



The Royal Statistical Society

Journal of the Royal Statistical Society

Notes on the Submission of Papers

Disclosure of financial and other interests

Some journals have policies requiring authors of submitted papers to declare potential conflicts of interest. The purpose is not to remove the conflict but to publicize it, and to allow readers to form their own conclusions on whether any conflict of interest exists. For many of the papers submitted to the *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society* this is unlikely to be an issue. However, such interests may take many forms, including financial considerations and situations where one or more of the authors have acted as consultants or advisors (paid or otherwise) to a project relevant to the submitted paper. This does not imply that there is anything wrong with holding such interests or that research published by authors with such interests is thereby compromised. With the aim of encouraging transparency and accountability, however, authors of material submitted to the *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society* are asked to disclose any financial or other interest that may be relevant and/or would prove an embarrassment if it were to emerge after publication and they had not declared it. The appropriate place for such disclosures is in a covering note to the Editor. At the Editor's discretion, this information may be printed at the end of the paper if it is published.

General

The *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society* is published in three series: Series A (*Statistics in Society*), Series B (*Statistical Methodology*) and Series C (*Applied Statistics*). Each series publishes contributed papers as well as papers (with discussion) which have been read at Ordinary Meetings of the Society.

Ordinary Meetings

Ordinary Meetings of the Society are held usually once a month between September and June. They span a very wide range of topics, and suitable papers may fall into any of the following categories: a study of an applied statistical problem of sufficient general interest to warrant discussion and publication; new methodology; an interesting and new application of existing methodology; issues of general interest to statisticians, especially if a wide variety of views is to be found; work concerned with the interface between statistics and other fields; 'state of the art' reviews and critical summaries of important material which is widely scattered. Read papers must be of a nature which will generate discussion.

There are two routes by which papers are considered for presentation to the Society, and potential authors of read papers are encouraged to discuss their proposals with the appropriate Meetings Secretary, who can be contacted via the Society. Papers which represent significant advances in statistical methodology are assessed by the Research Section Committee and subsequent publication of them is usually in Series B. Discussion papers on themes of general interest or motivated primarily by

statistical applications are considered by a process headed by the Theme Director for Meetings and Conferences and appear in Series A or Series C.

Research Section Ordinary Meetings

Papers are initially screened quickly for suitability by two members of the Research Section Committee and, if the papers pass this stage, it is usual for the Committee to seek detailed reports from four or five specialist reviewers. Also, all members of the Committee are encouraged to look at all submissions and to give their views. The Secretary gathers the reports, and at the next meeting of the Committee the screeners summarize their content and present an assessment for the Committee. The decision that is reached will then be conveyed to the authors by the Secretary.

Non-Research-Section Ordinary Meetings

The procedure for other types of Ordinary Meetings papers is similar to that for Research Section Ordinary Meetings. There is no corresponding formal committee like the Research Section Committee, but the standards of refereeing are no less rigorous than those applied by the Research Section. Instead, there is a Secretary, called the Read Papers Consulting Editor (similar to the Research Section Secretary), who appoints appropriate screeners from a pool comprising the journal Associate Editors and a contact from each of the Society's Section committees. The Secretary determines quickly whether a manuscript would be suitable for a discussion meeting, if it were publishable, and simultaneously seeks the approval of the Editors about the proposed destination series for publication, if the paper is acceptable to referees. If agreement cannot be reached among the Editors, then the Theme Directors for both Meetings and Publications make the decision on which journal hosts a paper. Assuming that in principle the conditions for discussability have been satisfied and an appropriate journal series has been identified, the Secretary consults the pool about appropriate referees and arranges for the paper to be reviewed fully. The Secretary collects all the reports and distributes them to the Theme Director for Meetings, an Editor of the proposed destination journal and the two screeners who were appointed at the beginning of the submission process. Between them, this group decides whether a paper is suitable for presentation to the Society and what revision needs to be carried out before this can take place. The Secretary then conveys the detail to the authors on the group's behalf.

Terms of reference

Series A (Statistics in Society) publishes papers that demonstrate how statistical thinking, design and analyses play a vital role in all walks of life and benefit society in general. There is no restriction on subject-matter: any interesting, topical and revelatory applications of statistics are welcome. For example, important applications of statistical methods in medicine, business and commerce, industry, economics and finance, education and teaching, physical and biomedical sciences, the environment, the law, government and politics, demography, psychology, sociology and sport all fall within the journal's remit. The journal is therefore aimed at a wide statistical audience and at professional statisticians in particular. Its emphasis is on well-written and clearly reasoned quantitative approaches to problems in the real world rather than the exposition of technical detail. Thus, although the methodological basis of papers must be sound and adequately explained, methodology *per se* should not be the main focus of a Series A paper. Of particular interest are papers on topical or contentious statistical issues, papers which give reviews or *exposés* of current statistical concerns and papers which demonstrate how appropriate statistical thinking has contributed to our understanding of important substantive questions. Historical, professional and biographical contributions are also welcome, as are discussions of methods of data collection and of ethical issues, provided that all such papers have substantial statistical relevance.

Series B (Statistical Methodology) aims to publish high quality papers on the

methodological aspects of statistics. The objective of papers should be to contribute to the understanding of statistical methodology and/or to develop and improve statistical methods; any mathematical theory should be directed towards these aims. The kinds of contribution considered include descriptions of new methods of collecting or analysing data, with the underlying theory, an indication of the scope of application and preferably a real example. Also considered are comparisons, critical evaluations and new applications of existing methods, contributions to probability theory which have a clear practical bearing (including the formulation and analysis of stochastic models), statistical computation or simulation where original methodology is involved and original contributions to the foundations of statistical science. Reviews of methodological techniques are also considered. A paper, even if correct and well presented, is likely to be rejected if it only presents straightforward special cases of previously published work, if it is of mathematical interest only, if it is too long in relation to the importance of the new material that it contains or if it is dominated by computations or simulations of a routine nature.

Series C (Applied Statistics) promotes papers that are focused on statistical methods for real life problems. Applications should be central to papers, rather than illustrative, to motivate the work and to justify any methodological developments. All papers should feature an adequate description of a substantial application and a justification for any new theory. Case-studies may be particularly appropriate and should include some contextual details, though there should also be a novel statistical contribution, for instance by adapting or developing methodology, or by demonstrating the proper application of new or existing statistical methods to solve challenging applied problems. Papers describing interdisciplinary work are especially welcome, as are those that give interesting novel applications of existing methodology or provide new insights into the practical application of methods, and papers explaining innovative analysis of generic applied problems but not necessarily focused on a particular application also have a place in Series C. Short communications may also be appropriate. Methodological papers that are not motivated by a genuine application are not acceptable; nor are papers that include only brief numerical illustrations or that mainly describe simulation studies of properties of statistical techniques. However, papers describing developments in statistical computing are encouraged, provided that they are driven by practical examples. Extended algebraic treatment should be avoided.

Preparation and Submission of Manuscripts

Submission

Submissions will only be considered in English.

Manuscripts should be submitted via the Manuscript Central on-line submission and peer review system for the journals at <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/jrss>, where instructions on how to create an account and how to use the system can be found. Manuscripts must be original contributions which are not under consideration for publication elsewhere.

A covering note should confirm which series the paper is intended for and should give any other information that is relevant to the submission, together with full contact details of the author for correspondence. Also, if the paper is to be considered for reading at an Ordinary Meeting of the Society, this should be indicated by selecting the correct manuscript type, i.e. 'Paper for reading (and appropriate series)'. Papers which are not to be considered for reading should be indicated by selecting 'Original article (and appropriate series)' as the manuscript type. If any illustrations are intended to be reproduced in colour, confirmation that the full cost for doing so will be borne by the author must be given. An electronic style file is available from the 'Instructions and forms' link on the Manuscript Central site, or from the Executive Editor (at journal@rss.org.uk) or from the 'Publications' section of the Society's Web

site at <http://www.rss.org.uk>, but it is not essential to use it. If accepted for publication, the source files of the final version will be required, preferably LATEX or TEX (or a Word document might be suitable), but for simplicity it is recommended that these forms should not be supplied for initial submission: complete .ps or .pdf files (or Word documents) will upload more quickly and easily and are perfectly acceptable.

Although flexibility in presentation is allowed, it is suggested that authors arrange their subject-matter under sequentially numbered headings and subheadings. Abbreviations should be given in capital letters (without full stops) and defined in full at the first place of mention. Footnotes or end notes, apart from the author's address for correspondence, are not used. The author to whom proofs are to be sent and the full postal address for correspondence must be clearly indicated on the title page of the manuscript. An electronic mail address should also be included if possible.

The Editors reserve the right to make changes to papers in conformity with the house style for the journals.

Summary and keywords

A short summary (no more than about 100 words) should be included at the beginning of the manuscript, together with five or six keywords or key phrases, arranged in alphabetical order, to describe the content of the paper. Although not compulsory, it is helpful for finding referees also to supply these details in completing the submission form. References should not be cited in the summary.

English spellings

Spellings should follow *Chambers Dictionary*.

Figures and tables

All graphs and tables should have a clear, self-explanatory title, including information on any units of measurement. Comments on the material that is presented should be placed in the main text, not in the captions.

Scales on graphs should be carefully chosen and axes should be clearly labelled.

If possible, encapsulated PostScript files (.eps) for each figure should be supplied when the paper is accepted for publication. Grey scale images may also be supplied in tag image file format (.tif) with the final version. However, for line drawings in particular, PostScript files (.ps) may be suitable.

During the initial submission process, illustrations may either be embedded in the text or separately at the end of the manuscript, in which case each illustration must be clearly identified. If the paper is accepted for publication, it is helpful if short captions are provided in a list, typed with double-line spacing, on a separate page at the end of the manuscript. The illustrations should be cited consecutively with Arabic numbers in the text.

Tables may either be embedded in the text or separately at the end of the manuscript. They should be numbered with Arabic numerals and referred to consecutively in the text. They should not duplicate information that is already given in the text or contain material which would be better presented graphically. Tabular matter should be as simple as possible, with brief column headings and the minimum number of columns. No vertical lines should be used to separate the columns and no horizontal rules within the body of the table. Numbers in tables should be right justified or with decimal points lined up where appropriate. Numbers should also be appropriately rounded.

References

References should not be numbered but should be standardized according to the Harvard system as follows:

- (a) in the text, only the authors' surnames should be given, followed by the year of publication in parentheses (when there are three or more authors of a publication, only the first author's surname should be given followed by *et al.* and the year of publication; the abbreviations *ibid.*, *loc. cit.* and *op. cit.* are not used);
- (b) at the end of the paper, the references cited should be listed in alphabetical order of surnames, giving all authors' surnames and initials for each reference.

Examples of the style for a paper published in conference proceedings, a paper in a journal, a book and a report on the Web are as follows.

- Andersson, S. A., Madigan, D. and Perlman, M. D. (1996) An alternative Markov property for chain graphs. In *Proc. 12th Conf. Uncertainty in Artificial Intelligence* (eds F. V. Jensen and E. Horvitz), pp. 40–48. San Francisco: Morgan Kaufmann.
- Golm, G. T., Halloran, M. E. and Longini, I. M. (1998) Semiparametric models for mismeasured exposure information in vaccine trials. *Statist. Med.*, 17, 2335–2352.
- Hughes, B. D. (1996) *Random Walks and Random Environments*, vol. 2, ch. 3. Oxford: Clarendon.
- Office for National Statistics (2000) 2001 hard-to-count index. Office for National Statistics, London. (Available from <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/census2001/pdfs/sc0015.pdf>.)

The following list gives the abbreviations of some of the journals that are frequently cited.

<i>Ann. Math. Statist.</i>	<i>Ops Res.</i>
<i>Ann. Statist.</i>	<i>Phil. Trans. R. Soc. Lond. A</i> (or B)
<i>Appl. Statist.</i>	<i>Popln Stud.</i>
<i>Biometrics</i>	<i>Proc. Natn. Acad. Sci. USA</i>
<i>Biometrika</i>	<i>Proc. R. Soc. A</i> (or B)
<i>Br. Med. J.</i>	<i>Rev. Int. Statist. Inst.</i>
<i>Comput. J.</i>	<i>Sankhya A</i> (or B)
<i>Communs Statist. Theory Meth.</i>	<i>Scand. J. Statist.</i>
<i>Econometrica</i>	<i>Skand. Akt.</i>
<i>J. Agric. Sci. Camb.</i>	<i>Statistician</i>
<i>J. Am. Statist. Ass.</i>	<i>Statist. Med.</i>
<i>J. Inst. Act.</i>	<i>Stoch. Process. Applic.</i>
<i>J. R. Statist. Soc. A</i> (or B)	<i>Technometrics</i>

Other journal titles should be given in full to assist the editor to form the correct abbreviation. The citing of references to unpublished material or publications which are not in the public domain should be avoided.

Mathematical expressions

Mathematical equations or complicated expressions should be typed on lines separate from the text ('displayed'). Important equations should be numbered consecutively and punctuated in the normal way as text, if necessary. Matrix, vector (bold) and script quantities should be identified for the editor, if it is not clear from the format of the text. The development of mathematical expressions, if essential, should be presented in appendixes and only the relevant equations should be given in the body of the text. Each appendix should have a short title.

Brackets: The order of brackets in nested expressions is $\{ \{ (() \} \}$.

Exponential function: The expression 'exp' rather than 'e' should preferably be used in text and with complicated arguments.