

Preparing and reviewing scientific papers (advanced course)

The course will address various aspects of writing and reviewing research papers for high quality biomedical journals. It will be suitable for mid-level and more senior researchers who have participated in or led research projects and published papers but who do not regularly publish in the leading journals in their field. It is also aimed at researchers who have some experience of peer review but would like to review for top journals and develop their expertise in evaluating manuscripts with a view to joining an editorial board.

The course will cover:

- planning the publication output from a research project, in terms of main and subsidiary papers
- complete and accurate reporting in compliance with the appropriate guidelines
- choosing the most suitable journal
- assessing a paper for the peer review
- writing a peer review report and sending to an editor.

The course will use the CONSORT guidelines for reporting clinical trials as the main guide to the structure of the paper and introduce *The Lancet's* Reduce Waste and Reward Diligence campaign. Topics will include reporting of primary and secondary outcomes and adverse events; the trial profile; sex and gender specific reporting; and clear, concise communication. Journal selection will address what to look for in a target journal and how to avoid 'predatory' journals. Participants will learn how to assess the key points of a paper for peer review process and how best to write the comments for the authors and the editor.

The course will include questions and answers throughout and group discussions. Participants are encouraged to bring an abstract or outline of a paper concerning their own work.

Learning objectives

By the end of the course, participants should

- understand how to draft a publication plan for a research study
- appreciate the importance of publication guidelines and know where to find these
- know what to consider when selecting a target journal
- have a good understanding of the peer review process
- know the key points in assessing a paper and writing a peer review report.

Background reading

CONSORT 2010 Statement: updated guidelines for reporting parallel group randomised trials:
www.equator-network.org/reporting-guidelines/consort/

Reducing waste from incomplete or unusable reports of biomedical research:

[http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(13\)62228-X/fulltext](http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(13)62228-X/fulltext)