



Tips for first time authors

This advice has been put together by the *Business and Human Rights Journal (BHRJ)* to support early career scholars and encourage them to submit appropriate work to the journal

What should I publish on?

- Read widely around your research area to see what is topical and what others are writing and presenting on
- Journals are looking for scholarship that says something new; is there an aspect of your research that is particularly innovative or adds a new perspective to the current literature. Make sure you clearly highlight the contribution of your research in the article
- Journals and reviewers want to be excited, only submit a paper that you feel excited about yourself
- Is there a topic you would like to test for a book; it is entirely appropriate to publish a few articles on a topic that will later become a book
- Discuss your ideas with colleagues and consider testing your topic at a workshop or conference before writing a full article

Is *Business and Human Rights Journal* an appropriate venue for my work?

- Read the scope of the journal carefully, if your article does not fit the scope of the journal it will likely be immediately rejected or time will be wasted when it could be being evaluated by a more appropriate journal; spend time looking at previous content published by the journal to evaluate your fit
- Ask colleagues which journals they recommend for your particular topic
- Consider what kind of audience you are hoping for – if a large audience is important than a generalist journal might be most appropriate; if you want to reach those most interested in your field, then a specialist journal may be the best way to go
- If fast publication is important consider publishing in a new or young journal like *BHRJ* which is likely to have less of a backlog between acceptance and publication

How can I make my article more 'publishable'?

- Write in clear English and if English is not your first-language consider using a professional editing service; ask colleagues to proof-read your work
- Pay attention to the title and abstract; the title should clearly describe your topic and make the piece easily discoverable online; the abstract should be a succinct summary

- Your article should present a detailed analysis rather than a simple narrative or commentary on a list of cases or legislation
- Make sure you make an arguable case and that your argument flows logically, using clear headings to break up the text
- Avoid issue- and/or theory-overload in your article. Addressing too many different issues at once often makes for superficiality; drawing from too many different theories can lead to incommensurability or dilute the theoretical contribution of your work
- Avoid cramming too many arguments and discussions into one paper; it will likely come at the cost of focus and sharpness. Divvy up your contribution into two papers, if you have too much to say
- Take time to check your citations thoroughly and ensure they are complete; ensure you reference the related literature accurately and completely and do not change its meaning to support your argument
- Be careful to make sure your article would be of interest to a global audience
- Ensure you are happy that your article is complete; do not expect to finesse your text or add additional material at a later stage
- Once you have chosen a journal to submit to, use that journal's instructions for authors or style guide to ensure the article is put into journal style
- Ensure you have adhered to any word limit for your selected journal (being over or under word count is likely to result in immediate rejection)
- If a journal requires work to be anonymised, please eliminate any author details and anonymise any citations that refer to your own work
- Closely follow the submission instructions for your chosen journal (e.g. *BHRJ* pieces must be submitted via our ScholarOne submission system)
- If a journal has an exclusive submission policy (which *BHRJ* does), please abide by this. Finding out an article has been submitted to another journal at the same time is likely to frustrate the editorial team and discourage publication this time or in the future

How should I respond to a revise and resubmit decision?

- Take seriously any revisions suggested
- Include with your revised manuscript a note on how you have responded to reviewer comments; if you have not made the suggested amendments say why

What should I expect if my article is accepted for publication?

- Respond to any queries from the editorial team or any copyeditor promptly
- Expect your article to be edited by the journal's editorial team – treat these edits constructively, they have been made to bring the best out of your article
- Be ready to check proofs quickly (most journals give just three days for this process)
- Proof corrections should be limited to typos and errors of law, substantial changes to your article are not allowed by any journal at this stage
- Expect to be asked to transfer your copyright to the journal and complete any documentation relating to this with care
- Check the re-use and self-archiving policy of the journal carefully before considering re-publishing or archiving in a repository

What is the best way to move on from a rejection?

- Ask for reasons if you are not given them
- Try another journal but consider amending your article to respond to reviewer comments before you do; the same reviewers could easily appear on another journal and you do not want to insult them
- Consider other types of submission such as for *BHRJ* writing a 'Developments in the Field' piece or writing a book review (a good way to show you are eager to write as well as increasing your profile and network of contacts)
- Do not be afraid to send a more suitable piece to the journal in the future