

# Author Guidelines

## Scope

The Journal of Open University of Sri Lanka publishes the results of innovative research in the areas of Open Distance Learning (ODL), Education, Engineering Technology, Natural Sciences, Humanities and Social Sciences, and Health Science. It aims at disseminating high-quality research among a broader spectrum of national and international audiences.

## Categories of Submission

**Research Articles:** Research Articles are papers that present complete descriptions of original research. Research Articles should include an Abstract, Keywords, Introduction, Methodology, Results and Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations where relevant. References should be prepared according to the “Guidelines for the preparation of manuscripts”. Maximum number of words per article is 10,000 including Figures, Tables and References. A Table/Figure occupying half a page will be considered as 400 words.

**Reviews:** Reviews are critical presentations on selected topics of Science or Technology. They should be well focused and organized and avoid general “textbook” style. A person/s who wish to submit a Review Article should have experience in the relevant field supported by an excellent publication record and obtain prior approval from the Editorial Board by submitting a concise summary of the intended article, along with a list of the author’s publications in the related area. Prospective authors under this category may write to: [ouslj@ou.ac.lk](mailto:ouslj@ou.ac.lk). Maximum number of words for a Review Article is 12,000 including Figures, Tables and References. A Table/Figure occupying half a page will be considered as 400 words.

**Research Communications:** Research Communications are intended to communicate important new findings in a specific area of limited scope that are worthy of rapid dissemination among the scientific community. The article should include an Abstract, Keywords, Introduction, Methodology, Results & Discussion, Conclusion and References. Maximum number of words is 2,500 including Figures, Tables and References. A Table/Figure occupying half a page will be considered as 400 words.

**Correspondence:** Correspondence will be accepted regarding one or more articles in the preceding four issues of the Journal, as well as Letters to the Editor. Articles covering important scientific events or any other news of interest to scientists, reviews of books of scientific nature, articles presenting views on issues related to science and scientific activity will also be considered. Publication will be made at the discretion of the Editor-in Chief. Maximum number

of words is 1,500 including Figures, Tables and References. A Table/Figure occupying half a page will be considered as 400 words.

## Submitting an Article Online

Submissions should be made electronically only through the Sri Lankan Journals Online (SLJOL) website (<https://ouslj.sljol.info/about/submissions/>). Once submitted, the author can track the submission and communicate with the editor via the online journal management system. Please ensure that you consider the following guidelines when preparing your manuscript. Failure to do so may delay processing your submission.

### Submission of Manuscript

All manuscripts in MS Word format must be electronically submitted to the journal's online platform at <https://ouslj.sljol.info/>. Submissions *via* email are not encouraged.

**Please make sure that no author information is mentioned in the article submitted.**

Authors are required to provide their personal, validated ORCID ID (<http://www.orcid.org>). The ORCID ID will be displayed in the first page of the published article.

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All submissions should be in English. If the manuscript conforms to the guidelines specified, the date received will be the date that the manuscript was submitted to the online system.

Submissions are accepted for processing on the understanding that they will be reviewed and that they have not been submitted for publication elsewhere (including publication as a full paper or extended abstract as a part of Conference Proceedings). The manuscripts submitted to the OUSL Journal will initially be pre-screened by the Editorial Board and, if suitable, will be referred to at least two subject experts in the relevant field. **The peer-review process of the OUSL Journal is double-blind.**

When revision of a manuscript has been requested, the revised manuscript should be submitted on or before the stated deadline. If the revised manuscript is not received on time, the manuscript will not be processed further. When submitting the revised manuscript, the authors' response to

the comments of referees should be tabulated with the comment and response for reference. The decision of the Editorial Board shall be final. Submitted papers are subject to editing.

The date of acceptance will be the day when the Editorial Board has decided it to be acceptable for publication.

The authors may suggest up to three names of non-related referees when submitting their manuscript, in the Cover Letter space provided at the bottom of the page in the first stage of online submission. Referees should not be from the institution where the work was carried out and should not have been co-authors (with the author of the submitted manuscript) in previous publications. The address, institutional affiliation and e-mail of the suggested referees should be provided.

The corresponding author should be prompt and ensure adherence to timelines when responding to requests, queries and recommendation of reviewers conveyed by or on behalf of the Editor-in-Chief and Editorial Board.

A complimentary copy of the Journal will be supplied to each of the authors.

## **Guide to Preparation of Manuscripts**

### **Manuscript**

The manuscript should be free of errors and prepared according to the [template](#) in single column, using double-spaced text of Times New Roman 12 font throughout, leaving at least 2 cm margins on both sides, and liberal spacing at the top and bottom of each page. Sheets should be numbered consecutively.

#### **a. Style**

The paper should be written clearly and concisely. The style of writing should conform to scholarly writing. Slang, jargon, unauthorized abbreviations, abbreviated phrasings should not be used. In general, the impersonal form should be used.

#### **b. Layout**

Manuscripts other than review articles should be generally organized as follows: Title, Abstract, Keywords, Introduction, Methodology, Results and Discussion, Conclusions and Recommendations where relevant, Acknowledgements and References. However, exceptions are allowed depending on the subject area. Pages should be arranged in the following order:

## **Page 1**

**Title page** should include the title of manuscript, and no author information should be mentioned in the title page. The names and affiliations of all authors and the contact information of the corresponding author must be fed into the system during the online submission process.

No change to the authors or order of authors will be accepted after the submission. All those who have made significant contributions should be listed as coauthors. The corresponding author should ensure that all contributing co-authors are included in the author list and have approved the final version of the paper and have agreed to its submission for publication.

If a major part of the research has been published as an abstract in conference proceedings, it should be cited as a footnote on the title page.

## **Page 2**

**Title** should accurately and concisely reflect the contents of the article.

Running title should be a shortened title that could be printed at the top of every other page of the article Journal and limited to a maximum of 50 characters.

**Abstract** : Should be between 200 - 250 words for full length articles and written as a single paragraph. It should not contain any references and should be able to stand on its own. It should outline objectives and methodology together with important results and conclusions. A Review Article should carry a summary of not more than 300 words.

**Keywords** : Include a maximum of six keywords, which may include the names of organisms (common or scientific), methods or other important words or phrases relevant to the study.

**Introduction** : This should state the reasons for performing the work with a brief review of related research studies in the context of the work described in the paper. Objectives of the study should be clearly stated.

**Literature Review (if applicable)** : This section should discuss the bodies of theoretical literature that are used by the study, and also demonstrate the need or the gap addressed by the research reflected in the submitted manuscript.

**Methodology** : New methods may be described in detail with an indication of their limitations. Established methods can be mentioned with appropriate references. Sufficient details should be included to allow direct repetition of the work by others. Where human subjects are involved, they should be referred to by numbers or fictitious names. A paper reporting the results of investigations on human subjects or on animals must include a statement to the effect that the

relevant national or other administrative and ethical guidelines have been adhered to, and a copy of the ethical clearance certificate should be submitted. Methods of statistical analyses used should be mentioned where relevant.

**Results and Discussion :** Results: the results should be concisely and logically presented. Repetition of the same results in figures, tables or text should be avoided. Discussion: data essential for the conclusions emerging from the study should be discussed. Long, rambling discussions should be avoided. The discussion should deal with the interpretation of results. It should logically relate new findings to earlier ones. Unqualified statements and conclusions not completely supported by data should be avoided.

Molecular sequence data, such as gene or rDNA sequences, genome sequences, metagenomic sequences etc. must be deposited in a public molecular sequence repository, such as GenBank, that is part of the International Nucleotide Sequence Database Collaboration (INSDC). The accession numbers obtained must be cited in the text, Table or on Figures of phylogenetic trees of the manuscript.

Collected data and relevant programming codes should be available upon the request of the reviewers.

**Conclusion :** The conclusion should be brief, highlight the outcomes of the study and should be aligned with the objectives of the study. It should not contain references.

### **References :**

All research work of other authors, when used or referred to or cited, should be correctly acknowledged in the text and in the References.

Citing references in the text:

- References to the literature must be indicated in the text and tables as per the Author-Year System, by the author's last name and year, in parenthesis (i.e. Able, 1997) or (Able & Thompson, 1998).
- Citation to work by more than two authors should be abbreviated with the use of *et al.* (i.e. Able *et al.*, 1997).
- Multiple publications by the same first author in the same year should be coded by letters, (i.e. Thompson, 1991a; b).
- Multiple citations should be made in chronological order and separated by a semi-colon, (i.e. Zimmerman *et al.*, 1986; Able *et al.*, 1997).

- Reference to unpublished work, work in preparation or work under review should be cited in italics as (*unpublished data*) or, with the author's initials and surname given; such works should not be included in the Reference section.
- Personal communications may be mentioned in the text with the date of communication as (*Personal communication, 2 June 2000*).

List of references:

- The list of References should be arranged in alphabetical order based on the last name of the first author.
- Names of all the authors should be given except when there are more than 10 authors. When there are more than 10 authors, only the name of the first author can be given followed by *et al.*
- All the initials of the author must be given after the last name and the year of publication should follow in parentheses.
- This should be followed by the full title of the referred publication.
- When journal articles are listed, the journal name should be given in full and in italics and followed by the volume number in bold type, issue number in parentheses and then the inclusive pages.
- Where there are several publications by the same author(s) and published in the same year they should be differentiated by adding a lower-case letter after the year.
- When books are listed, the order should be: author(s), year, book title, volume number, edition, pagination/ inclusive pages, publisher and place of publication. The book title should be in italics. When sections of a book are listed, the order should be: author(s) of chapter, year, title of the section, title of the book, edition, inclusive pages, publisher and place of publication.
- Digital object identifiers (DOIs) (<https://doi.crossref.org/simpleTextQuery>) should be included for all references where available.
- References should only be cited as 'in press' if the paper has been accepted for publication.
- Please use the **APA Style (6<sup>th</sup> Edition)**  
i.e. Within the body of the text (Surname, Year).  
**List of References (Eg.)**

**Format for Books:**

Author, A. A. (Year of publication). *Title of work: Capital letter also for subtitle*. Place of publication: Publisher.

**Format for Journal Papers, Print version:**

Author, A. A., Author, B. B., & Author, C. C. (Year). Title of article. *Title of Periodical*, *Volume number* (Issue number), page range.

**Format for Journal Papers, Online version:**

Author, A. A., Author, B. B., & Author, C. C. (Year). Title of article. *Title of Periodical*, *Volume number* (Issue number), page range. <http://dx.doi.org/xx.xxxxxxxxxx> or Retrieved from <http://xxxxxx>

- Authors are responsible for the accuracy of all references.
- Where available, URLs and DOIs for the references should be provided.

**Abbreviations and Symbols :** Unless common, these should be defined when first used, and not included in the abstract. The SI System of units should be used wherever possible. If measurements were made in units other than SI, the data should be reported in the same units followed by SI units in brackets, e.g. 5290 ft (1610 m).

**Formulae and Equations :** Equations should be typewritten and quadruple spaced. They should be started on the left margin and the number placed in parentheses to the right of the equation.

**Nomenclature :** Scientific names of plants and animals should be printed in italics. In the first citation, genus, species and authority must be given. e.g. *Borassus flabellifer* Linn. In latter citations, the generic name may be abbreviated, for example, *B. flabellifer* L.

**Tables :** Should be clear and intelligible without reference to the text, and should not repeat data available elsewhere in the paper. Tables should be numbered consecutively with Arabic numerals and placed at the appropriate position in the manuscript. If a Table must be continued, a second sheet should be used and all the headings repeated. The number of columns or rows in each Table should be minimized. Each Table should have a title, which makes its general meaning clear without reference to the text. All Table columns should have explanatory headings. Units of measurement, if any, should be indicated in parentheses in the heading of each column. Vertical lines should not be used and horizontal lines should be used only in the heading and at the bottom of the table. Footnotes to Tables should be placed directly below the Table and should be indicated by superscript lower case italic letters (*a, b, c*, etc.).

**Figures (Illustrations) :** All illustrations are considered as figures, and each graph, drawing or photograph should be numbered consecutively with Arabic numerals and placed at the appropriate position in the manuscript. Any lettering to appear on the illustrations should be of a suitable size for reproduction and uniform lettering should be used in all the Figures of the manuscript. Scanned figures or photographs should be of high quality (300 dpi), to fit the proportions of the printed page (12 × 17 cm). Each figure should carry a legend so that the

general meaning of the figure can be understood without reference to the text. Where magnifications are used, they should be stated.

**Note:** Any reproduction of illustrations, tabulations, pictures etc. in the manuscript should be acknowledged. Tables and Figures should be kept to a minimum.

Units of measurement Length: km, m, mm,  $\mu\text{m}$ , nm etc.

Area: ha, km<sup>2</sup>, m<sup>2</sup>, etc.

Capacity: kL, L, mL,  $\mu\text{L}$  etc.

Volume: km<sup>3</sup>, m<sup>3</sup>, cm<sup>3</sup> etc.

Mass: t, kg, g, mg,  $\mu\text{g}$  etc.

Time: year(s), month(s), wk(s), d(s), h, min, s

Concentration: M, mM, N, %, g/L, mg/L, ppm

Temperature: °C, K

Gravity: x g

Molecular weight: mol wt

Others: Radio-isotopes: <sup>32</sup>P

Radiation dose: Bq

Oxidation-reduction potential: rH

Hydrogen ion concentration: pH

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