‘Writing for Publication’
Dr Kim Toffoletti, Gender Studies, Deakin University
kim.toffoletti@deakin.edu.au

Resources
Deakin University Library has many books devoted to the topics of academic writing and publishing in peer-reviewed journals.

Why publish?
Publication output is an indicator of your prestige and performance in academia.
✓ To advance knowledge.
✓ To publicly contribute to debates in your discipline area as well as more broadly.
✓ To ‘legitimate’ your scholarship.
✓ To attract research income to the faculty.
✓ To improve your chances of getting an academic job/grant/post-doc.
✓ Seeing your name in print is cool.

Where do I publish?
Make sure that your research counts.
✓ Commercially published research monograph.
✓ Commercially published edited collection.
✓ Refereed article in a scholarly journal (the focus of today’s session).
✓ Book chapter in a commercially published edited collection.
✓ Refereed conference proceedings.

Choosing a journal
✓ Know the journals in your field.
✓ Can you list the top journals in your discipline nationally and internationally?
✓ Who is on the editorial board?
✓ What is the editorial policy?
✓ What kinds of issues, theories and approaches does the journal publish? Are they consistent with yours?
✓ Supervisors are a great resource: ask their advice

Regularly check ‘call for papers’
✓ Cultural Studies Association www.csaa.asn.au
✓ Univ of Maryland WS database www.mith2.umd.edu/WomensStudies/CallsforPapers
✓ The Australian Sociological Association www.tasa.org.au
✓ Voice of the Shuttle Vos.ucsb.edu/index.asp
Preliminary groundwork
✓ Know the submission requirements of the journal you are writing for.
✓ Know the audience.
✓ Read the journal's editorial policy. Is your work in keeping with their interests?
✓ Before you write anything, make initial contact with the journal via email/phone to assess the suitability of your work and find out how long their publication time is.

Prestige vs Runs on the board
✓ As an ECR, building a research profile is paramount.
✓ Sending an article to a prestigious journal risks a long turnaround and less likelihood of acceptance.
✓ New journals and e-journals have higher acceptance rates and faster publication.
✓ Upcoming special issues devoted to your area of research may increase the chances of publication.

Journals devoted to new scholars
Postgraduate journals
✓ AntiTHESIS (Eng/Cult.Studs, Unimelb)
✓ Eras (History, Monash)
✓ Traffic (Interdisc, Unimelb)
✓ M/C: Journal of Media and Culture (UQ)
✓ New Talents (p.grad issue of Journal of Australian Studies)
✓ Colloquy (Lit/Cult.Studs, Monash)
✓ Melbourne Historical Journal

Pros and cons of publishing during candidacy
Pros:
✓ Publications are vital for academic jobs.
✓ Opportunity to 'test' ideas.
✓ Focuses your writing.
✓ Valuable peer-feedback.

Cons:
✓ Can distract from the ‘main game’.
✓ Risks turning the thesis into a series of articles.
✓ Easier to ‘pull apart’ the PhD once it is completed.

Characteristics of a journal article
✓ Offers cutting edge knowledge.
✓ Displays knowledge of the research field.
✓ Identifies current debates.
✓ Develops a core argument in relation to these debates
  ✓ extends existing scholarship
  ✓ identifies gaps
  ✓ proposes a new methodology
  ✓ offers new interpretations

Characteristics of a journal article
✓ Critical analysis that is theoretically informed.
✓ Methodology is explained and justified.
✓ Method is relevant to aims and outcomes.
✓ Draws conclusions.
✓ Will often develop one key concept.
Do I have something publishable?
Yes if you are:
✓ Developing new ideas or paradigms.
✓ Identifying gaps in knowledge.
✓ Contributing new a perspective or approach to a particular issue.
✓ Devising new research methods.
✓ Analysing research findings.
✓ Critically reviewing literature.

Working with a co-author
✓ Identify your roles and responsibilities.
✓ Decide who will be first author.
✓ Opportunities for working with a more experienced colleague?

Writing the article
✓ Look at how others write.
✓ A journal article is usually 5-7,000 words. Every word counts.
✓ Adhere to the word limit.
✓ Organise your ideas.
✓ Use a plan/subheadings.
✓ Put your aims and argument upfront.

Writing the article
✓ Identify current debates and situate yourself relative to them.
✓ Condense the background literature and move quickly into YOUR analysis.
✓ Support your argument with evidence.
✓ Focus your argument - don't develop too many themes.
✓ Rewrite, rewrite, rewrite, edit, edit, edit.

Choosing a title
✓ The title should reflect the content of the article.
✓ Aim for clarity.
✓ It can be creative and descriptive.
✓ Try to include keywords that come up on database searches.

Writing the abstract
✓ Usually 2-300 words.
✓ It should ‘stand alone’.
✓ Don’t include references.
✓ State the significance of the research.
✓ State your argument.
✓ State your outcomes/conclusions.
✓ Identify the methods used.
✓ Mention any potential applications.

Style and presentation
✓ Follow the ‘Notes for contributors’ for formatting and referencing.
✓ Proof your work.
✓ Single sided, double spaced, clear font.
✓ Include page numbers but don’t put your name on each page.
✓ Avoid long, convoluted sentences. Make your writing easy to read.
✓ Guide the reader. ‘Signpost’ your argument.

Peer-review
✓ Ask a colleague to read your paper prior to submitting it to a journal for:
  ✓ critical feedback
  ✓ Editing/proofing/spelling
  ✓ Correct and consistent citation and referencing.
✓ Establish a peer-review cohort.

Submitting the article
✓ Follow the submission requirements for the journal.
✓ Journals will often ask for multiple copies.
✓ Include a cover letter.
✓ Most will request a soft copy via email.
✓ It is etiquette to send your article to one journal at a time.

What happens once the article has been received?
✓ Step 1. Confirmation of receipt.
✓ Step 2. Article considered by an editorial panel.
✓ Step 3. Referees conduct peer-review.
✓ Step 4. Editors will contact you with copies of the referee reports and an outcome.

The refereeing process
✓ Your article is (hopefully) allocated to two or more academic peers who are versed in your area of research.
✓ An anonymous process.
✓ Can take 3-6 months.

What do referees look for?
✓ Whether the article is appropriate for the journal.
✓ The significance of the article.
✓ The quality of the research and writing.

Outcomes of submission
✓ Accept for publication without amendments.
✓ Accept for publication with editorial modifications.
✓ Accept for publication with author revisions (as suggested by reviewers).
✓ Reject.

I've been rejected: I'm not worthy!
✓ Rubbish. Don’t take it as a sign of your worth as a scholar.
✓ Make good use of the referee reports.
✓ Perhaps it is better suited to another journal.
✓ Perhaps the referees are not sympathetic to your approach/methodology.
✓ Always resubmit.
My article has been accepted. What next?
✓ Make any amendments as requested in a prompt manner.
✓ Provide a map of revisions. This shows the editor what changes you have made and allows you to justify why you may have rejected a referee’s recommendations.
✓ Ask for an expected date/issue for publication.

I haven’t heard back from the journal yet and it’s been ages…
✓ If no confirmation of receipt has been forthcoming after a month, email the editor.
✓ If there is no response after three months of confirmation of receipt, email the editor to inquire about the status of your manuscript.

Dealing with editors
✓ Always be polite and professional.
✓ Don’t harass them.
✓ Don’t assume they are familiar with your article. When emailing them provide your date of submission, the title of your article and your contact details.

Managing your academic career
✓ Publishing is one aspect of being a scholar.
✓ Other things to consider include:
  ✓ Preparing a CV.
  ✓ Gaining teaching experience.
  ✓ Building a service profile.
  ✓ Making a name in your field
    ✓ Give conference/seminar papers
    ✓ Network
    ✓ Review exhibitions/books/productions.

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * *