

The following guidelines are designed to help you submit suitable articles to the Art&Science section of *Nursing Standard*

Please note that your manuscript must be sent to *Nursing Standard* ONLY. It is considered unethical to send your manuscript to more than one journal. It will not increase your chances of publication because editors will not consider articles that have been published elsewhere.

Presenting a clinical article

Articles should be informative, of interest to nurses working in clinical practice, have something new to say or offer a fresh approach to an old subject, challenge current thought or practice, predict future trends, or review current thinking.

One of the best ways of understanding how to write in a clinical style is to read a selection of articles previously published in *Nursing Standard*'s art&science section. There are various styles of article published in the section: **Literature review** This is a thorough and comprehensive review of current writing on a particular aspect of nursing. Up-to-date referencing is essential, as is a strong conclusion to bring the subject together. The article should begin with a summary of about 50 words.

Systematic reviews and original research This should be written in classic research style, that is: abstract; introduction; literature review; aims; method; results; discussion and conclusion. The abstract should be around 150 words, summarising the aim, method, results and conclusion, and a box highlighting the implications of the research for practice should be presented in bullet points at the end of the article. Please refer to the research guidelines when submitting research articles.

Description of practice An article that describes logically and informatively a particular nursing procedure, the work of a ward or unit, or the role and function of a nursing post or specialty. The relevance of this work to other nurses should be discussed.

Case study *Nursing Standard* rarely publishes case studies unless they are of exceptional quality and interest. Case studies of up to 300 words can be used to illustrate specific points within an article.

Length Manuscripts should be between 2,000 and 3,500 words long. Please note your word count at the end of the article. If your manuscript falls outside these limits, please contact Gwen Clarke, Clinical Editor, on 020 8872 3158 who can then discuss with you the best way to proceed.

Illustrations Charts, diagrams, tables, photographs and illustrations are always welcome. Please ensure that any illustrative material is carefully numbered and captioned and that copyright has been obtained before you submit your article for publication. Photographs will be returned to you on request.

References All manuscripts should be supported by up-to-date literature which needs to be referenced comprehensively. We rely on your integrity to supply accurate and complete references; it is not possible for *Nursing Standard* to verify all submitted references. Inaccurate referencing reflects badly on the author and the journal.

References in the text

Please ensure you use the Harvard (name and year) system for references in the text. For example, 'It has been suggested that nurses should

examine their own relationship with patients' (Brown 2004). For three or more authors, print the first author's name followed by *et al*, for example, 'As White *et al* (2004) argue...' Note that White *et al* is acceptable for White, Red and Blue but not for White and Red, which should be written as White and Red (2004). When several references are cited simultaneously the order should be chronological, from earliest to most recent. If there are two or more references to the same author, the order should also be chronological, for example, WHO 1996, 1997.

References in the reference list

Each journal reference should include:

- ▶ The author's surname and initial(s) (in bold): print the surname and initial of all authors for references with six or less authors. For seven or more authors, print the first three and add *et al* (in bold italics).
- ▶ The year of publication in brackets.
- ▶ The title of the article in full.
- ▶ The name of the journal in full.
- ▶ The volume, issue number and first and last page numbers.
- ▶ Use alphabetical order for references. If there are two or more references to the same author, use chronological order.

Each book reference should include (in the order listed):

- ▶ The author's surname and initial(s) in bold. Please indicate if the people cited are authors or editors.
- ▶ The year of publication in brackets.
- ▶ The title of the book in italic.
- ▶ The edition (if applicable).
- ▶ The publisher.
- ▶ The city of publication, and state if in US.
- ▶ If you are citing a chapter within a book, supply the author's name, title of the chapter and page numbers.
- ▶ Use alphabetical order for references. If there are two or more references to the same author, use chronological order.

Examples

Department of Health (2000) *The NHS Plan: A Plan for Investment, A Plan for Reform*. The Stationery Office, London.

Dougherty L, Lister S (Eds) (2004) *The Royal Marsden Hospital Manual of Clinical Nursing Procedures*. Sixth edition. Blackwell Publishing, Oxford.

Hill D, Hadfield J (2005) The role of modern matrons in infection control. *Nursing Standard*. 19, 23, 42-44.

Preparing your text

You may send your article as an email attachment or by post on disc. Please indicate which word processing package you have used. There can be problems translating some computer commands, so please keep these to a minimum. For example:

- ▶ Use only one space after full stops.
- ▶ If you want more than one space, use the tab key not the space bar.
- ▶ Use only one return to denote the end of a paragraph.
- ▶ Do not use bold or underline.
- ▶ Do not start a new page for sections. Either make a new paragraph or create a new document.

- ▶ Always use UPPER and lower case.

Articles should be printed on one side of A4 paper, with clear, plain, dark, serif print (such as Times New Roman) using single line spacing. Leave margins of an inch and a half for reviewer's comments and ensure the pages are numbered. One copy should be sent to *Nursing Standard* and one kept for your records. If you have any queries please contact Wanda Freeman on 020 8872 3142.

Submitting your manuscript

All contributions should be sent either by email to: gwen.clarke@rcnpublishing.co.uk or by post (NOT BOTH) to:

Gwen Clarke, Clinical Editor, RCN Publishing Company, The Heights, 59-65 Lowlands Road, Harrow-on-the-Hill, Middlesex HA1 3AW.

Please check that you have included the following information for all authors with your article:

* Full name * Qualifications * Job title * Place of work and full address * Work telephone number * Work fax number * Email address (work and/or home, if possible) * Home address and telephone number * A word count.

What happens to your manuscript

All manuscripts submitted to *Nursing Standard* are acknowledged within two weeks, the manuscripts are then assessed internally before being sent to an external clinical expert for double-blind peer review. This means that the reviewer does not know who the author is and the author is not informed who the reviewer is. This helps to ensure that manuscripts are given an objective and unbiased review.

Authors can expect to wait approximately 12 weeks after acknowledgement before receiving a response. This will either be acceptance without revision, a request for revision or rewrite or a letter explaining that your manuscript has not been accepted for publication.

Accept If your manuscript is accepted for publication, you will be asked to complete an author's form and sign a publisher's agreement for the purposes of copyright. The article will then be scheduled to appear in an issue, usually within six months of acceptance. Articles will not be published without a signed publisher's agreement from each author.

Shortly before your article is due to appear, you will be asked to proof-read it and answer any editorial queries raised. Any minor changes you feel should be made can be addressed at this stage. Payments should be received within eight to ten weeks of publication.

Request for rewrite In most cases, authors are asked to revise their manuscripts in the light of the comments made by external reviewers and editorial staff. These comments are intended to be constructive and useful and help to produce a high-quality article. In this case, the manuscript will be returned to you with a copy of the reviewer's comments and a deadline for re-submission will be set. Revised manuscripts may be returned to external reviewers to ensure the changes made are satisfactory.

Not accepted for publication There are many reasons why your manuscript may not be accepted for publication and these may not necessarily reflect the quality of the submission. Where possible we will try to explain why. We retain the right, however, not to engage in further correspondence on the matter.