



Author's Guide: A manual for all things JoULAB

1 Introduction

Hello! I'm Lydia Wiernik, a 3rd year undergraduate at the University of Edinburgh and JoULAB's Editor.

Whether you're a first year or have completed your dissertation, we'd love to publish your work. We hope that this author guide helps your understanding of who we are and how your submission contributes.

What's JoULAB? (/ˈdʒʌʊ.læb/, /ˈdʒuː.læb/, /ˈjɑʊ.læb/... The pronunciation is up to you!)

JoULAB is the Journal of the Undergraduate Linguistics Association of Britain. We were founded in 2020 in the absence of the ULAB conference, cancelled as a result of the pandemic.

We didn't want to halt opportunities for undergrads, so we created a journal *by undergrads, for undergrads* to fill that gap.

In fact, we're the only journal in the world publishing solely undergraduate work in linguistics and its subfields!

If you'd like to see the kind of things we're doing, you can check out [Issue 1](#) and [Issue 2](#).

Want to get in touch? Have a question or comment?

We're always reachable on Twitter and Instagram @ULAB_Journal or you can email us at ulabjournal@gmail.com.

2 Frequently Asked Questions - and our answers

Who can submit?

Anyone is eligible to submit so long as the bulk of their work was carried out when they were an undergrad and so long as their undergraduate studies were completed no more than three years prior to submitting.

Is there a word limit?

A: Nope! Feel free to submit work as short or as long as you'd like - we think great research can fit into 5 pages or 50 pages. We do, however, require a 250-word abstract.

What are you looking for?



We're looking for work that's **original, impactful, relevant**, and has the **scope for future study**. But most importantly, we want to see the **incredible things** undergrads are doing, in any way that may be showcased.

Do I have to submit my whole diss?

Not at all – it's up to you how much (or how little) you want to submit. This could mean turning a chapter into an article or creating something new based on work you've already done. The possibilities are endless!

Any tips for submitting?

Make sure your article's got a consistent argument throughout, without any straggler points that don't contribute to it.

What else can I submit?

Anything - so long as the work was carried out (or the bulk of it was carried out) when you were an undergraduate student and so long as your undergraduate studies were completed no more than three years prior to submitting.

Is there a fee to submit?

Nope! We do not charge a fee to submit or publish to our journal. We're completely open access in order to be as accessible and provide as many opportunities as possible.

When's the deadline?

Submissions close on **21 August 2022, 23:59 UTC+1**. However, if you submit earlier, you've got a better chance of being in the next issue!

3 Turning your dissertation into an article

A journal article is a different beast than a dissertation! You might want to use just a chapter or two of your work for JoULAB. Here are some helpful tips to get you started.

1. *Prepare a condensed abstract*

Generally, dissertation abstracts tend to be longer than those of articles. Ensure you condense your abstract into our maximum of 250 words.

2. *Keep your literature review concise and focused*

Literature reviews in journal articles tend to be more focused than in dissertations. Stick closely to the context of your research question, and eliminate sections which do not contribute to the understanding of your topic.



3. *Brief but informative discussion of your methodology*

Do not give an extensive discussion about your research approach. Provide just enough detail so that the readers understand how the data was collected and evaluated and discuss previous research (if any) that may have influenced your methods.

4. *Report key findings and analyses*

Unlike in dissertations, it is not necessary to report all findings and analyses in a journal article. Providing the main findings and analyses, which directly contribute towards answering the main research question, is sufficient.

5. *Stay close to the scope of your data*

Discussion of results should not extrapolate beyond the data in the current study. Strong discussion sections focus on points of divergence and convergence with other research and the limitations of the current study.

6. *Make sure to edit your manuscript for the purpose*

Finally, make sure to read through your manuscript so that it presents itself as a research paper and is not formatted as a dissertation. For example, substitute phrases like "In this dissertation..." for "In this study..." or "In this paper...".

At your leisure, you can flip through slides and notes from JoULAB founders Tom Williamson and Brandon Papineau. They give some tips on workshoping a dissertation into an article and assuage some worries about submitting! Find their advice on our website under *Submissions* or on our Zenodo [here](#).

4 Accessibility statements and academic writing help

Additionally, JoULAB provides academic writing support for any author who would like it.

How it works:

- You let us know if you'd like this service
- A member of the committee takes a look at your use of academic English and structure alone, not content
- You'll receive feedback from them alongside your two content-based reviews



This service is completely optional and by no means remedial! We want to extend this offer to everyone who submits to the Journal to make sure it is as accessible as possible for as many people as possible.

We're committed to making JoULAB as accessible as possible. All figures and tables have been designed to ensure readability for those with colour vision deficiencies and we aim to optimise every article for screen reader usage.

5 A rundown through submissions

So you've got this far, and decided you want to submit to JoULAB - excellent decision, but what's next? In this section, we'll give you a rundown of everything you'll need to know for the **submissions process**: **who's eligible to submit** (you, hopefully!); **how to format your submission**; **how to actually submit your work**; and **what Abstract Approval means**.

Eligibility

First, eligibility: we have a few simple criteria your paper will have to meet before we can officially take it on.

- (i) *Undergrad work*
You need to have completed at least the bulk of the work you'd like to submit *while an undergrad*; and you need to either *be an undergrad*, or *have been an undergrad within the last 3 years before submission*.
- (ii) *Linguistics-related*
The paper has to be about a topic within linguistics or related subfields – we interpret this quite broadly, though, so don't worry if you're unsure; anything linguistics-y is good with us!
- (iii) *Not peer-reviewed elsewhere*
And third, we can't take papers which are either under review at or have been published in other peer-reviewed journals, or in ULAB's Conference Proceedings (but non-peer-reviewed pre-prints, e.g. in a repository, are very welcome!).

Formatting your submission

Let's say your paper meets all these requirements - wonderful! This leads to the second stage - checking your paper is formatted as we'd like it to be. This involves three things:

- (i) *Include the stuff we need!*
Check your submission actually contains the stuff we want it to: **a title, an abstract of no more than 250 words, the main text, and page numbers**. If you've never had the chance to write an abstract before, worry not - we've got a helpful [Abstract Guide](#) on our website with loads of helpful pointers, plus you can email us if you're stuck! We may ask for a few more things later on, but you don't need to worry about that until after reviewing.



- (ii) *Formatting and styling*
As far as you can, we'd like you to format your submission so it's consistent with our [Formatting and Styling Guide](#) (again, available on our website). That being said, don't worry about adhering to every single detail if you don't have time - we can troubleshoot later on during copyediting. But any formatting you can do we really appreciate!
- (iii) *Anonymisation*
Make sure to anonymise your submission - take out any references to your name, your institution, or any other information which might enable our reviewers to identify you.

How to submit!

Once you've run through all these checks, you're ready to **actually submit your paper!** This is very simple: **just fill in the Submission Form on our website**, attach your paper, and that's it - your paper is submitted! If your paper is by multiple authors, you'll also need to include a signed [Undergraduate Authorship Agreement](#), available on our website.

Abstract Approval

At this point, the Editorial Committee springs into action, and the reviews process begins right away. In fact, you won't hear anything from us until the first stage of reviewing is complete: **Abstract Approval!** As soon as your paper arrives, we send your abstract to the Editor and/or Head of the Board of Reviewers for them to run over. They'll judge whether it's suitable for JoULAB to review, by seeing if it meets two basic criteria: (i) is it relevant to linguistics or related subfields?; (ii) is it appropriate for academic publication? Once a decision is reached, we'll immediately let you know via email - this usually happens within a few days of submission, or even the same day. If we've had to reject the abstract, we'll provide feedback to explain why; and if we've accepted it, the reviews process will begin...

6 A rundown through peer review

Each paper undergoes at least two rounds of peer review before publication; we assign your anonymised paper to two similarly anonymous reviewers, who independently assess your paper for qualities such as the originality and contribution of the research, the soundness of the methods used, and the quality of argumentation and discussion. When carrying out the review, they will give specific, line-by-line comments on the article, in order that their comments are maximally clear and useful to you.

All our reviewers are current PhD students from around the world, some of which are listed here on our website: <https://ulab.org.uk/journal/journal-reviewers>

The reviewers we assign to your paper are experts in your subfield of linguistics - and, being PhD students, they generally know what it's like to submit your first article for publication, so they won't bite!



First round of review

At first, each reviewer will give your paper one of four **designations**, as follows:

- (1) Accept with minor corrections
- (2) Accept with major corrections
- (3) Revise and resubmit
- (4) Reject

Based on these two reviews, the Editor decides on an **overall designation** for the paper, which may be different to one of the reviews given by the reviewers. For example, if your paper receives a (2) and a (3), it may be that the (3) review actually seemed a little harsh upon further inspection, and the Editor might award a (2) overall.

So what do these designations mean for your paper?

(1) *Accept with minor corrections*

Some small corrections to your paper are needed; we send you back the reviewers' comments, and you carry out the suggested corrections for (hopefully) a final check by the reviewers. Assuming you make the requested corrections, your paper will be **accepted for publication!**

(2) *Accept with major corrections*

Some more substantial corrections to your paper are needed, although the paper is still **suitable for publication**; we send you back the reviewers' comments, and you carry out the suggested corrections for another round of review.

(3) *Revise and resubmit*

Your paper is not suitable for publication in its current form; however, the reviewers have identified promising research that can be made suitable. The reviewers' comments will help you rework your paper to be suitable for publication, and when you resubmit it, we treat it as an entirely new submission.

(4) *Reject*

Your paper is unfortunately unsuitable for publication; often, this is because it falls outside the scope of JoULAB, by not being sufficiently related to linguistics.

If you receive a "Revise and resubmit" designation, don't panic! We really do want you to revise your paper and resubmit it to us, and the reviewers' comments should help you to do that. At any stage of review, we encourage you to get in touch if you are having trouble interpreting or carrying out reviewers' suggestions, and we will be happy to help. This includes, for example, if you no longer have access to particular materials or facilities used in your research.

Further rounds of review



If you're accepted, then once you've carried out your corrections, we send your paper back to its original reviewers for another round of review. The reviewers will assess if you've carried out the corrections to their satisfaction, and give it an updated designation:

- Publish: the paper is **ready for publication**
- (1) Accept with minor corrections
- (2) Accept with major corrections
- (3) Revise and resubmit

At this stage, there may be a bit of back-and-forth if the reviewers still identify a few small things that need changing. But once both reviewers have given their recommendation for publication, we move onto the final stage of review...

Final Acceptance

Before publication, the Editor and the Head of the Board of Reviewers conduct a final check of your paper, to make sure it's suitable for publication in JoULAB. If they identify any further required changes that weren't picked up in review, we may request that you make **minor modifications** before we approve it. Otherwise, we give the paper our **final acceptance**, and that means we can move onto the process of publication!

Publication

When your paper is accepted, we ask you to provide a few extra things so we can go ahead and start producing a pre-print for your paper - these are some details such as how you'd like your name and institution to appear on the paper, but also a 250-word Plain English Abstract, which we display alongside the existing abstract as a means of explaining your paper to readers who do not necessarily have expertise in your subfield.

We then begin the copyediting process, where our crack team of copyeditors performs two edits of the paper. Here, they reformat the paper to make sure it corresponds exactly to our [Formatting and Style Guide](#), as well as proofread it to catch any typographical errors. We may also, on request, (re-)produce certain graphics that you'd like included in the paper, depending on the complexity of the request. During the copyediting process, we will never change any of the style or content of your paper without your express permission (for example, if we catch any small factual or grammatical errors).

Once the two copyedits are finished, we'll send you the shiny new pre-print of the paper, which is how the paper will appear in the published issue! The pre-print will also contain a cover page which displays the article's keywords, as well as how other researchers can cite your research in the future - see some previous examples [here](#). If you're happy with how the paper is laid out, we begin the process of compiling a set of articles together into an Issue of the Journal, and we'll keep you updated on the timeline for your article's official publication.



7 Testimonials

Want to know what the publication process is really like? Take it straight from our past authors: T.R. Williamson, Madeleine Rees, and Nina Haket from Volume 1, Issue 1 and Martin Renard from Volume 1, Issue 2 provide some insight.

“The feedback and review given was helpful and manageable to implement, and the feeling of seeing my work in a journal was simply amazing. I would highly recommend it to anyone.” - **Nina Haket**

You can read Nina’s piece, Language Contact and the Phylogeny and Phonology of Early English, [here](#).

“The JoULAB team makes everything run smoothly [for first-timers], and will answer any question you have, no matter how stupid it may sound to you!” - **Martin Renard**

Read Martin’s article, Revitalising Kanyen’kéha on the Grand River: A Case Study of Indigenous Language Revitalisation and its Theoretical Implications, [here](#).

“Comments addressed gaps or ambiguities I didn’t realise I had. Reviewers were kind and understanding of my level of experience – they saw the article’s potential.” - **T.R. Williamson**

Read T.R.’s work, The Graded Co-Salience Hypothesis for Polysemous Ambiguity, [here](#).

“JoULAB is a really good opportunity for undergrads, and it obviously fills a niche in the market (as stated in the first journal's introduction, I believe.)

My main tip would be to make your data visualisations stand out by ensuring that they are clean and accessible - use a perceptually uniform colourmap and make your axis titles readable.

Overall I thought that publishing was a very smooth process: the editors made sure everyone was informed about how the publication was going. It never felt like we were waiting long, and they always responded to questions. I would definitely recommend submitting as a way of gaining experience with publication, which is always useful. Submitting an article also helps with many transferable skills (written communication, responding to feedback/corrections, completing work to deadline).” - **Madeleine Rees**

Check out Madeleine’s piece, The Palatalisation of the Voiceless Velar Fricative in Santiago, Chile: A Variationist Analysis, [here](#).



Backmatter

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