

# Improving journal quality 1: what is quality?

ACSE conference  
Dubai, August 2016

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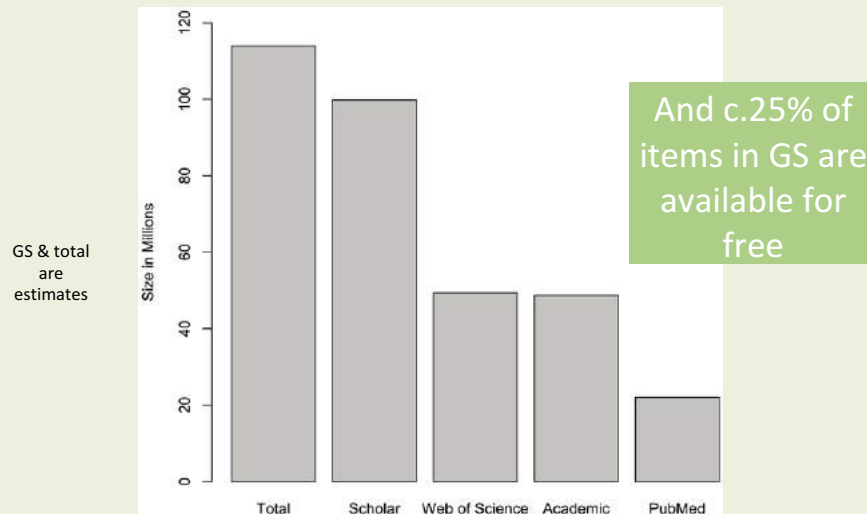


## Welcome

- Who am I?
  - In academic/scholarly publishing since 1986
    - Blackwell-Science (Wiley), CABI, CUP, INASP
  - Independent consultant since 2007
    - Editorial strategies, copyright
  - Other activities include:
    - Training courses on journal development, editorial matters, copyright, Crossref, etc.
    - Write a monthly newsletter: *ALPSP Alert*
    - Vice President of the European Association of Science Editors (EASE)
    - Editor-in-Chief of *Learned Publishing*



## How many articles ... ?

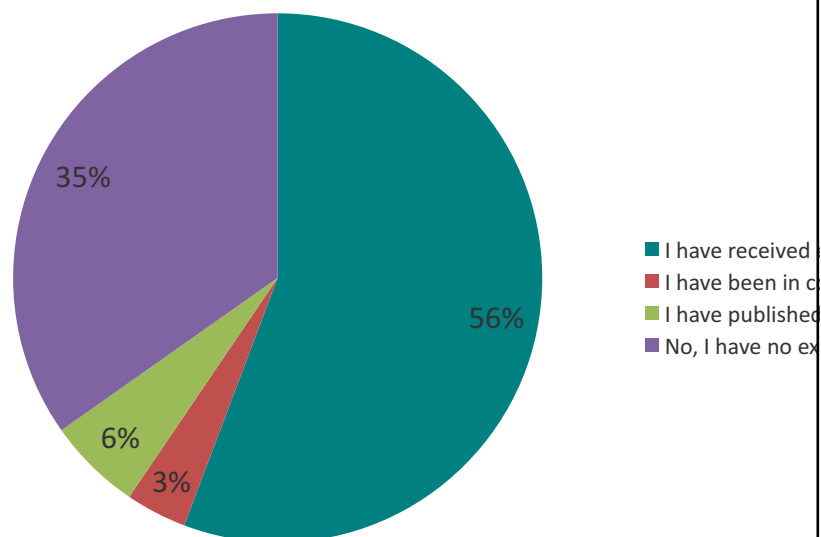


Khabsa M, Giles CL (2014) The Number of Scholarly Documents on the Public Web. PLoS ONE 9(5): e93949. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0093949  
<http://www.plosone.org/article/info:doi/10.1371/journal.pone.0093949>

## “Predatory” journals

- Journals that don't conform to international standards
  - What are international standards?
- People using the pay-to-publish model without scruples
  - Fraudulent journals (plagiarised content)

### Have you had experiences of encountering so-called 'predatory' publishers?



## Discussion

- What makes a journal successful?
- What makes **your** journal successful?
- Who judges?



## Success indicators

- Financial stability
- Reputation
  - Among your peers
    - Ease of getting submissions
    - High readership
    - High citation
  - Within institutions
    - Reward for publishing with you
- “Impact”

## Gatekeeper or access enabler?



## Strategies for improving “success”

Improve submission quality  
Improve review quality  
Make better decisions

Publish better content

Improve visibility  
Increase readership  
Raise reputation

Increase impact

Strategies

```
graph TD; Strategies[Strategies] --> Content[Publish better content]; Strategies --> Impact[Increase impact]; Content --> Quality[Improve submission quality<br/>Improve review quality<br/>Make better decisions]; Impact --> Visibility[Improve visibility<br/>Increase readership<br/>Raise reputation];
```



## Question

- Why are you publishing a journal?

## Differentiating the vision

- What makes your journal different?
- What makes you unique?
- What is the rationale for your journal?

**What is your USP\*?**

- \*Unique selling point

## **Not all journals are the same**

- The environment which journals inhabit is not uniform
- Different communities want different things from journals:
  - Professional advice and guidance
  - High level research findings
  - News and alerts to new guidelines
  - Examples and case studies
  - And what else ... ?

## **What about your journal?**

- Who are your community?
  - What do they want from the journal?
- What does the journal want to supply to them?



## **Different content / formats**

- Original research articles
  - Themed sections
  - Themed issues
  - Lead articles
- Review articles
- Short articles
- Editorial
- Guest editorial
- Editor's selection
- Book reviews
- Case studies
- Case notes
- A day in the life of...
- Perspectives
- Personal view
- Quizzes (CME, etc.)
- News, events
- Letters to the editor
- Obituaries
- And ... ?

## **Writing and communicating the vision**

- Goal
  - Why are you publishing?
- Aims and objectives
  - What you are publishing?
  - Who are you publishing it for?

## **Good and bad aims**

- Journal X aims to improve healthcare in Antarctica

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- Journal X aims to improve healthcare in Antarctica
- Journal Y aims to improve healthcare in Antarctica through the provision of high quality research
- Journal Z aims to improve healthcare in Antarctica through the provision of quality research for penguin conservationists

## **Example**

- Vision
  - Our vision is that the journal will contribute to improved quality and effectiveness in scholarly publishing by providing a source of relevant and authoritative research and opinion.
- Aims and scope
  - Learned Publishing publishes peer reviewed research, reviews, industry updates and opinions on all aspects of scholarly communication and publishing. Written by and published for everyone involved with scholarly communication and publishing, our readership includes publishers, vendors, librarians, academics and researchers from around the world.



## **DOAJ essential criteria**

- DOAJ Principles of Transparency and Best Practice in Scholarly Publishing
  - <https://doaj.org/bestpractice>
  - Developed in collaboration with COPE, OASPA and WAME

## **Governing Body / ownership**

- Journals shall have editorial boards or other governing bodies whose members are recognized experts in the subject areas included within the journal's scope. The full names and affiliations of the journal's editors shall be provided on the journal's Web site.
- Information about the ownership and/or management of a journal shall be clearly indicated on the journal's Web site. Publishers shall not use organizational or journal names that would mislead potential authors and editors about the nature of the journal's owner.



## **Editorial team/contact information**

- Journals shall provide the full names and affiliations of the journal's editors on the journal's Web site as well as contact information for the editorial office.



## **Peer review process**

- Journal content must be clearly marked as whether peer reviewed or not. Peer review is defined as obtaining advice on individual manuscripts from reviewers expert in the field who are not part of the journal's editorial staff. This process, as well as any policies related to the journal's peer review procedures, shall be clearly described on the journal's Web site.



## **Process for identification of and dealing with allegations of research misconduct**

- Publishers and editors shall take reasonable steps to identify and prevent the publication of papers where research misconduct has occurred, including plagiarism, citation manipulation, and data falsification/fabrication, among others. In no case shall a journal or its editors encourage such misconduct, or knowingly allow such misconduct to take place. In the event that a journal's publisher or editors are made aware of any allegation of research misconduct relating to a published article in their journal - the publisher or editor shall follow COPE's guidelines (or equivalent) in dealing with allegations.



## **Conflicts of interest**

- A journal shall have clear policies on handling potential conflicts of interest of editors, authors, and reviewers and the policies should be clearly stated.



## **Revenue sources**

- Business models or revenue sources (eg, author fees, subscriptions, advertising, reprints, institutional support, and organizational support) shall be clearly stated or otherwise evident on the journal's Web site.
- Journals shall state their advertising policy if relevant, including what types of ads will be considered, who makes decisions regarding accepting ads and whether they are linked to content or reader behavior (online only) or are displayed at random.



## **Author fees**

- Any fees or charges that are required for manuscript processing and/or publishing materials in the journal shall be clearly stated in a place that is easy for potential authors to find prior to submitting their manuscripts for review or explained to authors before they begin preparing their manuscript for submission.



## **Copyright**

- Copyright and licensing information shall be clearly described on the journal's Web site, and licensing terms shall be indicated on all published articles, both HTML and PDFs





## **Web site / access**

- A journal's Web site, including the text that it contains, shall demonstrate that care has been taken to ensure high ethical and professional standards. It must not contain misleading information, including any attempt to mimic another journal/publisher's site.
- The way(s) in which the journal and individual articles are available to readers and whether there are associated subscription or pay per view fees shall be stated.

**DOAJ** DIRECTORY OF  
OPEN ACCESS  
JOURNALS

## **Name of journal / schedule**

- The Journal name shall be unique and not be one that is easily confused with another journal or that might mislead potential authors and readers about the Journal's origin or association with other journals.
- The periodicity at which a journal publishes shall be clearly indicated.

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## **Archiving**

- A journal's plan for electronic backup and preservation of access to the journal content (for example, access to main articles via CLOCKSS or PubMedCentral) in the event a journal is no longer published shall be clearly indicated.



## **Direct marketing**

- Any direct marketing activities, including solicitation of manuscripts that are conducted on behalf of the journal, shall be appropriate, well targeted, and unobtrusive.





## Learned Publishing [www.learned-publishing.org](http://www.learned-publishing.org)



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# EMAME

<http://www.emro.who.int/entity/emame>

The screenshot shows the EMAME website interface. At the top, it features the World Health Organization logo and the text 'Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean'. Below this is a navigation bar with links for 'Home', 'Media centre', 'Information resources', 'Countries', 'Programmes', and 'About Us'. A search bar is also present. The main content area is titled 'Eastern Mediterranean Association of Medical Editors' and includes a description of the association's mission to support medical journalism. It also lists supported organizations like WHO, WAME, and FAME. There are sections for 'News', 'In focus', and 'Events', each with a brief article and a 'Read the full story' link. A 'Featured publications' section highlights 'The Manual for Editors of Health Science Journals' with download links in Arabic, English, and French. A 'Contact EMAME' section offers a way to submit comments or queries.

## EASE publications & resources [www.ease.org.uk](http://www.ease.org.uk)

- *European Science Editing* (quarterly journal)
- ***Science Editors' Handbook, 2nd ed.***
  - 56 chapters: editing, terminology, policies, peer review, ethics, publishing, promotion
- EASE Toolkit for Authors and for Journal Editors
  - Web links to resources
- EASE Guidelines for Authors and Translators
  - In >20 languages

**Thank you**

**... Questions ...**

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