

“Let’s Make Submissions Easier”: Revised Author Guidelines at IJTMB

Ann Blair Kennedy, LMT, BCTMB, DrPH, Executive Editor/Editor-in-Chief, IJTMB

University of South Carolina School of Medicine Greenville, Greenville, SC, USA

Recent reports indicate formatting and reformatting manuscripts costs scholars an exorbitant amount of time, effort, and energy. In an effort to reduce barriers to submission to the *IJTMB*, we have simplified and streamlined the guidelines for initial manuscript submission. If manuscripts are accepted for publication, authors will be asked to format according to standard *IJTMB* guidelines. The new guidelines for authors are presented below, following the editorial.

Writing, formatting, and submitting scientific manuscripts takes a significant amount of time. If the paper is then rejected by a journal, authors often have to reformat and rewrite certain sections of their manuscripts in order to submit the manuscript to a new journal. A recent publication estimates that this reformatting and resubmitting manuscripts prior to them being accepted for publication costs researchers upwards of 52 hours/year which translates in to nearly \$2,000 per year per researcher, based on a median annual salary category of \$61,000–80,999 per year.⁽¹⁾

In an effort reduce the amount of time needed to format articles for the *IJTMB*, while at the same time understanding that complex and lengthy author formatting guidelines can be a barrier to submitting to a journal, we have revised our guidelines. Upon acceptance, authors will be provided standardized formatting instructions which will have to be followed prior to copyediting, layout, and publication. Therefore, in the following section we present the revised guidelines which are separated into three sections, new submissions, revisions, and accepted manuscripts.

Finally, for those who are newer to scientific writing and are interested in expanded instruction on what each section of a paper should cover, please review [Specific](#)

[Manuscript Components](#). Below are the new revised guidelines, we hope this reduces the time burden for authors when submitting manuscripts to the *Journal*.

AUTHOR GUIDELINES

Thank you for considering submission to the *International Journal of Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork* an open access journal. There are **no fees** for publication if your manuscript is accepted.

You may now submit your manuscript for the peer review process as a single document, either in word, rich text format, or PDF. You may put your tables and figures in-line with the text or at the end of the manuscript. If your paper is accepted for publication, you will be asked to revise your paper into the “IJTMB format” – see accepted submissions below.

Types of articles:

The *IJTMB* accepts many types of articles. Word counts do not include abstract, tables, figures, or references.

- Experimental and observational research—structured abstract 300 words or less—up to 4000 words
 - Qualitative and Mixed Methods research articles are allowed up to 5,500 words
- *Systematic reviews and meta-analyses*—structured abstract 300 words or less—up to 3500 words, not including tables
- *Case reports and series*—structured abstract 300 words or less—up to 2500 words
- *Education and Practice reports*—structured abstract—up to 3000 words
- *Commentaries*—unstructured abstract of less than 200 words—text up

to 2500 words, no more than 2 tables or figures (combined), and no more than 20 references

- *Letters to the editor*—no abstract—no more than 500 words

New Submissions Preparation

Submission Checklist

You must complete the submission checklist when submitting your manuscript – you will be asked to verify the following statements.

- ✓ The submission has not been previously published, nor is it before another journal for consideration.
- ✓ All URL address(es) in the text are activated and ready to click.
- ✓ Recommended international reporting guidelines have been followed; see www.equator-network.org.
- ✓ Details about ethical review and informed consent are included in the Methods section.
- ✓ Details about patient and public involvement in the design, conduction, and dissemination of the study are included in the Methods section of the paper. See [Changing Author Guidelines to Include Patient and Public Involvement](#).

Information relevant to all manuscripts

MANUSCRIPT COMPONENTS

Research/Education/Practice manuscripts submitted need to include the following essential sections and follow study type reporting guidelines (see www.equator-network.org):

- Title
- Abstract
- Introduction
- Materials and/or methods
 - Including patient and public involvement
 - Reporting ethical review and informed consent
- Results
- Discussion
- References
- Conflict of Interest declaration
- May also include
 - Funding source
 - Acknowledgements

Case Report manuscripts must follow the [Adapted CARE guidelines](#)⁽²⁾ and include the following sections:

- Title
- Abstract
- Introduction
- Case presentation
 - Client or patient information
 - Informed consent
 - Assessment Measures
 - Practitioner Descriptors
 - Therapeutic Intervention
- Results
- Discussion
- References
- Conflict of Interest declaration
- May also include
 - Funding source
 - Acknowledgements

Commentaries

- Title
- Abstract (unstructured)
- Headings and subheading are recommended to allow for ease of reading
- References
- Conflict of Interest declaration
- May also include
 - Funding source
 - Acknowledgements

REVISIONS

When you prepare a revised version of your manuscript, it is essential that you carefully follow any specific instructions given in the Editor's letter regarding preparation of the revised manuscript. The following are expected in preparation of the revised manuscript:

1. Any changes to the manuscript must be done with "track changes".
2. A cover letter for the editor must be prepared that outlines:
 - a. what changes were made in the manuscript/supplementary files to address reviewers' suggestions or concerns; and
 - b. reasons why the remaining reviewers' suggestions or concerns should not result in changes in the manuscript/supplementary files.

ACCEPTED MANUSCRIPTS

Upon Acceptance, authors will be required to submit the manuscript based upon the following guidelines:

Formatting

- Final file should preferably be in word document
- Ensure that manuscript adheres to the 'Specific Manuscript Components'
- Ensure units of measurement and place names are clearly indicated

Tables and figures

Should be uploaded as Supplemental files for copyediting

Reference

Formatted in AMA style of referencing prior to copyediting

URL addresses in the text should be activated and ready to click.

Copyediting Review

- Any changes to the copyedited file must be done with "track changes"
- Authors are welcome to comment, accept, or refuse the copyeditors comments

- Indicate any changes you've made to the copyedited file in your discussion with the Copyeditor and Production Editor

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REFERENCES

1. LeBlanc AG, Barnes JD, Saunders TJ, Tremblay MS, Chaput J-P. Scientific sinkhole: the pernicious price of formatting. *PLoS ONE*. 2019;14(9):e0223116.
2. Munk N, Boulanger K. Adaptation of the CARE Guidelines for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork Publications: efforts to improve the impact of case reports. *Int J Ther Massage Bodywk*. 2014;7(3): 32–40.

Corresponding author: Ann Blair Kennedy, LMT, BCTMB, DrPH, University of South Carolina School of Medicine Greenville, 701 Grove Road, Greenville, SC 29605, USA