

Some good advices if you are publishing a journal

The international organization [INASP](#) (International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications) - which is an international development charity working with a global network of partners to improve access, production and use of research information and knowledge in Africa - has compiled a number of quality criteria that will help improve the standard of the journals published on the organization's journal platform [AJOL](#).

The quality criteria are divided into three levels, with the first and lowest levels assigned to one star and the subsequent two and three stars respectively. If one strives for the ultimate one should aim for three stars. Here are the three levels that may provide inspiration for some of our editors at [tidsskrift.dk](#). The pages are all downloaded from the website: [JPPS – Journal Publishing Practices and Standards](#).

One Star



(of a possible three)

This journal has been compliant with the JPPS basic ([new title](#)) criteria for at least two years:

1. The journal is published within the JOL country or region (the publishing, peer review management, business development and production is all handled in-country).¹
2. The journal publishes original research (in addition to other content).
3. The journal has a clearly-stated aim, focus and scope.
4. The masthead (“about the journal” information) includes:
 - The journal title.
 - The ISSN, registered with the ISSN International Centre.
 - The name of the publisher, institution and/or society by which the journal is published (with all relevant contact details, including physical address, phone numbers, email addresses and website address). Journals are encouraged to use official or institutional email addresses rather than Yahoo or gmail email addresses.
 - The copyright statement.
 - The licensing statement (if the journal is Open Access, it needs to have selected an official licensing statement, for example the Creative Commons licence).
 - Details of the Editor and an Editorial Board with identifiable members. All details about the Editor and Editorial Board must be up to date and accurate. Names and titles should be written out in full, and all persons listed should be actively and verifiably involved with the journal.
 - Accurate publishing frequency, which is clearly stated (number of issues published per year, or an explanation of the process if the journal is publishing article-by-article).
5. The journal provides clear and comprehensive instructions to authors, including:
 - An explanation of the types of manuscript that a journal will consider.
 - A detailed style guide (that includes referencing style).
 - A description of how to submit an article.
 - A functional and frequently-checked contact email address for the journal.

6. Basic information displayed on the front page of each article, whether print or online, includes:
 - The article title.
 - The name(s) of author(s).
 - The abstract (or summary, in the case of some humanities journals).
7. All articles relate to the focus and scope of the journal.
8. Each article includes complete bibliographic information for all cited references.
9. The journal sends the JOL (or another appropriate platform in the future) digital, English-language (and any other language, in addition) titles, abstracts, article keywords and PDFs of the full text of each issue in a timely manner, immediately after publication (or loads its own content, if trained to do so).
10. The journal has an established publishing track record (of at least two years).
11. The journal publishes at least one issue per year, and/or at least five articles per year, and publishes issues on time, according to the stated publishing frequency.

Two Stars



(of a possible three)

In addition to the criteria for a [one-star journal](#), this journal is compliant with additional JPPS criteria for publishing practice quality:

1. The journal has an editorial policy statement (including an accurate and detailed explanation of the validity of the peer-review and the quality-control processes applied to all manuscripts or authors' texts submitted for publication).
2. The masthead ("about the journal" information) includes:
 - An eISSN for the online version of the journal registered with the ISSN International Centre.
 - As well as the Editorial Board member information, any other oversight body involved with the journal, for example, an International Advisory Committee, named with up to date and accurate information. Names and titles are written out in full, and all persons listed are actively and verifiably involved with the journal; the list also includes the primary and up to date institutional affiliation (or connection with a larger organization, for example a society or university) of each person listed. NOTE: The JOL requires applicant and partner journals to provide accurate contact details, including institutional (and other) email addresses for ALL persons listed on the masthead, as part of our review process. These contact details will not be made publicly available by the JOL unless we are instructed to do so by the journal/publisher.
3. The journal provides clear and comprehensive instructions to authors, including:
 - Information about copyright (please note the importance of telling authors whether the journal will be the copyright holder after publication of an article, or whether copyright remains with authors).
 - If the journal charges readers subscription fees, or charges authors or authors' institutions any handling fees, publication fees or similar, the amount/s should be clearly stated and publicly available on the JOL website as well as on the journal's own website (if it has one) and in the journal's hard copy (if it has one).
4. Basic information displayed on the front page of each article includes:
 - The journal title; volume and issue number; page numbers.

- Article keywords.
 - The article DOI (digital object identifier, which is a string or set of numbers that uniquely identifies a published article).
5. The journal publishes at least one issue per year and/or at least eight articles per year, and publishes issues on time, according to the stated publishing frequency.
 6. The journal has a publicly-available, accurate and detailed description of its peer-review process on the JOL and on its homepage, if it has one.
 7. Language and copy editing provide clarity for readers; layouts are consistent; tables, graphs and images are of good quality; and the same style is consistently used throughout the journal.
 8. The cover of the journal looks professional or competent (no clip art or pre-made pictures, or low-quality images).
 9. If the journal or publisher has its own website or is included on websites other than the JOL (for example, on a university website), the website quality is good (having a professional and functional or well-working site design with no garish or over-decorated, flashing images), and the journal content is up to date.

Recommendations

The journal is strongly recommended to have clear and comprehensive instructions to peer reviewers, which are also placed on the journal's own website and/or its JOL homepage.

Three Stars



(of a possible three)

In addition to all of the criteria for [one-star](#) and [two-star](#) journals, the journal also consistently (for at least three years) meets the following criteria:

1. The journal includes copyright and licensing information on the first page of each article.
2. The journal includes author ORCIDs (for at least the corresponding author, but preferably for all authors). See orcid.org for more information on ORCIDs.
3. The journal includes funding acknowledgements by authors is displayed on the first page of each article (but may be on the last page).
4. Submission, acceptance and publication dates are included on the first page of each article.
5. The DOIs of referenced articles are included in the bibliographic references of each article.
6. Information about subscription fees, handling fees, publication fees or similar are included in the author instructions. If there are no fees, then this should be stated.
7. If the journal has its own website then the primary institutional affiliations of its full Editorial Board as well as of any other governance committees, such as advisory committees are included.

8. The Editorial Board (and any supporting committees) is institutionally and, geographically diverse (or varied) and ideally with a good gender balance.
9. The journal has a clearly-stated policy on authors' permissions to deposit the article in a personal, institutional, thematic and/or other Open Access repository, including whether the permission is for the post-publication version or pre-publication version of the article.
10. The journal implements, and publicly and transparently shares, its policies on publication ethics (codes of moral and correct publishing conduct) and publishing malpractice (improper publishing conduct) on its own website and on its JOL homepage, including plagiarism, copyright violations, errata, retractions, data sets, gender, racial and language policies.
11. The journal loads its own content onto the JOL platform.
12. The journal has an archival, digital preservation arrangement with an external party, for example CLOCKSS (a joint venture or project between certain publishers and research libraries to create a reliable global archive or place where documents are stored).
13. The journal has a full back file of archival content available online (via the JOL and/or on its own website).
14. At least one issue and/or 10 articles are published per year (preferably more).

Recommendations

15. It is recommended that journals include contact email addresses and/or a link to each Board member's primary affiliation (connection to a larger organization, for example a society or university) website, under the JOL's "About the Journal" section and on the journal's own website, if it has one.
16. Membership of COPE (the Committee on Publication Ethics) and/or OASPA (the Open Access Scholarly Publishers Association) (for Open Access journals) is strongly encouraged.

For Open Access journals to get a JPPS three-star status, they are strongly encouraged to provide evidence that they meet the DOAJ technical requirements and DOAJ Seal Qualifiers (see doaj.org/application/new).

ⁱ Of course, this criterion only applies to journals associated with the journal platform [AJOL](#)