International Journal of Research in Language and Education
(IJRLE)

Author Guidelines for Writing Original Research Articles

Editorial Office

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These guidelines specify how to prepare an original research article for submission to IJRLE.

- Follow them together with the IJRLE article template.
- Where a point of style is not covered here, follow the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (7th ed.).

1. General manuscript setup

- Word Count: 6,000–9,000 words. (The word count above refers to the main body of the text only. It excludes the title, abstract, keywords, references, tables, figures and their captions, and appendices.)
- Page size. US Letter (8.5 × 11 in). Keep it consistent throughout.
- Margins. 0.9 in left/right; 0.8 in top/bottom. Header/footer distance 0.4 in.
- Layout. Single column.
- Font. Times New Roman throughout (including tables, figure captions, and references).
- Body spacing. Line spacing 1.15; no extra space between paragraphs.
- Alignment. Body text justified.
- Running header. Every page — left: empty; right: the journal name, volume & issue, year, and article number; 8 pt italic.
- Page numbers. Centered in the footer.
- File format. Submit as .docx, with tables and figures placed in the text where cited.

2. Title

- Font. 16 pt, regular weight (not bold), left-aligned.
- Capitalization. Sentence case (capitalize only the first word, proper nouns, and the first word after a colon).
- Length. 10–15 words; name the key variables, population, and, where useful, the design.
- Avoid. Vague openers ("A study of…") and undefined abbreviations.

3. Authors and affiliations

- Authors. 11 pt. Full names in submission order; superscript letters (a, b …) key each author to an affiliation; an asterisk (*) marks the corresponding author.
- Affiliations. 8 pt italic, one line each: department, institution, city, country.
- ORCID. Include each author's ORCID iD (as an https link) under the affiliations or in the Author Note.

4. Corresponding-author note

- One line directly below the abstract block, 8 pt italic: * Corresponding author. E-mail address: name@domain (A. Author).

5. Abstract

- Placement. Right cell of the "Abstract" block, light-orange fill (FDE9D9 HEX COLOR), ruled top and bottom.
- Label. "A B S T R A C T" — 8 pt bold, letter-spaced.

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- Text. 9 pt, justified, one unindented paragraph, 150–250 words, no citations, no undefined abbreviations.
- Content, in order. Background/problem → purpose → method (design, participants, instruments, analysis) → main results with key figures → conclusion/contribution. Write it last.

6. Keywords

- Left cell of the block. Label "Keywords:" 8.5 pt italic; then 4–6 keywords, one per line, 8.5 pt, sentence case, chosen as readers would search (include population and method where distinctive).

7. Headings (numbered)

- Use a consistent decimal scheme and do not skip levels.
- Level 1 (section). e.g., "1. Introduction" — 12 pt bold, left, title case.
- Level 2 (subsection). e.g., "1.1. Design and participants" — 11 pt bold italic, left, title case.
- Level 3 (rare). e.g., "1.1.1. …" — 10.5 pt bold, left.
- Order. Number main sections continuously; back-matter headings are not numbered.
- Recommended sequence. 1. Introduction · 2. Literature Review · 3. Method · 4. Results · 5. Discussion · 6. Conclusion (Limitations may be a separate section or part of the Conclusion).

8. Body text

- Size and spacing. 10.5 pt, justified, line spacing 1.15.
- First-line indent. 0.2 in for every paragraph except the first after a heading, which is flush left.
- Paragraphing. Several paragraphs per section, each one clear idea; avoid one-sentence paragraphs.
- Tense and voice. Past tense for methods/results; present tense for established knowledge and interpretation; hedge claims appropriately.
- Spelling. British or American — used consistently. Define each abbreviation at first use.

9. In-text citations (APA 7)

- Basic. (Nation, 2013) or narrative Nation (2013).
- Two authors. (Webb & Nation, 2017); narrative uses "and," parenthetical uses "&."
- Three or more. First author + et al. from the first citation: (Grabe et al., 2020).
- Multiple sources. Alphabetical, separated by semicolons: (Grabe, 2009; Krashen, 1985).
- Quotation. Add a page number: (Schmitt, 2010, p. 34).
- Rule. Every in-text citation must have a matching reference-list entry, and vice versa.

10. Numbers, statistics, and symbols (APA 7)

- Numerals. Spell out numbers below 10 in prose; use numerals for 10 and above and for all measurements, ages, sample sizes, and statistics.
- Italics. Italicize statistical symbols: M, SD, n, t, F, p, r, d.
- Reporting. Report exact p values ($p = .03$); use $p < .001$ for very small values; e.g., $t(58) = 5.42$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.74$.
- Leading zero. Omit the leading zero for values that cannot exceed 1 (p, r, d): $p = .001$, $r = .32$.

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11. Tables (APA 7)

- Number and title. On one line above the table — "Table 1." (bold) followed by the title (10 pt italic, title case), with no period at the end.
- Rules only. A rule at the top, one under the header row, and one at the bottom. No vertical lines.
- Body. 9.5 pt; numeric columns centered; the first (stub) column left-aligned.
- Note. Below the table (8.5 pt italic label "Note.") to define abbreviations, units, and significance markers.
- Reference. Cite every table in the text; number in order of first mention.

12. Figures (APA 7)

- Number and caption. On one line below the figure — "Figure 1." (bold) followed by the caption (italic), with no period at the end.
- Black and white. IJRLE prints in greyscale — use greyscale fills, patterns, or line styles (not colour) to distinguish series, with error bars where relevant.
- Resolution. Supply artwork at ≥ 300 dpi.
- Note. Below the figure (8.5 pt italic) for source and explanation (e.g., "Error bars represent standard deviations.").
- Keep together. The figure number, caption, image, and note must stay together on one page.

13. Quotations

- Short (< 40 words). In the text, in double quotation marks, with a page number.
- Block (≥ 40 words). A separate indented block (0.5 in), no quotation marks, with the citation after the final punctuation.

14. Back matter (before the References)

Each is an unnumbered heading (11 pt bold) followed by a short statement. Write "Not applicable" where a statement does not apply.

- Disclosure of interest. Declare any competing or financial interests, or state that none were reported.
- Funding. Name the funder and grant number, or state that no specific funding was received.
- Declaration of generative AI use. Disclose any generative-AI tools used and their purpose, or state that none were used.
- Data availability statement. State whether and how the data can be accessed (open repository with DOI/URL; on reasonable request; within the article; restricted; or not applicable).
- Notes on contributors. A 4–5 sentence biography for each author.
- Acknowledgements (optional). Thank non-author contributors, with their permission.

15. References (APA 7)

- **Format.** Heading "References"; entries 9.5 pt, hanging indent 0.25 in, with a small space between entries.
- **Order.** Alphabetical by first author's surname; same author ordered by year (earliest first); one-author entries precede same-surname multi-author entries.

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- **DOIs.** Include a DOI for every source that has one, as a link (https://doi.org/10.xxxx/xxxxx); omit only where none exists.
- **Style.** Italicize journal titles, volume numbers, and book titles; sentence case for article and book titles, title case for journal names.
- **Journal Article**
- Niepel, C., Hausen, J. E., Weber, A. M., & Möller, J. (2025). Understanding mean-level and intraindividual variability in state academic self-concept: The role of students' trait expectancies and values. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 117(5), 772–788. https://doi.org/10.1037/edu0000946
- **Book**
- Levenson, H., Jinich, S., Vaz, A., & Rousmaniere, T. (2025). *Deliberate practice in emotionally focused couple therapy*. American Psychological Association. https://doi.org/10.1037/0000436-000
- **Chapter in an Edited Book**
- Zeleke, W. A., Hughes, T. L., & Drozda, N. (2020). Home–school collaboration to promote mind–body health. In C. Maykel & M. A. Bray (Eds.), *Promoting mind–body health in schools: Interventions for mental health professionals* (pp. 11–26). American Psychological Association. https://doi.org/10.1037/0000157-002
- **Conference Session**
- Davidson, R. J. (2019, August 8–11). *Well-being is a skill* [Conference session]. APA 2019 Convention, Chicago, IL, United States.
- **Doctoral Dissertation**
- Horvath-Plyman, M. (2018). *Social media and the college student journey: An examination of how social media use impacts social capital and affects college choice, access, and transition* (Publication No. 10937367) [Doctoral dissertation, New York University]. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global.

16. Appendices (optional)

Researchers may add one or more appendices for supplementary material that supports the study but would interrupt the main text — for example, the full questionnaire, test, or interview guide; a coding scheme or rubric; the stimulus/word list; extended tables; additional analyses; or the consent form.

Placement and order

- **After the References.** Appendices appear at the very end of the article.
- **New page.** Each appendix starts on a new page.
- **Order.** Sequence them in the order first mentioned in the text.
- **Reference.** Refer to every appendix at least once ("see Appendix A"); do not include one that is never cited.

Labelling and titling

- **One appendix.** Label it simply "Appendix" (no letter).
- **Two or more.** Label them "Appendix A," "Appendix B," … in order of first mention.
- **Title.** Give each a descriptive title on the line below the label.

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- **Format.** The label ("Appendix A") is set like a Level-1 heading (12 pt bold); the title beneath it is 11 pt bold italic, title case.

Content formatting

- **Same setup.** Use the same page setup, font, and spacing as the main text.
- **Subheadings.** Appendix subheadings may be numbered A.1, A.2, etc.
- **Tables.** Number them Table A1, Table A2 (Table B1… in Appendix B); with a single appendix use Table A1.
- **Figures.** Number them Figure A1, Figure A2, etc. Same rules as in the body (number bold, title italic, Note beneath, greyscale).
- **Instruments.** Reproduce questionnaires, tests, or consent forms exactly as administered, noting the response scale and scoring.
- **Citations.** Sources cited in an appendix go in the main reference list, not in the appendix.

17. Language and mechanics

- **Commas.** Use the serial (Oxford) comma consistently.
- **Dashes.** En dashes for number ranges (24.6–66.7); em dashes for parenthetical breaks.
- **Quotation marks.** Use curly ("smart") quotation marks and apostrophes.
- **Abbreviations.** Define at first use; avoid in the title and abstract unless standard (e.g., EFL, L2).

18. Pre-submission checklist

☐ Title 10–15 words, sentence case; abstract 150–250 words; 4–6 keywords.

☐ Times New Roman; body 10.5 pt justified, 1.15 spacing; headings numbered and consistent.

☐ All tables/figures numbered, cited in text, greyscale, with notes; figure blocks unbroken.

☐ Statistics in APA style (exact p, effect sizes, correct italics and decimals).

☐ In-text citations and reference list match exactly; DOIs included; hanging indents applied.

☐ All back-matter statements completed (disclosure, funding, AI, data, contributors).

☐ Appendices placed after References, labelled, titled, and cited in the text.

☐ Running header, page numbers, and margins as specified.

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