European Association of Science Editors

EASE

Five years of *EASE Guidelines* (2010–2015): promoting complete, readable, and ethical publications

Sylwia Ufnalska, EASE Council member

EASE Conference, Strasbourg, 11.06.2016

EASE website: www.ease.org.uk

European Association of Science Editors

Username | Password | Log In

The European Association of Science Editors (EASE) *is an international community of individuals and associations from diverse backgrounds, linguistic traditions and professional experience in science communication and editing.*

Home | About us | Membership | Publications | Services | EASE Events | Training

Welcome to EASE

The 13th EASE Conference will be held in June 2016 in Strasbourg.

Registration is now open. Come and join us!

Conference Information

- Conference Programme (PDF)

Upcoming Events

13th Annual Meeting of the International Association of Veterinary Editors
June 8 - June 9

Third International Conference on Academic Writing in Israel – Building Bridges through Academic Writing: Research, Policy, and Practice
June 27

International Conference for Asian Science Editors
July 20 - July 22

ISMTE 9th Annual North American Conference
August 11 - August 12

Commissioning Content: Working effectively with authors and editors
September 21

View All Events

Jobs

EASE publications

www.ease.org.uk/publications

- EASE Statements (2007: on inappropriate use of impact factors; 2016: on data sharing)
- Journal: *European Science Editing*
- *Science Editors' Handbook*, 2nd ed.
- *EASE Guidelines for Authors and Translators*
- EASE Toolkit for Authors
- EASE Toolkit for Journal Editors (e.g. 10 golden rules for editors)
- Sex and Gender Questions

European Association of Science Editors

EASE

Why *EASE Guidelines*?

Why?

Many scientists and translators are unaware of editorial guidance on scientific writing

⇓

They make mistakes that could be easily avoided

⇓

They waste more time and energy on revisions of their manuscripts

EASE Guidelines for Authors and Translators of Scientific Articles

European Association of Science Editors

EASE

www.ease.org.uk/publications/author-guidelines

- Concise guidance for structuring and writing manuscripts; updated annually (since 2010)
- Shortly explaining how to write **complete**, **concise**, and **clear** papers, taking into account also ethical issues: authorship criteria, plagiarism, conflict of interests, etc. (Selected examples are shown on the following slides.)
- 8 appendices: Abstracts, Ambiguity, Cohesion, Ethics, Plurals, Simplicity, Spelling, Text-tables

Now in 24 languages

European Association of Science Editors

EASE

- Arabic
- Bangla
- Bosnian
- Bulgarian
- Chinese
- Croatian
- Czech
- English
- Estonian
- French
- German
- Hungarian
- Italian
- Japanese
- Korean
- Persian
- Polish
- Portuguese
- Romanian
- Russian
- Serbian
- Spanish
- Turkish
- Vietnamese

“Preface” of *EASE Guidelines*

European Association of Science Editors

EASE

“To make international scientific communication more efficient, research articles and other scientific publications should be COMPLETE, CONCISE, and CLEAR, as explained below. These are generalized but not universal guidelines, intended to help authors, translators, and editors. Common sense is necessary when applying these rules, as perfection is impossible to reach.”

Initial remarks

European Association of Science Editors

EASE

"First of all:

- **Carefully plan and conduct your study** (e.g. Hengl et al. 2011). Do not begin drafting the whole paper until you are sure that your findings are reasonably firm and complete (O'Connor 1991), allowing you to draw **reliable conclusions**.
- Before you start writing, **preferably choose the journal** to which you will submit your manuscript. Make sure that the journal's readership corresponds to your target audience […]"

COMPLETE: authorship

European Association of Science Editors

EASE

"• **List of authors**, ie all people who contributed substantially to study planning, data collection or interpretation of results **and** wrote or critically revised the manuscript **and** approved its final version **and** agree to be accountable for all aspects of the work. Each person who meets the first criterion should be allowed to participate in the drafting and approval of the final version (ICMJE 2014). The authors listed first should be those who did most […]"

COMPLETE: abstract

European Association of Science Editors

EASE

"• **Abstract**: briefly explain why you conducted the study (BACKGROUND), what question(s) you aimed to answer (OBJECTIVES), how you performed the study (METHODS), what you found (RESULTS: major data, relationships), and your interpretation and main consequences of your findings (CONCLUSIONS). The abstract must **reflect the content** of the article, as for most readers it will be the major source of information about your study. You must **use keywords** within the abstract, to facilitate on-line searching for your article by those who may be interested in your results […]"

CONCISE: redundancy

European Association of Science Editors

EASE

"• **Do not include information that is not relevant to your research question(s)** stated in the Introduction.

- **Do not copy** parts of your previous publications and do not submit the same manuscript to more than one journal at a time. Otherwise, you may be responsible for **redundant publication** (see COPE flowcharts). This does not apply to preliminary publications, such as conference abstracts (O'Connor 1991, see also BioMed Central policy). Moreover, **secondary publications** are acceptable if intended for a completely different group of readers […]"

CLEAR: sentence structure

European Association of Science Editors

EASE

"• **Sentences generally should not be very long. Their structure should be relatively simple**, with the subject located close to its verb (Gopen & Swan 1990). For example, avoid abstract nouns and write "X was measured…" instead of "Measurements of X were carried out…". (***See Appendix: Simplicity***) Do not overuse passive constructions (e.g. Norris 2011). When translating, modify sentence structure if necessary to convey the message correctly or more clearly (Burrough-Boenisch 2013)."

CLEAR: originality

European Association of Science Editors

EASE

"• **Clearly distinguish your original data and ideas** from those of other people and from your earlier publications – provide citations whenever relevant. **Preferably summarize or paraphrase** text from other sources. This applies also to translations. When copying text literally (e.g. a whole sentence or longer text), put it in inverted commas (e.g. Roig 2011, Kerans & de Jager 2010). Otherwise you could commit **plagiarism** (see COPE flowcharts) or self-plagiarism."

Appendix: Ethics

EASE Ethics Checklist for Authors

EXPLANATION: obligatory declarations applying to all manuscripts are printed in bold.

Original or acceptable secondary publication

- ☐ No part of this manuscript (MS) has been published, except for passages that are properly cited.
- ☐ An abstract/summary of this MS has been published in……
- ☐ This MS has already been published in …… but in …… language. A full citation to the primary publication is included, and the copyright owner has agreed to its publication in English.
- ☐ **No part of this MS is currently being considered for publication elsewhere.**
- ☐ **In this MS, original data are clearly distinguished from published data. All information extracted from other publications is provided with citations.**

Authorship

- ☐ **All people listed as authors of this MS meet the authorship criteria, ie they contributed substantially to study planning, data collection or interpretation of results *and* wrote or critically revised the MS *and* approved its final submitted version *and* agree to be accountable for all aspects of the work (ICMJE 2014).**
- ☐ **All people listed as authors of this MS are aware of it and have agreed to be listed.**
- ☐ **No person who meets the authorship criteria has been omitted.**

Ethical experimentation and interpretation

- ☐ The study reported in this MS involved human participants and it meets the ethical principles of the Declaration of Helsinki (WMA 2013). Data have been disaggregated by sex (and, whenever possible, by race) and sex and gender considerations are properly addressed (see Sex and Gender Questions[2]).
- ☐ The study reported in this MS meets the Consensus Author Guidelines on Animal Ethics and Welfare for Veterinary Journals[3] about humane treatment of animals and has been approved by an ethical review committee.
- ☐ The study reported in this MS meets other ethical principles, namely ……
- ☐ **I and all the other authors of this MS did our best to avoid errors in experimental design, data presentation, interpretation, etc. However, if we discover any serious error in the MS (before or after publication), we will alert the editor promptly.**
- ☐ **None of our data presented in this MS has been fabricated or distorted, and no valid data have been excluded. Images shown in figures have not been manipulated to make a false impression on readers.**
- ☐ **Results of this study have been interpreted objectively. Any findings that run contrary to our point of view are discussed in the MS.**
- ☐ **The article does not, to the best of our knowledge, contain anything that is libellous, illegal, infringes anyone's copyright or other rights, or poses a threat to public safety.**

Acknowledgements

- ☐ **All sources of funding for the study reported in this MS are stated.**
- ☐ **All people who are not listed as authors but contributed considerably to the study reported in this MS or assisted in its writing (eg author's editors, translators, medical writers) are mentioned in the Acknowledgements.**
- ☐ **All people named in the Acknowledgements have agreed to this. However, they are not responsible for the final version of this MS.**
- ☐ Consent has been obtained from the author(s) of unpublished data cited in the MS.
- ☐ Copyright owners of previously published figures or tables have agreed to their inclusion in this MS.

Conflict of interest

- ☐ **All authors of this study have signed the EASE Form for Authors' Contributions and Conflict of Interest Disclosure[4].**

Date:……

Corresponding author:……

MS title:……

……

Compiled by Sylwia Ufnalska
sylwia.ufnalska@gmail.com

[2] http://www.ease.org.uk/publications/sex-and-gender
[3] http://www.veteditors.org/consensus-author-guidelines-on-animal-ethics-and-welfare-for-editors/
[4] www.ease.org.uk/publications/ease-form

www.ease.org.uk/publications/author-guidelines-authors-and-translators/

Benefits of common use of *EASE Guidelines*

- **Less time wasted** by scientists
- **Less money spent** on translation
- **Less work for editors**, lower risk of misconduct
- **Easier understanding** by non-specialists
- **Basis for designing courses** on scientific writing for PhD students, etc.
- Appendices can be printed and used as **ready-made handouts** during the courses
- **More effective international communication**

Suggested note in journals' Instructions for Authors

European Association of Science Editors

EASE

A frame on page 15 of *EASE Guidelines*:

Before submission, follow EASE Guidelines for Authors and Translators, freely available at www.ease.org.uk/publications/author-guidelines in many languages. Adherence should increase the chances of acceptance of submitted manuscripts.

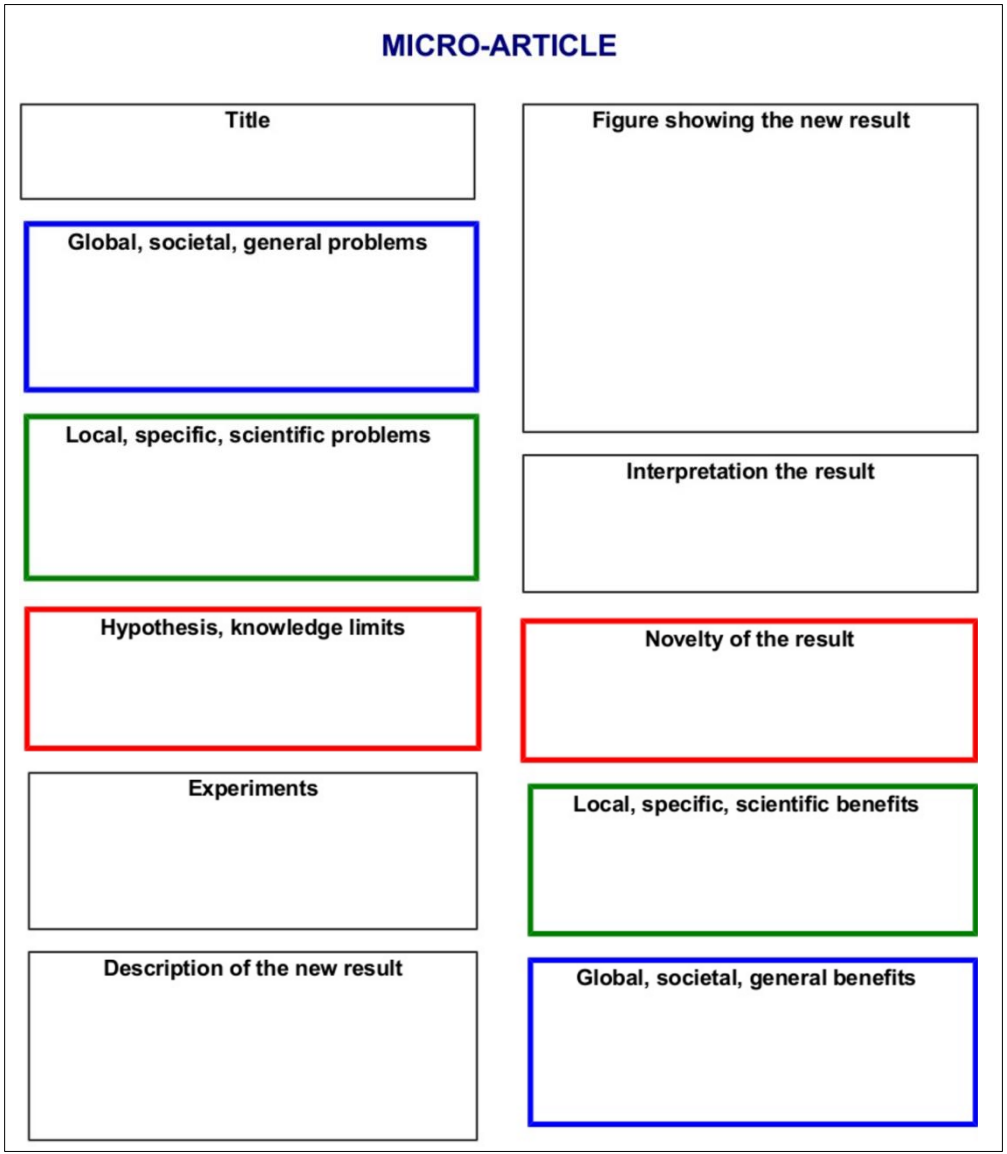
EASE Toolkit for Authors

www.ease.org.uk/publications/ease-toolkit-authors

- More detailed than *EASE Guidelines*, but available only in English
- Aims to increase scientists' confidence in writing and submitting articles
- 20 modules with links to materials freely available on the Internet, which are useful to authors of scientific articles
- Modules 3-13 framed on a book published by the International Society of Addiction Journal Editors (ISAJE)

Module 2 of the Toolkit

www.ease.org.uk/publications/ease-toolkit-authors



Very useful when planning a manuscript

(Source: Lichtfouse E. 2013. *Scientific Writing for Impact Factor Journals*. Nova Publishers)

Golden rules for journal editors

European Association of Science Editors

EASE

The full text is available in pdf format and the rules have been summarised into a flyer.

Golden rules for scholarly journal editors	Notes
1. Be aware of your **target audience**.	
2. Make **instructions to authors simple and understandable**, and review them regularly.	In the instructions, authors can be asked to follow *EASE Guidelines*[1] (available in >20 languages)
3. Ensure a **fair peer review** process (usually with 2-3 reviews, or more if necessary).	See section 4 of *Science Editors' Handbook*[2] and *The golden rules and the peer review good practice checklist*[3]
4. Pay due attention to **ethical issues**: data fabrication or manipulation, plagiarism, authorship, conflict of interest, copyright, legislation, etc.	See section 5 of *Science Editors' Handbook*[2], page 10 of *EASE Guidelines*[1] (publication ethics checklist), and COPE flowcharts[4]
5. **Respect others**: inform authors about progress and delays as soon as possible; do not overburden reviewers and authors.	
6. Do your best to ensure that publications are **complete, concise, and clear**, with appropriate methods and correct citations.	See sections 1-2 of *Science Editors' Handbook*[2], reporting guidelines (eg in EQUATOR Network[5]), and San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment[6]
7. Make sure that **abstracts properly summarize** essential information (usually: background, objectives, methods, results, and conclusions) and contain **major keywords**.	See pages 2 & 7 of *EASE Guidelines*[1]
8. Ensure **safe long-term storage** of publications and documentation	

www.ease.org.uk/publications/ease-toolkit-journal-editors/golden-rules-scholarly-journal-editors

Golden rules for journal editors

European Association of Science Editors

EASE

www.ease.org.uk/publications/ease-toolkit-journal-editors/golden-rules-scholarly-journal-editors

1. Be aware of your **target audience**.
2. Make **instructions to authors simple and understandable**, and review them regularly.
3. Ensure a **fair peer review** process (usually with 2-3 reviews, or more if necessary).
4. Pay due attention to **ethical issues**: data fabrication or manipulation, plagiarism, authorship, conflict of interest, copyright, legislation, etc.
5. **Respect others**: inform authors about progress and delays as soon as possible; do not overburden reviewers and authors.
6. Do your best to ensure that publications are **complete, concise, and clear**, with appropriate methods and correct citations.
7. Make sure that **abstracts properly summarize** essential information (usually: background, objectives, methods, results, and conclusions) and contain **major keywords**.
8. Ensure **safe long-term storage** of publications and documentation of the editorial process.
9. **Develop** your journal.
10. Perfection is impossible to reach, so **common sense** is necessary.


Thank you for attention!
Sylwia B. Ufnalska
sylwia.ufnalska@gmail.com