

What happens when a paper is submitted?

An understanding of what happens will help in preparing the paper and in responding to decisions from journals

The publishing process and peer-review
– an outline of the process with *Weed Research*

Submission
Paper check
Allocation to an expert Subject editor
Selection of reviewers
Reviewer reports
Recommendation
First decision

Responding to review reports

Acceptance
Typesetting
Proof correction
Publication
Reprints.

The criteria Editors use for accepting manuscripts for publication are originality, relevance, scientific rigour and the clarity of presentation. The journal accepts approximately 26% of submitted manuscripts and the time taken from submission to publication is about 12 months.

Peer Review

-What is it? A mechanism that has the objective of ensuring what is published is correct, properly done and clearly communicated

Editors seek at least two independent and objective reports of a paper, ideally from experts in the field

In *Weed Research*, the Editor-in-Chief also has a report from the expert Subject Editor

Ethical considerations

- Ownership
- Plagiarism
- Double publication
- Conflicts of interest
- Funding
- Ethical approvals

Submission

- the Editor checks style, originality and amount of work. If this does not meet the journal requirements, or the Editor feels the paper is not worth sending for review, the manuscript will be rejected

Reviewer reports

First decision

Weed Research accepts between 25 and 30% of submissions

= it is difficult!

Minor revision

Resubmission

Reject

Respond to every comment

- Write a full report
- check the journal style and instructions
- do give your arguments, where you disagree with a reviewer comment

Do not give up

The process is not aimed critically at you

It is aimed at getting the best out of the work

Journal Responses

- It takes time to review (referee) a submission
- You are unlikely to get an immediate acceptance
- The most usual responses are revision (minor or major) or rejection

Rejection

- If a rejection, check whether you have submitted to the most appropriate journal (e.g. is it agricultural science or agronomy or agricultural economics?)
- Have you submitted a paper or a report?

Rejection

- Don't be angry
- Learn from the experience
- Do better next time
- Attend a course on scientific writing

Minor revision

- This usually means the paper is basically ok
- The reviewers think there are some improvements or clarifications to be made and/or it is not in the required format
- This should not take too long

Major revision

- Sometimes termed 'Revise and Resubmit'
- This means the journal still wants a paper on this topic
BUT ...

Major revision

- You may need to provide further explanation of methods
- You may need to delete irrelevant portions
- You may need to re-interpret your results
- You may need to do more analyses

Major revision

So:

- Discuss with your co-authors how you will jointly revise the paper
- Senior author to collate changes and ensure consistency
- After the revision, get co-authors to approve the changes

For ALL Revisions

- Try to revise as soon as possible
- Respond to ALL the comments
- Many journals ask you to comment specifically how you have responded to each of the reviewers comments

**OBEY THIS
INSTRUCTION**

Revisions

- When you send the revision, you will need to confirm that all authors have seen and approved the new version

Further revision

Be prepared

- After 'major revision' often authors are asked to make 'minor revisions'
- This is mainly to bring the paper to a form that the editors can accept

Acceptance

Deep Joy

What happens next?

- Editorial office checks technical editing
- Editorial Office sends to production team
- Proofs

Proofs

- Paper or electronic
- Must respond quickly
- Read carefully
- Annotate proof using the system specified
- Return by deadline date

Proofs

- Order reprints?
- Return completed Copyright Form
(if not already done)

**OBEY THE
INSTRUCTIONS**

IMPORTANT BECAUSE

Any mistakes are now

YOURS

Publication

- Online – ‘forthcoming paper’ – often soon after return proofs
- Print version – often some months later
- Reprints – after the print version

Other thoughts

Reviews

- If you have done a PhD, consider rewriting the literature review with your supervisor and submitting as a review paper
- Target a journal that publishes reviews
- Note - rewrite

Impact Factors

- Each Journal has an Impact Factor, recalculated each year.
- Journals with high Impact Factors are more prestigious.
- Journals with higher impact factors have higher rejection rates.

Novelty

- Most journals demand 'Novelty' (it hasn't been done before)
- If you can say 'this confirms someone else's results' throughout your paper, it is unlikely to be novel findings and is likely to be rejected from an international journal.

Don't be shy

- Ask colleagues to comment on your draft
- Choose someone who is competent to give an opinion
- Choose someone who will give an honest opinion .

And Finally

Enjoy writing as much as
researching