Writing a Journal article and getting it published: a two-day course

The skill of writing an article – and getting it published in a peer reviewed journal – is highly prized, but rarely taught. This two-day course concentrates on this skill, and in particular on the *process* of writing. Participants should come with an idea for an article, and they will work this up during the first day. They come back on the second day with their draft paper, and learn how to progress it through to submission.

What the programme includes

Day 1: writing the first draft. Participants should be in a position to write a paper (ie have collected the 'data'). By the end of the session participants will…
- *understand the publications game* – and how to be a winner;
- make logical and informed decisions on *where to send articles*;
- *reduce rewriting* in the final stages by effective planning before;
- *cut 'information overload'* by using simple brainstorming techniques;
- make the most of scarce time by *writing for 10 minutes a day*;
- use 'evidence-based writing' to *solve disputes with others*;
- apply *simple marketing techniques* to increase the chances of a submitted paper being looked at favourably.

Day 2: working on the first draft. The day will take place a week later. Participants *must* bring with them the first draft of their paper. By the end of the session participants will…
- *improve their manuscript* by applying tests in five main areas;
- know how to give - and receive – *balanced feedback*;
- *design a schedule* that will enable them to finish off their paper;
- be confident in *dealings with co-authors*;
- understand *how journals work* – and how they select articles;
- understand the strengths and weaknesses of the reviewing process, and how to *cope with the comments of reviewers*;
- be able to *deal constructively with editorial staff*;
- have clear ideas for *continuing to publish*.

What the programme aims to provide
By the end of the programme participants will have acquired the attitudes, knowledge and skills needed to send off a journal article that has a good chance of being accepted by their target journal.

What the programme does not provide
The purpose of the programme is to train participants in the techniques they will need to write a journal article and get it published. It is not a course on critical appraisal or English grammar/style. We do not offer a technical editing service after the course.

Who should go on the programme
The programme is suitable for anyone who has the data for a scientific paper and wants to write it up.
The course is *not* suitable for those who have had many papers published, and want a course to see if they could have done it any better.

What people have said about this course:
- 'I previously struggled to write a paragraph in a day. After the course I wrote my paper in an hour.'
- 'An absolute game changer for me.'
- 'Thank you for a very inspiring and confidence building two days.'
- 'A really useful and enjoyable course that helped to demystify the process of seeking publication in academic journals.'
- 'I submitted my paper a few months after attending your course. Two days ago it was accepted for publication. Not bad for a first try!'

Writing a journal article: programme

Day one

9.30   Introduction to course: individual needs and objectives, discussion

10.45   Coffee

11.15   1. Understanding the publications game: a writer-friendly approach

12.00   2. Understanding the player: the key to effective time management

12.30   3. Setting the brief: how to get going

1.00   Lunch

2.00   4. Organising the information: using mindmaps to sort out information

3.00   Tea

3.15   5. Writing the plan: meeting the (unwritten) conventions of a scientific paper

4.00   5. Writing: maximising creativity

4.30   End of day one

Remember:

• Participants should block off six to eight hours between the two days of the course so that they can work on their paper.

Day two

9.30	Re-introduction
10.00	7. Rewriting
	(a) macro-editing: the important issues on which articles succeed or fail
10.45	Coffee
11.15	(a) macro-editing: continued
12.15	(b) micro-editing: the important issues of detail that have to be worked on
1.00	Lunch
2.00	8. Adding the extras: putting together an attractive package
2.45	9. Dealing with others
	(a) co-authors and reviewers: how to use them effectively
3.15	Tea
3.30	(b) understanding editors: how not to become a problem author
4.00	10. Post the package and after: how you can profit from painful experiences!
4.30	Personal action plans, evaluations; end of course