, deposition of data as a condition of publication, availability of data after publication, human and animal subjects, digital image integrity, biosecurity, corrections and retractions, duplicate publication, confidentiality and plagiarism, please visit the [editorial and publishing policies](#) of *Palgrave Communications*.



## How to submit

For detailed information about how to submit to *Palgrave Communications*, please view the [view the Submission Guidelines](#).

## Initial submission

Manuscripts should be submitted via the online [submission system](#). Copies of any papers containing similar or related work that are under consideration or in press at other journals should be included with the submission as additional supplementary information.

The cover letter of your manuscript should include suggestions for [Editorial Board](#) members who might advise on reviewers for your paper. We also urge you to suggest appropriate reviewers we might approach. We do however reserve the right not to approach your suggested reviewers. Manuscripts that are within scope and seem, on initial assessment, to be technically sound, will be peer reviewed. At the submission stage, authors may also indicate a limited number of individuals who should not review the paper. Excluded individuals must be identified by name.

## Peer review

The corresponding author will be notified by e-mail when we decide whether or not the paper will be peer reviewed. Papers judged to be of potential interest to our readership are sent for formal review, typically to two reviewers. A decision is then made, based on the reviewers' advice, from among several possibilities:

- Accept
- Accept after minor revision
- Probably acceptable after major revision with re-review
- Unacceptable as is, but worth reconsideration if extensively revised
- Reject

## Decision after review

In cases where the referee has requested well-defined changes to the manuscript that do not appear to require extensive further experiments, we may request a revised manuscript that addresses the referees' concerns. The decision letter will specify a deadline.

In cases where the referees' concerns are more wide-ranging, we will normally reject the manuscript. If the consensus is that the manuscript is of potential interest to the journal, however, they may express interest in seeing a future resubmission. The resubmitted manuscript may be sent back to the original referees or to new referees. In such cases, revised manuscripts will not retain their earlier submission date.

In either case, the revised manuscript should be accompanied by a cover letter explaining how the manuscript has been changed.

An invited revision should be submitted via the revision link to the online submission system provided in the decision letter, not as a new manuscript.



## Final submission and acceptance

When all editorial issues are resolved, the paper is formally accepted. The received date is the date on which we received the original manuscript. The accepted date is when the acceptance letter is sent.

Contributors are sent proofs; however, the production process does not allow minor changes. Only changes in the title, author list or major scientific errors will be permitted at this stage. All corrections will be approved by the publishing team. *Palgrave Communications* reserves the right to make the final decision about matters of style and the size of tables and figures.

## Appeals

Even in cases where *Palgrave Communications* does not invite resubmission, some authors may ask that we reconsider a rejection decision. These are considered appeals, which, by policy, must take second place to the normal workload. In practice, this means that decisions on appeals often take several weeks. Only one appeal is permitted for each manuscript, and appeals can only take place after peer review. Final decisions on appeals will be made by the Publisher following consultation with appropriate Editorial Board member(s).

Decisions are reversed on appeal only if we become convinced that the original decision was a serious mistake, not merely a borderline call that could have gone either way. Further consideration may be merited if a referee made substantial errors of fact or showed evidence of bias, but only if a reversal of that referee's opinion would have changed the original decision. Similarly, disputes on factual issues need not be resolved unless they were critical to the outcome. Thus, after careful consideration of the authors' points, most appeals will be rejected.

If an appeal merits further consideration, we reserve the right to send the authors' response or the revised paper to the original referee/s.

## Ethics policy

This journal is a member of the [Committee on Publication Ethics](#). We expect all prospective authors to read and understand our [Ethics Policy](#) before submitting any manuscript to this journal. This policy details the responsibilities of all authors, editors and reviewers working with and for Palgrave Macmillan Journals as well as our own ethical responsibilities. This includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism, falsification of data, misuse of third party material, fabrication of results and fraudulent authorship. Please note that submitted manuscripts may be subject to checks using the [iThenticate](#) service, in conjunction with [CrossCheck](#), in order to detect instances of overlapping and similar text. The [iThenticate](#) software checks submissions against millions of published research papers, documents on the web, and other relevant sources. If plagiarism or misconduct is found, consequences are detailed in the policy.

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- Pre-submission checklist
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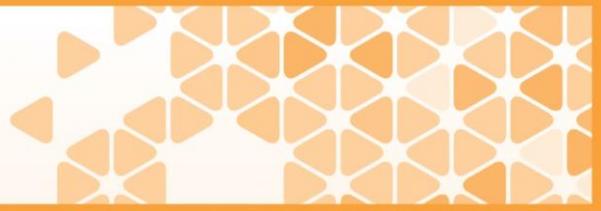
### Pre-submission checklist

Authors should ensure that the following key issues are addressed prior to submission; additional guidance on manuscript preparation is outlined in the detailed sections that follow.

<p><b>Supporting cover letter</b></p>	<p>All submissions should be accompanied by a cover letter that includes the following key points for the Editors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statement on why the work is appropriate for <i>Palgrave Communications</i>;</li> <li>• Outline of the paper's aims and key conclusions;</li> <li>• Short description how the paper builds on, and advances, existing thinking in the relevant field(s) of scholarship.</li> </ul> <p>Authors should also indicate whether they have had any prior discussions with a <i>Palgrave Communications</i> Editorial Board Member about the work described in the manuscript.</p>
<p><b>Abstract</b></p>	<p>Please include an abstract in the manuscript file that includes the details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Background context (e.g. for the general reader);</li> <li>• Specific knowledge gap the work aims to fill and/or the research question explored;</li> <li>• Methods/approach used in the study;</li> <li>• Key findings, conclusions or observations;</li> <li>• Implications or applications of the work.</li> </ul>



	<p>A reader should have a clear impression from the abstract of the novelty and significance of the work, and how it builds on existing scholarship. <b>Abstracts should not exceed 450 words.</b></p>
<p><b>Anonymised manuscript files</b></p>	<p>Manuscript files should not include any information that can identify the authors. All relevant author information should be entered into the submission system and cover letter as appropriate.</p>
<p><b>Article references/bibliography</b></p>	<p>All submissions should follow the Harvard style of in-text parenthetical citations, followed by a complete list of works cited at the end of the paper. Further details can be found here.</p>
<p><b>Data Availability statement</b></p>	<p>All original research articles should include a Data Availability statement at the end of the manuscript following the reference list—this includes papers that do not analyse or generate any datasets. Standard statements can be found here.</p>
<p><b>Figures and permissions to reuse copyrighted materials</b></p>	<p>All figures should be uploaded as separate files - and not included in the article text. <b>Note:</b> tables may be included in the main text.</p> <p>Figure legend(s) should be included at the end of the main article file as a list.</p> <p>All figures must have individual legends. These should begin with a brief title sentence for the whole figure and continue with a short description of what is shown; methodological details should be kept to a minimum as much as possible.</p> <p>Authors bear the responsibility for checking whether supporting material (e.g. figures, illustrations, datasets) submitted is subject to copyright or ownership rights. Authors must obtain permission to reproduce any such items, and include these permissions with their final submission. <a href="#">Please see our further guidance on the use of 3rd party materials.</a> Publication of papers will be delayed if such information is not provided.</p> <p>Please include full copyright and permission for reuse information in all figure/table legends (where applicable). This <a href="#">published paper</a> provides a worked example.</p>



The [editorial team](#) can answer any questions regarding the submission process.

### General information for preparing manuscripts

Online submissions include a cover letter, a manuscript text file, individual figure files and optional Supplementary Information files. All figures should be uploaded as separate files - and not included in the article text. Note: tables may be included in the main text. Figure legend(s) should be included at the end of the main article file as a list. The main article file should be no more than 3 MB in size. Supplementary Information should be combined and supplied as a separate file, preferably in PDF format.

Authors should note that only the following file types can be uploaded for article text and figures:

- For article text: txt, doc, docx, tex
- For figures: eps, tiff, jpg

If your paper does not include formulas, we strongly encourage you to submit your paper in txt, doc or docx rather than tex.

*Palgrave Communications* is read by academics and researchers from diverse backgrounds. In addition, many are not native English speakers. Authors should, therefore, give careful thought to how their findings may be communicated clearly. Although a basic knowledge may be assumed, please bear in mind that the language and concepts that are standard in one field may be unfamiliar to non-specialists. Thus, technical jargon should be avoided as far as possible and clearly explained where its use is unavoidable.

Abbreviations, particularly those that are not standard, should also be kept to a minimum. Where unavoidable, abbreviations should be defined in the text or legends at their first occurrence, and abbreviations should be used thereafter. The background, rationale and main conclusions of the study should be clearly explained. Titles and abstracts in particular should be written in language that will be readily intelligible to any academic or researcher. We urge authors to ask a colleague with different expertise to review the manuscript before submission, in order to identify concepts and terminology that may present difficulties to non-specialist readers.

The format requirements of *Palgrave Communications* are described below.

*Palgrave Communications* uses UK English spelling.

### Writing in English

For editors and reviewers to accurately assess the work presented in your manuscript you need to ensure the English language is of sufficient quality to be understood. If you need help with writing in English you should consider:

- Visiting the [English language tutorial](#) which covers the common mistakes when writing in English;
- Asking a colleague who is a native English speaker to review your manuscript for clarity;
- Using a professional language editing service where editors will improve the English to ensure that your meaning is clear and identify problems that require your review. Two such



services are provided by our affiliates [Nature Research Editing Service](#) and [American Journal Experts](#).

Please note that the use of a language editing service is not a requirement for publication in *Palgrave Communications* and does not imply or guarantee that the article will be selected for peer review or accepted.

### Cover letter

Authors should provide a cover letter that includes the affiliation and contact information for the corresponding author. Authors should briefly explain why the work is considered appropriate for *Palgrave Communications*. Authors are asked to suggest the names and contact information for reviewers and they may request the exclusion of certain referees. Please ensure that your cover letter also includes suggestions for Editorial Board members who would also be able to review or advise on your submission. Finally, authors should indicate whether they have had any prior discussions with a *Palgrave Communications* Editorial Board Member about the work described in the manuscript.

### Format of manuscripts

In most cases we do not impose strict limits on word and page lengths, however we encourage authors to write concisely and suggest authors adhere to the guidelines below.

The manuscript text file should include the following parts. The main text of an Article should begin with an Introduction or other introductory section (with heading) of referenced text that expands on the background of the work (some overlap with the Abstract is acceptable), followed by the main sections of the paper. The file should also contain Reference and any Acknowledgements (optional). Additional Information (including a Competing Interests statement), Figure Legends and Tables (maximum size of one page) can be added as relevant. Footnotes are allowed.

For first submissions (i.e. not revised manuscripts), authors may choose to incorporate the manuscript text and figures into a single file up to 3 MB in size - the figures may be inserted within the text at the appropriate positions, or grouped at the end. Any Supplementary Information should be combined and supplied as a separate file, preferably in PDF format. The first page of the Supplementary Information file should include the title of the manuscript and the author list.

Authors who do not incorporate the manuscript text and figures into a single file should adhere to the following: all textual content should be provided in a single file, prepared using either Microsoft Word or LaTeX; figures should be provided in individual files.

TeX/LaTeX - Authors submitting LaTeX files may use any of the standard class files such as `article.cls`, `revtex.cls` or `amsart.cls`. Non-standard fonts should be avoided; please use the default Computer Modern fonts. For the inclusion of graphics, we recommend `graphicx.sty`. Please use numerical references only for citations. References should be included within the manuscript file itself as our system cannot accept BibTeX bibliography files. Authors who wish to use BibTeX to prepare their references should therefore copy the reference list from the `.bbl` file that BibTeX generates and paste it into the main manuscript `.tex` file (and delete the associated `\bibliography` and `\bibliographystyle` commands). As a final precaution, authors should ensure that the complete `.tex` file compiles successfully on their own system with no errors or warnings, before submission.

Manuscripts published in *Palgrave Communications* are not subject to in-depth copyediting as part of the production process. Authors are responsible for procuring copy-editing or language editing



services for their manuscripts, either before submission, or at the revision stage, should they feel it would benefit their manuscript.

## References

References will not be copy-edited by *Palgrave Communications*. References will be linked electronically to external databases where possible, making correct formatting of the references essential.

All submissions should follow the Harvard style of in-text parenthetical citations, followed by a complete list of works cited at the end of the paper. The journal does not permit numbered referencing; numbered footnotes may be used to amplify on the main text or provide extra information. Authors should ensure that all references cited in the article text are included in a reference list at the end of the paper.

Please use the formatting outlined in the examples below. For any needed clarification of the style, please consult one of the many online guides to the Harvard style.

- Journal articles

Lang D C, Monefeldt C and Rosenhead J V (2000) Looking in the wrong place for healthcare improvements: A system dynamics study of an accident and emergency department. *Journal of the Operational Research Society* 51(5): 518-531.

- Online articles

Ormerod R J (2009) Rational inference: deductive, inductive and probabilistic thinking. *Journal of the Operational Research Society* advance online publication 26 August, doi:10.1057/jors.2009.96.

- Books

Glover F and Laguna M (1997) *Tabu Search*. Kluwer Academic Publishers: London.

- Chapter in a contributed volume

Osman IH (1995) An introduction to meta-heuristics. In: Lawrence M and Wilsdon C (eds) *Operational Research Tutorial 1995*. Operational Research Society: Birmingham, pp 92-122.

- Websites

Author last name First initial (Year published). Page title. [online] Website name. Available at: URL [Accessed Day Mo. Year].

- Magazines

Author last name First initial (Year published) Article title. Magazine, (Volume), Page(s).



- Artworks

Author last name First initial (Year created) Title. [Medium]. City that the artwork is/was displayed in: Gallery or Museum.

- Archive material

Author last name First initial (Year published) Title of the material. [format] Name of the university, library, organization, Collection name, code, or number. City.

- Published research dataset with a persistent identifier

Hao Z, AghaKouchak A, Nakhjiri N, Farahmand A (2014) Global Integrated Drought Monitoring and Prediction System (GIDMaPS) Datasets. figshare. <http://dx.doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.853801>.

### **Acknowledgements**

Acknowledgements should be brief, and should not include thanks to anonymous referees and editors, or effusive comments. Grant or contribution numbers may be acknowledged. Assistance from, proof-readers and editors should also be acknowledged here.

### **Author contributions**

*Palgrave Communications* permits the designation of up to six equally contributing authors, up to six joint supervisors, and up to three corresponding authors. Any requests to include more equally contributing, supervising, or corresponding authors are reviewed by the Managing Editor. When applicable, equally contributing and jointly supervising authors should be clearly indicated in the manuscript, using the exact wording: 'These authors contributed equally to this work'; 'These authors jointly supervised this work'. For corresponding authors the following wording should be used: 'Corresponding author' followed by 'Correspondence to:'

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The author bears the responsibility for checking whether material submitted is subject to copyright or ownership rights, eg figures, tables, photographs, illustrations, trade literature and data. The author will need to obtain permission to reproduce any such items, and include these permissions with their final submission. Where use is so restricted, the Publisher must be informed with the final submission of the material. [Please see our further guidance on the use of 3<sup>rd</sup> party materials](#). Please add any necessary acknowledgments to the typescript, preferably in the Acknowledgments section. Credit the source and copyright of photographs, figures, illustrations etc. in the accompanying captions.

### **Competing interests**

Where appropriate a competing interests statement is required for accepted papers published in *Palgrave Communications* where authors have competing financial interests.

### **Data availability**



All original articles should include a Data Availability statement after the References section. This should, wherever possible, include a link to and citation of any datasets analysed or generated in the study, when these are available in an appropriate public repository.

We recognise it is not always possible to share research data publicly, for instance when individual privacy could be compromised, and in such instances data availability should still be stated in the manuscript along with any conditions for access. Data Availability statements can take one of the following forms (or a combination of more than one if required for multiple datasets):

1. The datasets generated during and/or analysed during the current study are available in the [NAME] repository, [PERSISTENT WEB LINK TO DATASETS]
2. The datasets generated during and/or analysed during the current study are not publicly available due [REASON WHY DATA ARE NOT PUBLIC] but are available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.
3. Data sharing not applicable to this article as no datasets were generated or analysed during the current study.
4. All data generated or analysed during this study are included in this published article.

An example of a Data Availability statement can be found in the paper by Shutters *et al.* (2015).

While deposition of data in specialised public repositories (statement #1) is the preferred approach wherever possible, in principle all authors who generate or analyse research data are expected to comply with #2, which is the minimum journal policy.

The journal's editorial team carries out appropriate checks to ascertain whether non-availability of data is for legitimate reasons.

### Figure legends

Figure legends begin with a brief title sentence for the whole figure and continue with a short description of what is shown in each panel in sequence and the symbols used; methodological details should be kept to a minimum as much as possible.

### Tables

Please submit tables at the end of your text document (in Word or TeX/LaTeX, as appropriate). Tables that include statistical analysis of data should describe their standards of error analysis and ranges in a table legend.

### Equations

Equations and mathematical expressions should be provided in the main text of the paper. Equations that are referred to in the text are identified by parenthetical numbers, such as (1), and are referred to in the manuscript as "equation (1)".

If your manuscript is or will be in .docx format and contains equations, you must follow the instructions below to make sure that your equations are editable when the file enters production.



If you have not yet composed your article, you can ensure that the equations in your .docx file remain editable in .doc by enabling "Compatibility Mode" before you begin. To do this, open a new document and save as Word 97-2003 (\*.doc). Several features of Word 2007/10 will now be inactive, including the built-in equation editing tool. You can insert equations in one of the two ways listed below.

If you have already composed your article as .docx and used its built-in equation editing tool, your equations will become images when the file is saved down to .doc. To resolve this problem, re-key your equations in one of the two following ways.

1. Use MathType to create the equation. MathType is the recommended method for creating equations.
2. Go to Insert > Object > Microsoft Equation 3.0 and create the equation.

If, when saving your final document, you see a message saying "Equations will be converted to images," your equations are no longer editable and we will not be able to accept your file."

### **General figure guidelines**

Authors are responsible for obtaining permission to publish any figures or illustrations that are protected by copyright, including figures published elsewhere and pictures taken by professional photographers. The journal cannot publish images downloaded from the internet without appropriate permission.

Figures should be numbered separately with Arabic numerals in the order of occurrence in the text of the manuscript. One- or two-column format figures are required. When appropriate, figures should include error bars. A description of the statistical treatment of error analysis should be included in the figure legend.

Figure lettering should be in a clear, sans-serif typeface (for example, Helvetica); the same typeface in the same font size should be used for all figures in a paper. Use symbol font for Greek letters. All display items should be on a white background, and should avoid excessive boxing, unnecessary colour, spurious decorative effects (such as three-dimensional 'skyscraper' histograms) and highly pixelated computer drawings. The vertical axis of histograms should not be truncated to exaggerate small differences. Labelling must be of sufficient size and contrast to be readable, even after appropriate reduction. The thinnest lines in the final figure should be no smaller than one point wide. Authors will see a proof that will include figures.

Figures divided into parts should be labelled with a lower-case bold a, b, and so on, in the same type size as used elsewhere in the figure. Lettering in figures should be in lower-case type, with only the first letter of each label capitalized. Units should have a single space between the number and the unit, and follow SI nomenclature (for example, ms rather than msec) or the nomenclature common to a particular field. Thousands should be separated by commas (1,000). Unusual units or abbreviations should be spelled out in full or defined in the legend. Scale bars should be used rather than magnification factors, with the length of the bar defined on the bar itself rather than in the legend. In legends, please use visual cues rather than verbal explanations such as "open red triangles".

Unnecessary figures should be avoided: data presented in small tables or histograms, for instance, can generally be stated briefly in the text instead. Figures should not contain more than one panel unless the parts are logically connected; each panel of a multipart figure should be sized so that the whole figure can be reduced by the same amount and reproduced at the smallest size at which essential details are visible. When a manuscript is accepted for publication, we will ask for high-



resolution figure files. This information will be included in the acceptance letter. See below for details of digital image production and submission.

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### **Figures for peer review**

Figures should be uploaded on submission via our online submission system, in one of our preferred formats. Please use the smallest file size that provides sufficient resolution for their content to be clearly legible, preferably less than 1 MB, so that referees do not have to download extremely large files.

### **Figures for publication**

When possible, we prefer to use original digital figures to ensure the highest-quality reproduction in the journal. For optimal results, prepare figures to fit either one (87mm wide) or two columns (180mm wide). When creating and submitting digital files, please follow the guidelines below. Failure to do so, or to adhere to the following guidelines, can significantly delay publication of your work.

Authors are responsible for obtaining permission to publish any figures or illustrations that are protected by copyright, including figures published elsewhere and pictures taken by professional photographers. The journal cannot publish images downloaded from the internet without appropriate permission.

#### **1. Line art, graphs, charts and schematics**

All line art, graphs, charts and schematics should be supplied in vector format, such as EPS (preferred), and should be saved or exported as such directly from the application in which they were made.

They should not be saved as bitmaps, jpegs or other non-vector file types unless strictly necessary.

#### **2. Photographic and bitmapped images**

All photographic and bitmapped images should be supplied in TIFF (preferred) or JPEG format at 300 DPI if possible. A single column width measures 88 mm and a double column width measures 180 mm.

Please do not supply Word or Powerpoint files with placed images. Images can be supplied as RGB or CMYK (note: we will not convert image colour modes).

Please do not scan laser printouts of figures and send them to us as digital files. The dot pattern on a laser print often creates a moiré pattern when scanned.



Figures that do not meet these standards will not reproduce well and may delay publication until we receive high-resolution images.

### Supplementary information

Any Supplementary Information should be submitted with the manuscript and will be sent to referees during peer review. It is published with the online version of accepted manuscripts. We request that authors avoid "data not shown" statements and instead include data necessary to evaluate the claims of the paper as Supplementary Information. Supplementary Information is not edited by *Palgrave Communications*, so authors should ensure that it is clearly and succinctly presented, and that the style and terminology conform to the rest of the paper. Authors should include the title of the manuscript and full author list on the first page.

**Please note that the preferred way to share datasets associated with papers is via specialised public repositories, if one exists, or through a general data repository that can assure permanence and unique identification of deposited datasets. Please consult the journal's [data availability policy](#) for further guidance.**

The guidelines below detail the creation, citation and submission of Supplementary Information - publication may be delayed if these are not followed correctly. Please note that modification of Supplementary Information after the paper is published requires a formal correction, so authors are encouraged to check their Supplementary Information carefully before submitting the final version.

1. Designate each item as Supplementary Table, Figure, Video, Audio, Note, Data, Discussion, Equations or Methods, as appropriate. Number Supplementary Tables and Figures as, for example, "Supplementary Table S1". This numbering should be separate from that used in tables and figures appearing in the main article. Supplementary Note or Methods should not be numbered; titles for these are optional.
2. Refer to each piece of supplementary material at the appropriate point(s) in the main article. Be sure to include the word "Supplementary" each time one is mentioned. Please do not refer to individual panels of supplementary figures.
3. Audio and video files should use a frame size no larger than 320 x 240 pixels.
4. Images should be just large enough to view when the screen resolution is set to 640 x 480 pixels.
5. Remember to include a brief title and legend (incorporated into the file to appear near the image) as part of every figure submitted, and a title as part of every table.
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7. With the exception of spreadsheet, audio and video files, please submit the Supplementary Information as a single combined PDF if possible (in the order figures, tables and text). If necessary, we can also accept any of these formats:

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.gif - GIF image  
.html - HTML document  
.doc - MS Word document  
.jpg - JPEG image  
.swf - Flash movie  
.mov - QuickTime movie  
.xls - MS Excel spreadsheet  
.pdf - Adobe Acrobat file  
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1. Author responsibilities
2. License agreement and author copyright
3. Competing interests
4. Availability of materials and data
5. Studies involving human participants
6. Digital image integrity and standards
7. Refutations, complaints and corrections
8. Duplicate publication
9. Confidentiality and pre-publicity
10. Plagiarism and fabrication

### Author responsibilities

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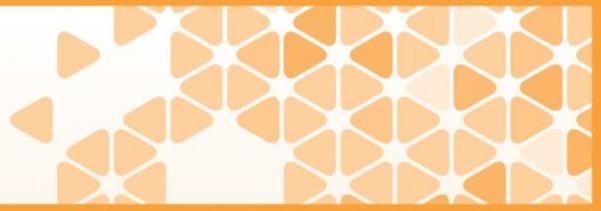
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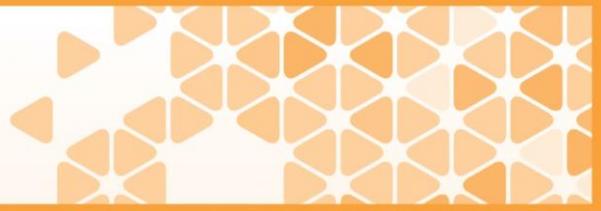
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## Competing interests

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The corresponding author is responsible for submitting a competing financial interests statement on behalf of all authors of the paper. This statement must be included in the submitted article file, under the heading "competing financial interests". The corresponding author will also be required to indicate the existence of a competing financial interest as part of the submission process.

### **Definition of a competing financial interest**

For the purposes of this statement, competing interests are defined as those of a financial nature that, through their potential influence on behaviour or content or from perception of such potential influences, could undermine the objectivity, integrity or perceived value of a publication.

They can include any of the following:

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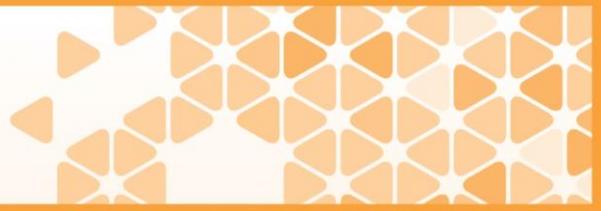
**Personal financial interests:** stocks or shares in companies that may gain or lose financially through publication; consultation fees or other forms of remuneration from organizations that may gain or lose financially; patents or patent applications whose value may be affected by publication.

It is difficult to specify a threshold at which a financial interest becomes significant, but note that many US universities require faculty members to disclose interests exceeding \$10,000 or 5% equity in a company (see, for example, B. Lo et al. *New Engl. J. Med.* 343, 1616–1620; 2000). Any such figure is necessarily arbitrary, so we offer as one possible practical alternative guideline: "Any undeclared competing financial interests that could embarrass you were they to become publicly known after your work was published."

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## Competing financial interest statement format guidelines

The statement included in the article file must be explicit and unambiguous, describing any potential competing financial interest (or lack thereof) for each contributing author.

Examples of declarations are:

Competing financial interests

The author(s) declare no competing financial interests.

Competing financial interests

Dr X's work has been funded by A. He has received compensation as a member of the advisory board of B and owns stock in the company. He also has consulted for C and received compensation. Dr Y and Dr Z declare no potential conflict of interest.

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All original articles should include a Data Availability statement. This should, wherever possible, include a link to and citation of any datasets analysed or generated in the study, when these are available in an appropriate public repository.

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#### Image integrity and standards

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A certain degree of image processing is acceptable for publication (and for some experiments, fields and techniques is unavoidable), but the final image must correctly represent the original data and conform to community standards. The guidelines below will aid in accurate data presentation at the image processing level; authors must also take care to exercise prudence during data acquisition, where misrepresentation must equally be avoided. Manuscripts should include an 'equipment and settings' section with their Methods that describes for each figure the pertinent instrument settings, acquisition conditions and processing changes, as described in this guide.

- Authors should list all image acquisition tools and image processing software packages used. Authors should document key image-gathering settings and processing manipulations in the Methods.
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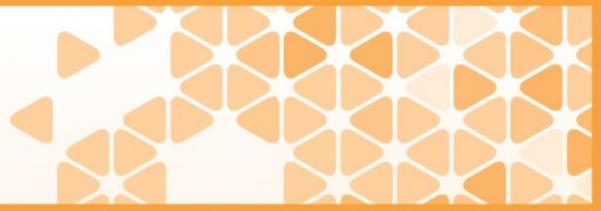
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**Correction:** Notification of an important error made by the journal or by the author that affects the publication record or the academic integrity of the paper, or the reputation of the authors, or of the journal.

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Retractions are judged according to whether the main conclusion of the paper no longer holds or is seriously undermined as a result of subsequent information coming to light of which the authors were not aware at the time of publication. In the case of experimental papers, this can include further experiments by the authors or by others that do not confirm the main experimental conclusion of the original publication. Readers wishing to draw our attention to published work requiring retraction should first contact the authors of the original paper and then write to the publishing team, including copies of the correspondence with the authors (whether or not the correspondence has been answered). The publishing team will seek advice from reviewers if they judge that the information is likely to draw into question the main conclusions of the published paper.



If there is an error in the lettering on a figure, the usual procedure is to publish a sentence of rectification. A significant error in the figure itself is corrected by publication of a new corrected figure as a correction. The figure is republished only if we consider it necessary for a reader to understand it.

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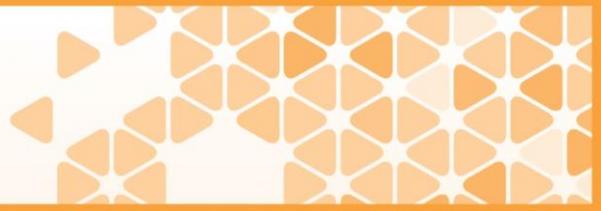
Authors' corrections to supplementary information (SI) are made only in exceptional circumstances (for example major errors that compromise the conclusion of the study). Published corrections to SI are usually linked to the Correction statement. Authors cannot update SI because new data have become available or interpretations have changed, as the SI is a peer-reviewed and integral part of the paper, and hence part of the published record.

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### **Confidentiality**

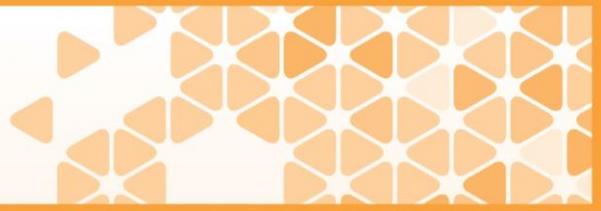
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Plagiarism can be said to have clearly occurred when large chunks of text have been cut-and-pasted. Such manuscripts would not be considered for publication in *Palgrave Communications*. But minor plagiarism without dishonest intent is relatively frequent, for example, when an author reuses parts of an introduction from an earlier paper. We judge any case of which we become aware on its own merits.

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If a case of plagiarism comes to light after a paper is published in *Palgrave Communications*, the publication will conduct a preliminary investigation. If plagiarism is found, the publication will contact the author's institute and any funding agencies. A determination of misconduct will lead *Palgrave Communications* to run a statement, bidirectionally linked online to and from the original paper, to note the plagiarism and to provide a reference to the plagiarised material. The paper containing the plagiarism will also be obviously marked on each page of the PDF. Depending on the extent of the plagiarism, the paper may also be formally retracted.

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Discussion of published work: When discussing the published work of others, authors must properly describe the contribution of the earlier work. Both intellectual contributions and technical developments must be acknowledged as such and appropriately cited.

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## Guide to Referees

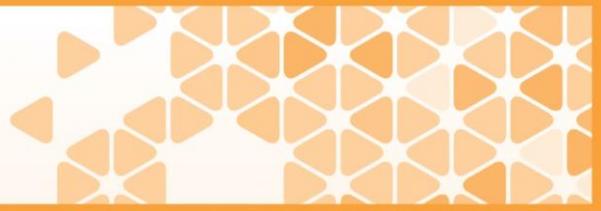
1. Aims and scope
2. Criteria for publication
3. The review process
4. Selecting referees
5. Writing the review
6. Confidentiality
7. Timing
8. Anonymity
9. Editing referees' reports
10. Competing interests
11. Online manuscript review

### Aims and scope

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We are committed to providing an efficient service for both authors and readers. A streamlined peer-review system, together with the support of an eminent Editorial Board, allows us to make rapid and fair publication decisions. Prompt dissemination of accepted papers to Palgrave Macmillan's wide readership and beyond is achieved through a program of continuous online publication. Published manuscripts are enhanced by innovative web technologies, including interactive browsing and article level metrics.



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- the methodology and any data utilised are technically sound;
- the paper provides strong evidence for its conclusions;
- the results are novel (we do not consider abstracts and internet preprints to compromise novelty); and
- the manuscript is important to the specific field(s) and/or is important in interdisciplinary terms.

In general, to be acceptable, a paper should represent an advance in understanding likely to influence thinking in the field.

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To save authors and referees time, only those papers that seem most likely to meet our editorial criteria are sent for formal review. Those papers judged to be of insufficient interest to the field, or otherwise inappropriate, are rejected promptly without external formal review (although these decisions may be based on informal advice from the Editorial Board).

Manuscripts judged to be of potential interest to our readership are sent for formal review, typically to two reviewers. A decision is then made, based on the reviewers' advice, from among several possibilities:

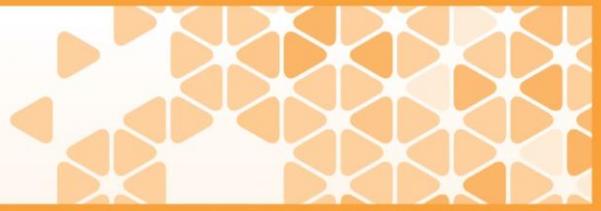
- Accept
- Accept after minor revision
- Probably acceptable after major revision with re-review
- Unacceptable as is, but worth reconsideration if extensively revised
- Reject

Referees are asked to recommend a particular course of action. The most useful reports, therefore, provide us with the information on which a decision should be based. Setting out the arguments for and against publication is often also helpful.

We may go back to referees for further advice, particularly in cases where referees disagree with each other, or where the authors believe they have been misunderstood on points of fact. We therefore ask that referees should be willing to provide follow-up advice as requested. We are very aware, however, that referees are normally reluctant to be drawn into prolonged disputes, so we try to keep consultation to the minimum we judge necessary to provide a fair hearing for the authors.

When referees agree to review a paper, we consider this a commitment to review subsequent revisions as well. However, editors will not send resubmitted papers to the referees if it seems that the authors have not made a serious attempt to address the referees' criticisms.

We take referees' criticisms very seriously, and in particular, we are very reluctant to disregard technical criticisms. In cases where one referee opposes publication, we may consult with the other referee(s) as to whether s/he is applying an unduly critical standard. We occasionally bring in additional referees to resolve disputes, but we prefer to avoid doing so unless there is a specific issue on which we feel a need for further advice.



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We normally check with potential referees before sending them manuscripts to review. Referees should bear in mind that these messages contain confidential information, which should be treated as such.

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The primary purpose of the review is to provide us with the information needed to reach a decision. It could also instruct the authors on how they can strengthen their paper to the point where it may be acceptable.

As far as possible, a negative review should explain to the authors the weaknesses of their manuscript, so that rejected authors can understand the basis for the decision. This is secondary to the other functions, however, and referees should not feel obliged to provide detailed advice to authors of papers that do not meet the criteria for *Palgrave Communications*.

Confidential comments are welcome, but it is helpful if the main points are stated in the comments for transmission to the authors. To enable rapid and easy decisions we have developed a template approach. The review process will answer the following questions:

- Is the paper methodologically and technically sound?
- What are the major claims of the paper?
- Are the claims novel? If not, please identify the major papers that compromise novelty
- Are the claims convincing? If not, what further evidence is needed?
- Will the paper be of interest to others in the field?
- Will the paper influence thinking in the field?
- Are the claims fully supported by the argument(s) and/or any associated data?
- Are the claims appropriately discussed in the context of previous literature?
- Have the authors complied with the [journal's policy](#) and the research community's expectations on the availability of research data, and documented this in their [Data availability statement](#)?
- If the manuscript is unacceptable in its present form, does the study seem sufficiently promising that the authors should be encouraged to consider a resubmission in the future?

Please note that it is *Palgrave Communications'* policy to remain strictly neutral with respect to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations, and the naming conventions used in maps and affiliation are left to the discretion of authors. Referees should not, therefore, request authors to make any changes to such unless it is critical to the clarity of the academic content of a manuscript.

In addition to answering the previous questions, referees can provide further information, including comments that may answer the following:

- Is the manuscript clearly written? If not, how could it be made more accessible?
- Have the authors done themselves justice without overselling their arguments/claims?
- Have they been fair in their treatment of previous literature?

- Have they provided sufficient methodological detail?
- Is any statistical analysis of any data sound?

Referees are given the opportunity to provide comments that will be transmitted to authors and to provide comments that are solely for us.

Finally referees are asked for their overall recommendation:

- Accept
- Accept after minor revision
- Probably acceptable after major revision with re-review
- Unacceptable as is, but worth reconsideration if extensively revised
- Reject

### **Confidentiality**

We ask all referees to treat the review process as strictly confidential, and not to discuss the manuscript with anyone not directly involved in the review. If it is deemed necessary to consult with colleagues, please identify them to us. Consulting with experts from outside the referee's own institution may also be acceptable, but please check with us before doing so, to avoid involving anyone who may have been excluded by the authors.

### **Timing**

*Palgrave Communications* is committed to rapid editorial decisions and publication, and we believe that an efficient editorial process is a valuable service both to our authors and to the scholarly community as a whole. We therefore ask referees to respond promptly (within four weeks of receiving a manuscript, although this may be either longer or shorter by prior arrangement). If referees anticipate a longer delay, we ask them to let us know so that we can keep the authors informed and, where necessary, find alternative referees.

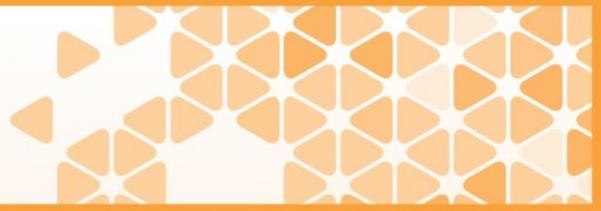
### **Anonymity**

We do not release referees' identities to authors or to other referees, except when referees specifically ask to be identified. Unless they feel strongly, however, we prefer that referees should remain anonymous throughout the review process and beyond. We ask referees not to identify themselves to authors without our knowledge.

We deplore any attempt by authors to confront referees or determine their identities. Our own policy is to neither confirm nor deny any speculation about referees' identities, and we encourage referees to consider adopting a similar policy.

### **Editing referees' reports**

As a matter of policy, we do not suppress referees' reports; any comments that were intended for the authors are transmitted, regardless of what we may think of the content. On rare occasions, we may edit a report to remove offensive language or comments that reveal confidential information about other matters. We ask referees to avoid saying anything that may cause needless offence; conversely, authors should recognize that criticisms are not necessarily unfair simply because they are expressed in robust language.



### **Competing interests**

Our normal policy is to avoid referees whom the authors have excluded, for whatever reason. We also usually try to avoid referees who have recent or ongoing collaborations with the authors, who have commented on drafts of the manuscript, who are in direct competition to publish similar research, who we know to have a history of dispute with the authors, or who have a financial interest in the outcome. It is not possible for the publishing team or our editorial board to know of all possible biases, however, so we ask referees to draw our attention to anything that might affect their review, and to decline to review in cases where they feel unable to be objective.

We recognize, however, that competing interests are not always clear-cut, and the above circumstances need not automatically undermine the validity of a report. Indeed, the people best-qualified to evaluate a paper are often those closest to the field, and a skeptical attitude towards a particular claim does not mean that a referee cannot be persuaded by new evidence.

Referees who have reviewed a paper for another journal might feel that it is unfair to the authors for them to re-review it for *Palgrave Communications*. We disagree; the fact that two journals have independently identified a particular person as well-qualified to review a paper does not, in our view, decrease the validity of his or her opinion.

### **Online manuscript review**

Referees must submit their comments via our online submission system by following the link provided in our email. For help with the system please contact [palcomms@palgrave.com](mailto:palcomms@palgrave.com).