

How to get your journal article published

The publication process

Standards are high and getting published is not easy, but there are certain things to consider which can improve your success rate when trying to get an article published in a Sage journal. This document explains what happens after you press submit. Learn about the five possible outcomes of submission, and how best to respond.

What happens next?

Depending on the journal, your article will be considered by the Editor/s and/or Associate Editors and 2-3 reviewers, often from the Editorial Board. If it is submitted to an online system, you will receive an acknowledgement and a reference number. Please use this reference number if you need to follow up on your manuscript.

There are five possible outcomes

Desk reject – your paper will not be sent out for review. Common reasons for a desk reject include poor fit for the journal, poor presentation (e.g., includes grammatical errors or incorrect formatting), and weak methods or literature base. However, if the Editor determines your submission might be a good fit for another journal, your paper could be a candidate for our article transfer hub, [Sage Path](#).

Reject and resubmit – There are several reasons a paper may receive this decision. There may be a flaw in the methodology requiring more experiments, more data may need to be retrieved or a model validated. This may also be due to poor writing, grammar, or a lack of focus.

Revise and resubmit – Considerable changes required. This decision is an elaboration of a major revision, to give more time for more lengthy alterations

Major revision – Substantial work is required prior to resubmission.

Minor revision – A limited number of changes are required. Implies that the editors and reviewers feel the paper is publishable once their comments have been addressed.

Accept – The manuscript is publishable in its current form. The majority of articles require revision before reaching this stage.

When can or should I contact the editor?

Check the journal's website. It might stipulate how long the review process normally takes. Some manuscripts may take longer to review, particularly if they are in niche areas and it is difficult to find good reviewers. It is reasonable to inquire about your paper if you feel the review timeframe has exceeded the stated guidelines.

Handling revisions

- Consider reviewers' and the editor's comments carefully. Don't rush!
- Follow the timeframes requested for review.
- Demonstrate what you have changed point by point.
- Address each referee point in a separate document.
- If you cannot meet all criticisms, point out why.
- Be positive/constructive.
- Be aware that the process can take 2-3 iterations.

Handling rejections

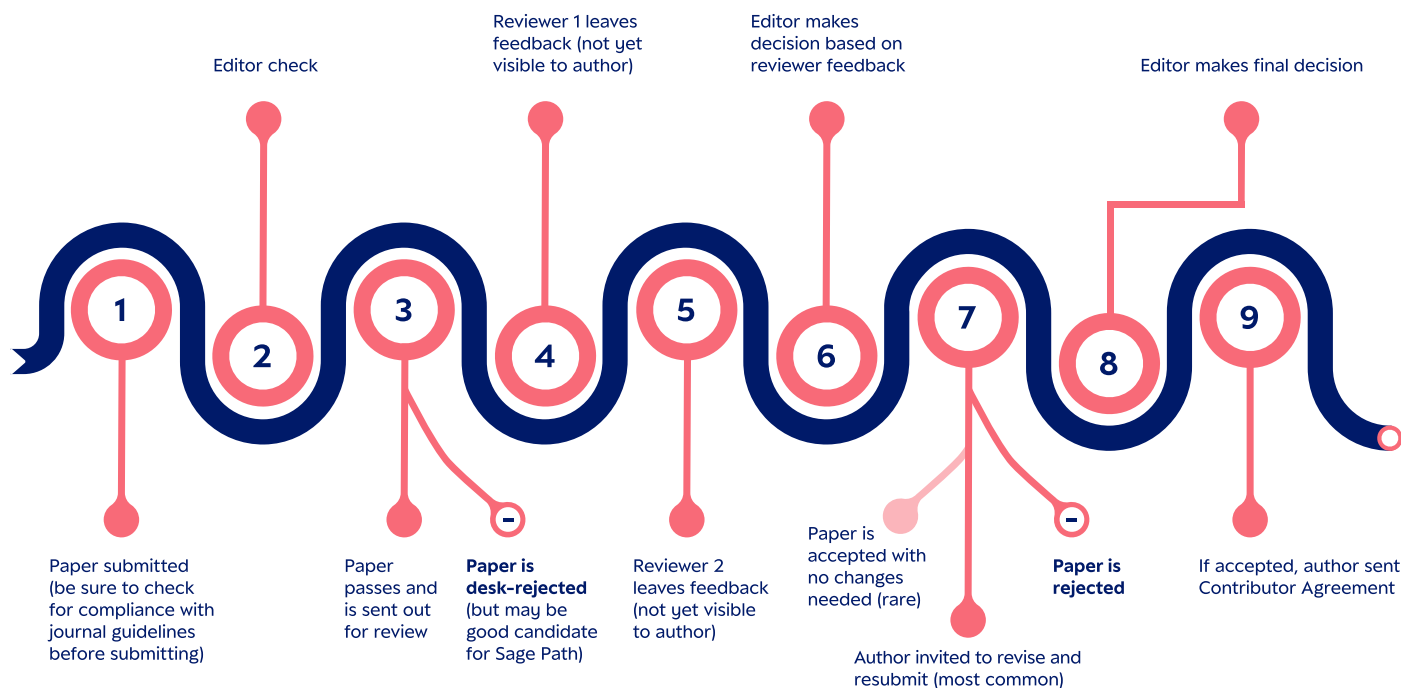
- Don't overreact. The criticisms are there to enhance your paper.
- Carefully read referees' report and Editor's letter.
- Aim to understand why. Was the topic ill-focused? Is it the wrong journal? Is the research fundamentally flawed? Was there another specific problem?
- Try and rework the paper.
- Consider submitting to an alternative journal.

Find out more at

[Sage Journals Information for Authors](#)

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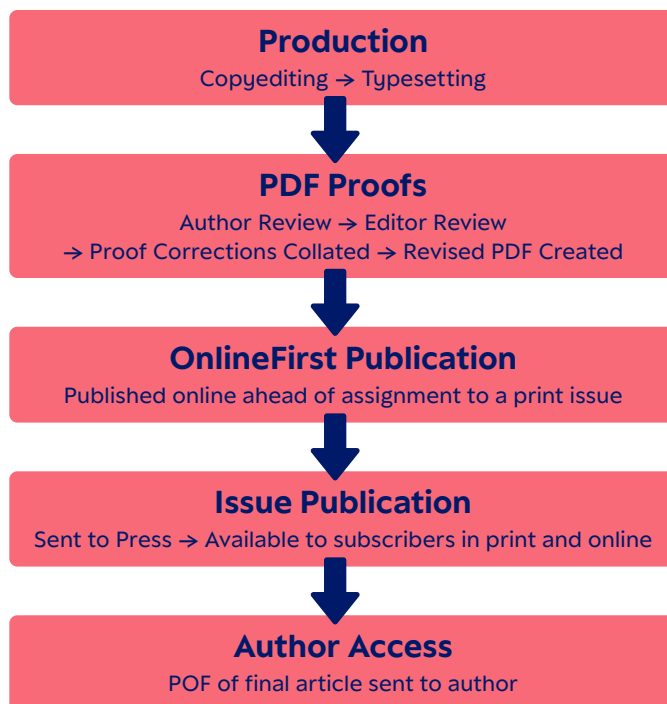
How does peer review work?



What happens once your paper has been accepted?

Once your paper is accepted for publication, it will be forwarded to the production team for processing. You will need to sign a contributor agreement form, or if the journal is on the online system, Sage Track, you simply click a button. Sage does the following:

1. Copyedits your paper so that it conforms to the journal style.
2. Creates a PDF of proofs to be sent to you for final review.
3. Corrects any errors you have identified.
4. Posts your finished paper Online First ahead of the issue publication (if desired). Your paper can then be read and cited by journal subscribers, or if open access, it can be read online.
5. Sends the final copy to the printer.
6. Dispatches the journal to subscribers.
7. Provides authors with access to a PDF of their final article. We additionally provide the corresponding author with a complimentary copy of the print issue in which the article appears (up to a maximum of 5 copies for distribution to co-authors).



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If you are publishing open access in a hybrid journal through Sage Choice, you will also be subject to an APC. Note that you can request your article to be made open access at any point, but the article can only be sent to Sage Journals Licensing & Payment once the article has been accepted and has entered Production.

An article processing charge is a fee charged to enable an article to be made open access on publication. APCs can vary from journal to journal, so be sure to check the journal's individual website to find out the current APC.

Your institution may be able to help you to cover the open access article processing charge (APC) through an Open Access agreement they have with Sage. Your institution may also have an open access prepaid account (OAPA) with Sage in order to cover APCs, or you may be eligible for a discount due to your institutional affiliation. To check your institution's status and/or to learn more about OA agreements with institutions by country, please have a look at our [Open Access Agreements](#) page.

If your institution isn't included in one of our OA agreements, it may have a central fund to support researchers who want to publish open access. These are usually managed by the institutional library, so this is a good place to start to find out what might be available for you.

Note that APC waivers or discounts are offered to Corresponding Authors who are affiliated with institutions in countries, areas and territories described by the [Research4Life](#) program publishing in the majority of [Sage's gold open access journals](#). Learn more about [Sage's APC Waivers Policy](#).

If your research funding requires you to publish open access, your APC may be included in your research grant. Please contact those responsible for administering funds at your institution or organization or your grant funding body to find out more.

Some Sage journals offer role-based discounts for editorial board members, reviewers, or students. You can contact the journal's editorial office for more details.

Finally, if you cannot pay the APC, you can still make your article free to read by submitting to a Sage subscription journal and depositing the article in your institution's repository under Sage's [green open access policy](#).



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Further reading

- Atkinson Jennie (2019) Thinking of Publishing in a Journal Published by SAGE? Social Science Space. <https://www.socialsciencespace.com/2019/01/thinking-of-publishing-in-a-journal-published-by-sage>
- Martín Eloísa (2014) How to write a good article. *Current Sociology* 62(7) 949-955
- Becker L and Denicolo P (2012) *Publishing Journal Articles*, Sage Publishing
- Kitchin R and Fuller D (2005) *The Academic's Guide to Publishing*, Sage Publishing
- Epstein D, Kenway J and Boden R (2007) *Writing for Publication*, Sage Publishing
- Questions reviewers will be asking, from 'Peer Review: Nuts and Bolts' by Sense about Science (2017): [peer-review-the-nuts-and-bolts.pdf](#)
- Publication ethics for editors and authors: [publicationethics.org](#)
- How to Get Published Webinar – [How to Write a Journal Article](#) (2022)

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