Writing for Publication:
Personal & Editorial Perspectives

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Editor, Health Information & Libraries Journal

My Background

- 1987–1990, First job in a hospital library
- 1990-1993, BA (Hons) in Library and Information Science, University of Central England
- 1994-1995, Government Agencies/Departments: Health and Safety Executive *and* Employment Department
- 1995-1998, National Information Services: UK Clearing House on Health Outcomes *and* the Centre for Health Information Quality
- 1998-Present, University of Salford

Where is the University of Salford?

- North West of England
- 1.5 miles from Manchester city centre
- Manchester United Football Club

Me and Writing for Publication

- 1998, I contributed to my first journal paper
- 2003, I first began to contribute to the evidence base in the form of a commentary
- 2004, I put myself forward as a peer reviewer
- 2005, I published my first solo peer-review for a journal
- 2006, I was appointed as Review Editor
- 2009, I was appointed Editor-in-Chief

Structure of This Presentation

- Personal experiences of writing for publication

- Editorial experiences of writing for publication

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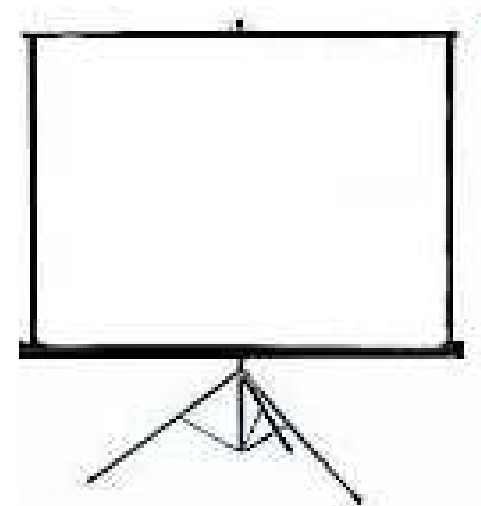
Personal Experiences of Writing for Publication

- In 2006, an external speaker came to talk about 'Getting Published' at the University of Salford

- Lots of reasons for not writing
  - Lack confidence, motivation or momentum
  - Lack systems to encourage, develop and support novice writers

- What can we do to address these problem?

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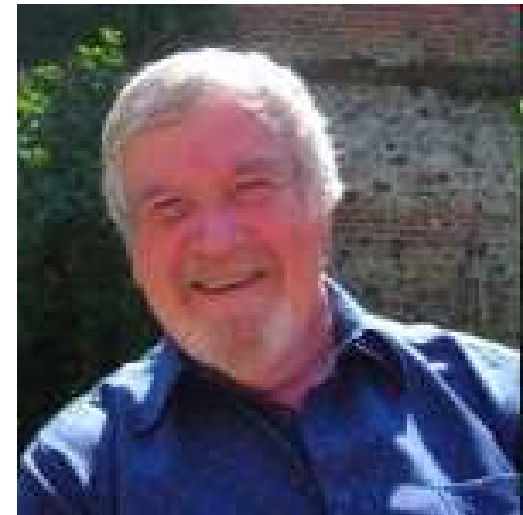
What Did the Evidence Suggest?

Four options were identified to support writing activity within the university. They were:

- Writing courses run by experts
- Writing retreats to avoid distractions
- How to guides on writing for publication
- Writing groups

Option 1: Writing Courses

- Run by someone with experience in writing for publication

- Time limited option

- Unlikely to have central funding

http://phil-race.co.uk/

Option 2: Writing Retreats

- Taken away from every day distractions

- Able to focus purely on the task of writing

- How sustainable was this in the longer term?

http://bit.ly/mPrbiM

Option 3: 'How To' Guides on Writing for Publication

- Step by step guides

- Practical advice

- Exercises

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Option 4: Writing Groups

- With or without a facilitator

- Provide momentum

- *'Provide a collegial and supportive environment between peers'*

  (Murray R & Moore S. The handbook of academic writing: a fresh approach. Maidenhead: Open University Press, 2006.)

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Cross Disciplinary Writers' Group

- Summer of 2006 an invitation was sent out
- No preconceptions about what the group might look like
- Knew that it was unlikely that there would be any centrally funded support
- The writers' group would need to be a self supporting enterprise

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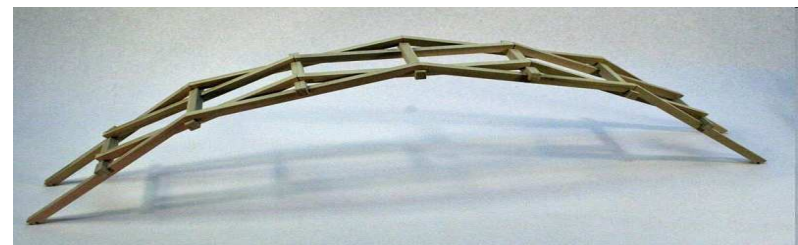
What Would the Group Look Like?

- At the first meeting we determined the groups terms of reference
    - When we would meet
    - How long we would meet for
    - How regularly we would meet
    - Structure of meeting

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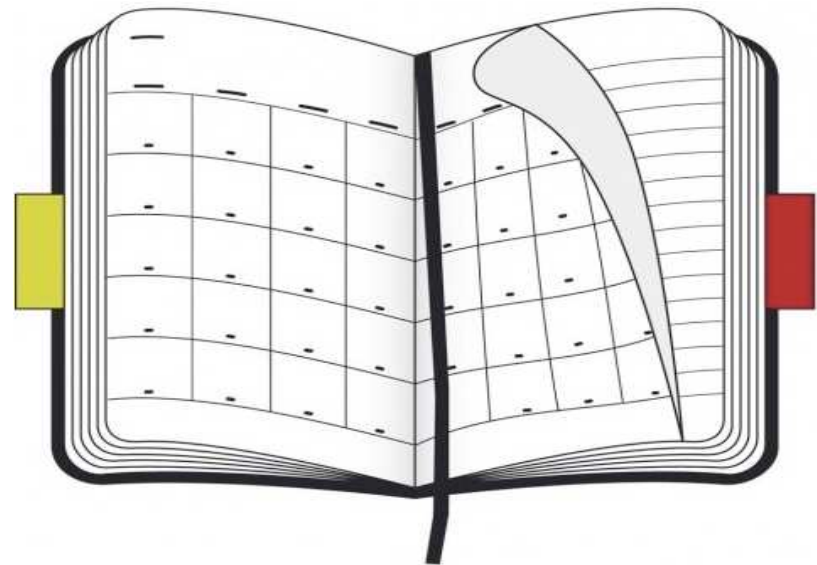
Structure of Meetings

- Chairing and make notes of the meeting
- Provide updates on our writing activity
  - Student reports, emails, writing for newsletters
- Lead a writing activity
- Provide feedback on writing
- Set goals for what we would like to achieve before the next meeting

Schedule of Meetings

Writers' Group Schedule 2010 - 2011

Meetings are held on the first Thursday of every month, 12 noon - 1.30pm

Date	Venue	Chair	Facilitator	Open Activity	Writing for Feedback
07-Oct	RG004 Farad	Sian	Sian	Planning your writing career	
04-Nov	Maxwell 921	Jaye	Frances Bell	Peer review: writing and responding	Sian Etherington
02-Dec				*meeting cancelled due to snow*	
06-Jan				*no meeting*	
03-Feb	RG003 Farad	Maria	Maria	Strategies for planning long term writing activity	
03-Mar	MS258	Jaye	Cristina	Online writing strategies & blogging	N/A
07-Apr	MS160	Cristina	Wendy	Writing Sandwich	Maria J Grant
05-May	MS160	Sian	Jaye	Reading as part of writing	Sian Etherington
02-Jun	MS261	Leslie	Sian	No open activity but two writing for feedback	Cristina Costa AND Jaye McIsaac
07-Jul	MS261	Maria	All	Review of year and planning	Janet Suckley

Writing Activities

- What is a writing activity?
  - Exercise or discussion about any topic relating to writing
- Where do the ideas for writing activities come from?
  - Reading about writing
- What were the writing activities?
  - Getting started
  - Mining projects for papers
  - Negotiating authorship
  - Nutshelling

Writing Activities 1: Negotiating Authorship

- Different disciplines have different standards
  - Who is an author?
  - How do you wish to be cited?
  - How do you decide on the sequence of authors?
  - What strategies can be adopted to avoid disputes?

Negotiating Authorship – Question Sheet

Attribution can become a contentious issue when more than one person is involved in a research project, the writing of a research report or a journal paper.

The following five questions are posed to identify interpretations and alternative practices which group members may find helpful in negotiating authorship.

- What does authorship mean?
- Who is an author?
- How do you wish to be cited?
- How do you decide on the sequence of authors?
- What strategies can be adopted to avoid disputes?

Writing Activities 2: Nutshelling

- Defining our topic in less than 200 word

- A technique we were using with our students but not applying to our own practice

http://bit.ly/pExhWR

Providing Writing for Feedback

- Develop a protocol for providing feedback
  - Responding to the ideas
  - Adopt a solution-orientated approach
  - Be specific
  - Be constructive

# Setting Writing Goals for the Next Meeting

- To maintain the momentum

- When we are actively thinking about our writing

- Making a public commitment to writing

What Purpose Does the Writing Group Serve?

- Five years later we are still meeting

- Rather than 'finding' time for writing activity, we actively schedule time

- Engaging with a range of writing related activities has broadened our writing horizons
  - Identify opportunities for adapting our projects for different audiences
  - Levels of output and acceptance rates have increased

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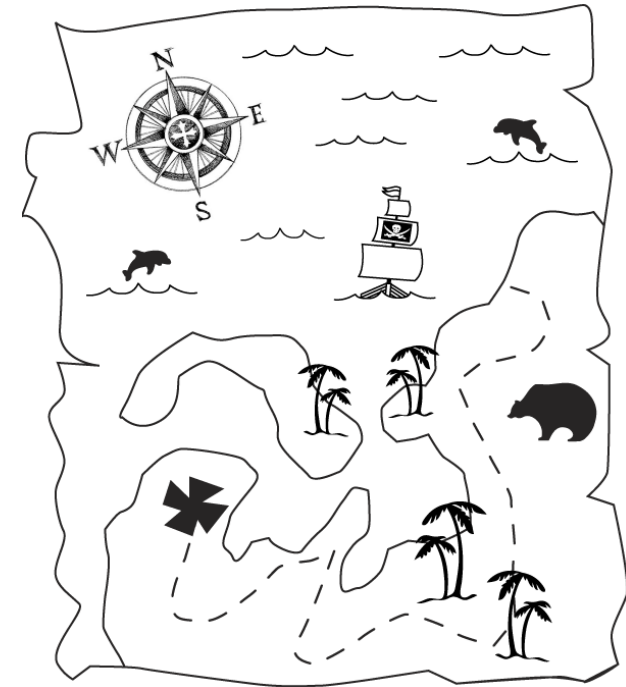
Outputs From the Writers' Group

- Books and book chapters
- Conferences
  - Oral presentations
  - Poster presentations
- Journal articles
  - Non-peer reviewed articles
  - Peer-reviewed articles
- Reports
  - Internally funded
  - Externally funded
- Others
  - Editorship
  - Peer reviewing
  - Writing for publication workshops

R Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

CROSS-DISCIPLINARY WRITERS' GROUP STIMULATES
FRESH APPROACHES TO SCHOLARLY COMMUNICATION:
A REFLECTIVE CASE STUDY WITHIN A HIGHER
EDUCATION INSTITUTION IN THE NORTH WEST
OF ENGLAND

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For the inexperienced writer it can be difficult to know how to start writing, while for those with some writing experience, it is often seen as a luxury for which there is precious little time to indulge. This reflective case study describes the role of a cross-disciplinary writers' group, as a writing intervention, within a higher education institution in the North West of England. Established in 2006, the group has always had a librarian as part of its membership and has been informed by the literature on successful writers' groups. Monthly meetings facilitate ongoing scholarly activity; we share group roles and seek to extend our knowledge of writing practice including writing conference abstracts, constructing an argument, collaborative writing projects, and negotiating authorship. At the inception of the writers' group, members were seeking to develop their writing portfolio. We are now at various stages of our scholarly development, ranging from early career writers to well published authors and editors. The model of a collaborative writers' group has provided a winning formula for those wishing to develop scholarly communications as part of their daily activities and has valuable lessons from which academic librarians might learn.

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Editorial Experiences of Writing for Publication

- Invitation to write

- Peer review of other peoples writing

- Commissioning of manuscripts

- Editing manuscripts
  - Advising author/s
  - Synthesising referees comments

Health Information and Libraries Journal

- Established in 1984
- Official journal of the *Health Libraries Group* of the *Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals*
- Jointly owned by the *Health Libraries Group* and *Wiley-Blackwell Publishing*
- Published quarterly

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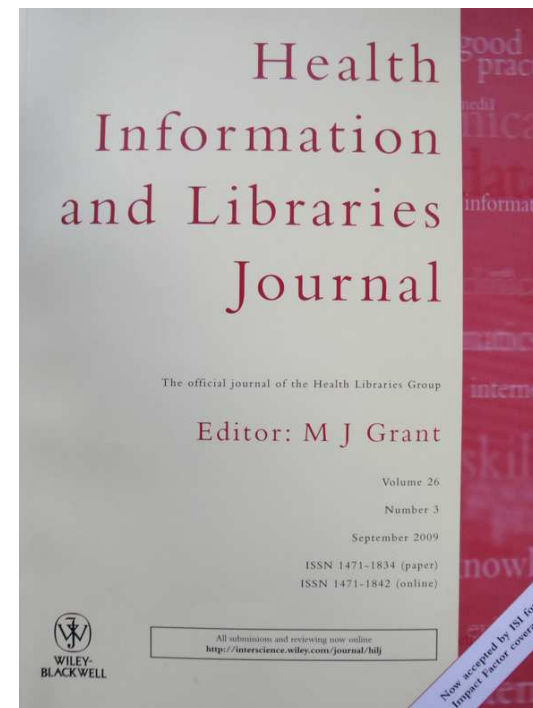
Key Milestones

- 2001 - Introduction of Regular Features
- 2006 – Accepted for inclusion in the Journal Citation Report (Impact Factor)
- 2007 - Introduction of Reviews
- 2008 - 25th Anniversary issue
- 2009 - Impact Factor
- 2010 - Virtual Issues

http://bit.ly/pL6npg

A Typical Issue of the Health Information and Libraries Journal

- Editorial

- A review article

- Original articles

- Regular features

- Obituaries

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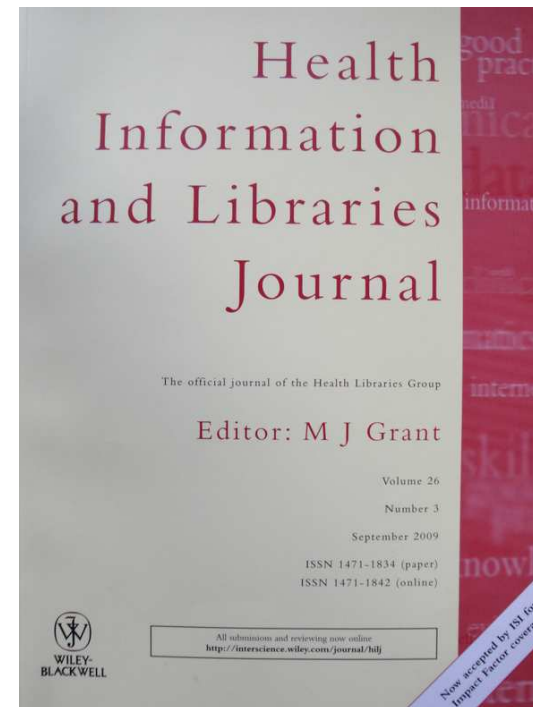
Review Articles

- Introduced in March 2007
- Different types of review require different approaches
  - Literature review vs systematic review
  - State-of-the-art
  - Overview
- Speak with Review Editor before starting work on a review

Review Article

A typology of reviews: an analysis of 14 review types and associated methodologies

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Abstract

Background and objectives: The expansion of evidence-based practice across sectors has lead to an increasing variety of review types. However, the diversity of terminology used means that the full potential of these review types may be lost amongst a confusion of indistinct and misapplied terms. The objective of this study is to provide descriptive insight into the most common types of reviews, with illustrative examples from health and health information domains. *Methods:* Following scoping searches, an examination was made of the vocabulary associated with the literature of review and synthesis (literary warrant). A simple analytical framework—Search, Appraisal, Synthesis and Analysis (SALSA)—was used to examine the main review types. *Results:* Fourteen review types and associated methodologies were analysed against the SALSA framework, illustrating the inputs and processes of each review type. A description of the key characteristics is given, together with perceived strengths and weaknesses. A limited number of review types are currently utilized within the health information domain. *Conclusions:* Few review types possess prescribed and explicit methodologies and many fall short of being mutually exclusive. Notwithstanding such limitations, this typology provides a valuable reference point for those commissioning, conducting, supporting or interpreting reviews, both within health information and the wider health care domain.

Background

The advent of evidence-based practice (EBP) in the early 1990s has seen the role of the health library and information worker in the ascendancy, with clinicians increasingly relying on health care literature in their decision making. With their knowledge of information sources and their skills to retrieve information to inform health care decisions, library and information sector workers

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have played,[1] and indeed continue to play, an important role in assisting in the uptake of EBP principles and practice. It quickly became apparent that synthesized summaries of 'all' evidence within a particular domain would be required, in addition to the evidence from primary studies, if clinicians were to make truly informed decisions within a typical consultation. However, the review article of the time seemed ill-equipped to meet such a challenge. Medical review articles of the pre-EBP era were generally unsystematic and lacked formal statistical methods to derive best estimates of treatment effects from the available
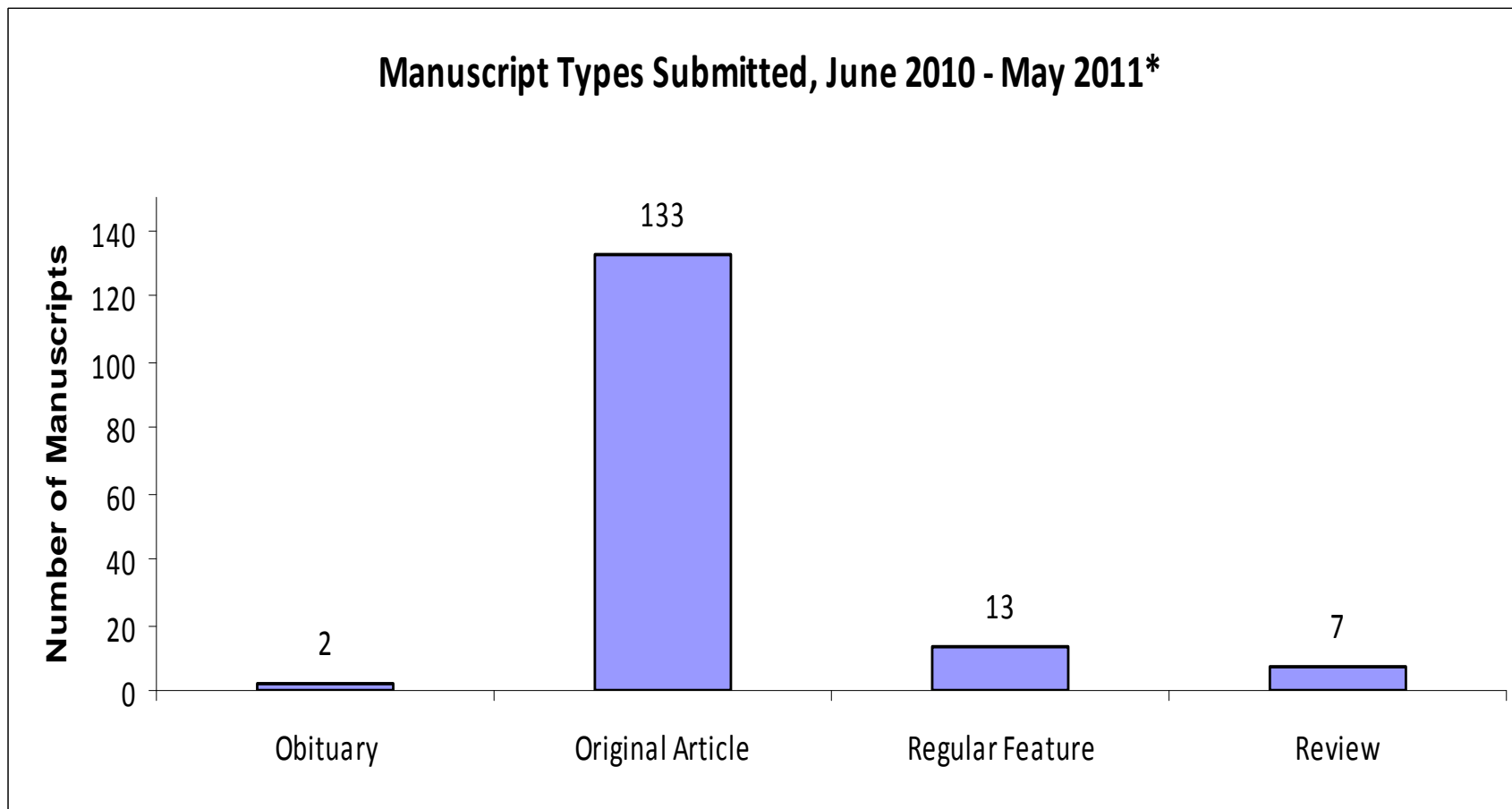
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Original Articles

- 6-8 original articles published in each issue
  - Educating and training health library and information workers
  - Identifying health information needs and use
  - Information technology and its application in healthcare settings
  - Managing health information programmes and services in the changing environment
  - Outreach to healthcare providers as users of health information services

Regular Features

- International Perspectives and Initiatives
- Learning and Teaching in Action
- Using Evidence in Practice

- Content is usually commissioned by the feature editor

Manuscript Types Submitted, June 2010 - May 2011*

Number of Manuscripts

- Obituary: 2
- Original Article: 133
- Regular Feature: 13
- Review: 7

* 155 manuscripts handled by the editorial office, representing 68 unique submissions and subsequent revisions.

Manuscripts Submitted by Geographic Area
June 2010 to May 2011

28%

22%

15%

9%

7%

6%

9%

3%

1%
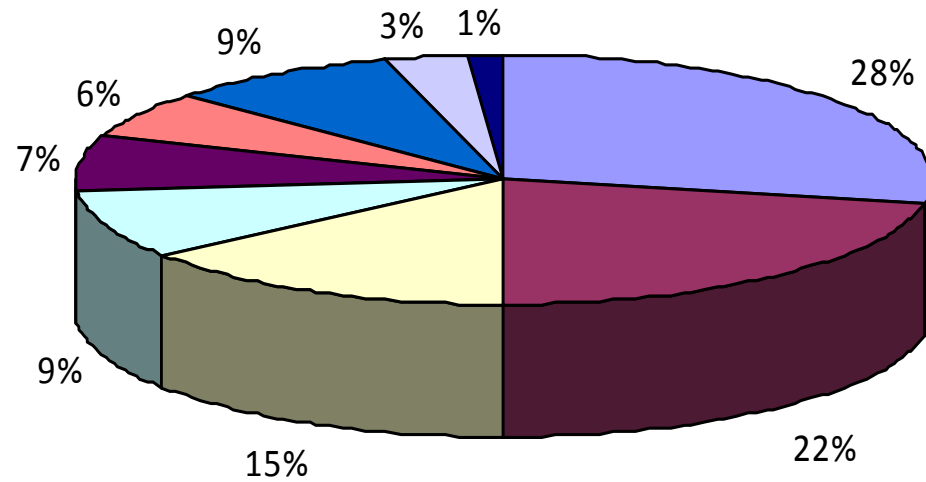
Legend:
- UK
- Europe
- North America
- Central Eurasia
- East Asia
- South Asia
- Australasia
- South Africa
- South America

A Typical Manuscript

- Submitted online via ScholarOne Manuscripts (S1M)
- First assessment by the editorial team
- Assignment to at least 2 referees
  - If there is a consensus a decision is recorded
  - If there is a disagreement a further referee is invited
- Usually 2 revisions before a final decision is made
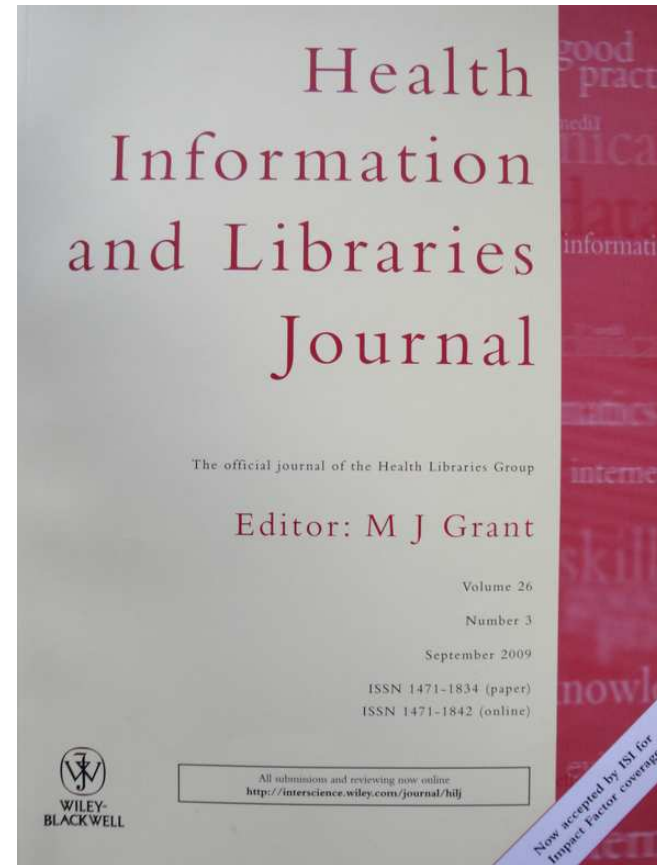 - Not unusual for 3 or 4 revisions to be required

Contact with Editorial Teams

- Is the manuscript within scope?

- Usually invite to submit a structured abstract
  - Determine whether the manuscript is likely to fit within the journals aims and scope

- Will still need to be peer reviewed
  - To determine quality of the methodology and the reporting

Challenges When Writing for Publication

@MariaJGrant

Editor

http://bit.ly/9RMH6S