



Checklist for journal article authors

The *International Journal of Law in Context* encourages junior scholars to submit their work to the journal and has put these tips together in support of this.

Selecting a topic

- Consider the most interesting areas that have arisen in your research
- Is there a topic you would like to test for a book?
- Read widely around your research area to see what is topical and what others are writing and presenting on
- Consider testing your topic at a conference before writing a full article
- Discuss your ideas with colleagues

Writing your article in a way that is more likely to be published

- Write in clear English
- If English is not your first-language consider using a professional editing service
- Ask colleagues to proof-read your work
- Consider attending a writing workshop
- Your article should present a detailed analysis rather than a simple narrative or commentary on a list of cases or legislation
- Make sure your argument flows logically, using clear headings to break up the text
- Take time to check your citations thoroughly, do not assume someone at the journal will do this
- 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
- Closely follow the submission instructions for your chosen journal (e.g. some require submission by email, some through an electronic submission system)
- 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
- If a journal has an exclusive submission policy, 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

Choosing an appropriate journal

- Read widely to give you a clear sense of which are the appropriate journals to your field
- Read the scopes of journals carefully (often outlined inside a journal or on its webpages), if your article does not fit the scope of a journal it will likely be immediately rejected
- 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 your piece is particularly innovative or provocative, look for journals that have a tendency to publish these kinds of work
- Keep in mind that there are some journals that particular favour junior scholars – lookout for journals that offer a junior scholar's prize
- If fast publication is important consider publishing in a new or young journal which is likely to have less of a backlog between acceptance and publication
- Is ranking important – check with colleagues whether your school has its own ranking list of journals and whether Impact Factor is important? Law is a field with few ranking lists but those that seem to count most are the Thomson Reuters Journal Citation Reports that publishes Impact Factors, Scopus' SCImago list and Washington and Lee's law journal rankings

If you article is accepted

- Take seriously any revisions suggested
- 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
- Respond to any queries from the editorial team or any copyeditor promptly
- Be ready to check proofs quickly (many 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 to do if your article is rejected

- Ask for reasons
- Try another journal
- Take on board any feedback before submitting to another journal
- Do not rule out trying this journal again in the future
- Consider other types of submission such as writing a book review (a good way to show you are eager to write as well as increasing your profile and network of contacts)