



Work, Employment and Society

Guidelines for Authors

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Work, Employment and Society

Work, Employment and Society publishes a variety of manuscript types: Main Research articles, Debates and Controversies, Research Notes, and On the Front Line. All submissions should be written in UK English.

Guidance: Main Research Articles

Please read this [Notes for Contributors](#) document before submitting your manuscript to WES. It contains many useful points on formatting and style and other manuscript preparation requirements. Following this guidance will help to ensure that the submission process is smooth and speedy.

Main articles, fully anonymised and up to 8000 words, can be of three types:

1. Empirical articles - Articles in which qualitative or quantitative data are analysed to a) explore theoretical propositions generated from a literature review with a view to advancing understanding of theoretical perspectives, practices and policy; or b) develop new theoretical insights.
2. Review articles - Articles that review or map existing literature to form 'position pieces' that expound the 'state of the art' on a particular topic and also provide original insights into this literature.
3. Conceptual articles - Articles that are wholly theoretical or conceptual and seek to develop new theoretical and conceptual understandings.

In addition to main research articles, the journal publishes a number of different article types: Research Notes, articles that represent Debates and Controversies, On the Front Line accounts, and Book Reviews. Please note that you need to consult special guidelines for these types of articles, which can be found on the [WES website](#).

All submissions to WES should be prepared according to the Notes to Contributors and then submitted online via ScholarOne Manuscripts™. This applies to ALL manuscript types. For information on how to submit, please see the 'Instructions and Forms' section of the [submission site](#).



Journal Scope

Articles published in the main section of the journal can:

- Utilise any theoretical, methodological or empirical approach;
- Explore any aspect of employment, unemployment and categories of paid and unpaid work in between;
- Draw upon disciplines adjacent to sociology.

However, all submissions to WES, of whatever type, must make an original contribution to *sociological understanding of work and employment*. The study of work encompasses not only employment in the formal or informal economy but also non-standard forms of work and forms of unpaid labour, as well as unemployment. Submissions informed by adjacent disciplines are welcomed but must be of sociological interest and ensure that they contribute to sociological debates and theorizing. Lack of a sustained and original theoretical contribution to and engagement with the debates in the sociology of work and employment is one of the key reasons for desk rejections in WES. Authors are responsible for making these contributions clear in their submitted manuscripts. Authors are encouraged to read the editorials published by [Beck et al. \(2016\)](#) and [Stuart, Grugulis and Tomlinson \(2012\)](#) as a good orientation to the journal and the types of submissions we encourage. Authors are also encouraged to read past issues of the journal in order to acquaint themselves with the journal's existing debates and themes that may be relevant to their submission.

Articles that offer empirical examinations must be theoretically informed and must offer a theoretical contribution to the sociology of work and employment. They also must include sufficient information about the research methodology/methods used to enable reviewers to evaluate the robustness of the findings.

The journal is international in content and contribution. It welcomes contributions from authors of any country and the content of submissions likewise can focus on any national – or international or comparative - empirical and/or theoretical issue, development and debate. In addition, we particularly encourage contributions from the Global South.

How to Prepare an Article for Submission

Length and anonymity

Articles in the main section of the journal should be no longer than 8000 words in length. The 8000 word limit includes the title, abstract, keywords, text, references, notes, tables and figures. Tables and figures are counted by literal word count. All papers should be appropriately anonymised according to the journal style (e.g., Author 2000) and citations should not be included in the bibliography. Papers that are over the word count or not anonymised properly will be returned to the author.



Cover letter

A cover letter must accompany all article submissions. The cover letter should include:

- A brief summary of the main contribution of the article
- A brief statement about whether or not the data reported in the manuscript have been used for other publications. Any prior, concurrent, or forthcoming use of data and/or study samples must be brought to the attention of the editorial team. This includes the use of data sets and/or samples in any articles previously published, those in press or currently under review. For both quantitative and qualitative data, the authors should explain how this current submission uses data in a way that is different from previous publications and whether there are any overlaps.
- A brief confirmation that the article has not been previously submitted to WES. Resubmissions to WES are not permitted unless the previous manuscript has been rewritten to the point where it is a completely new article. In this case, authors must declare their previous submission and fully explain how the new manuscript represents a different and original contribution.

Data

In the case of articles presenting quantitative analyses, authors will need to be judicious in selecting which of their results to report in order to meet the word limit requirements. Only those results most pertinent to the overall argument of the article should be included, but authors are strongly encouraged to include additional results and analyses in an appendix submitted alongside the article. This may include additional descriptive statistics and correlation matrices, full details of any data reduction analyses (e.g., factor analysis), the full results of regression models, and sensitivity analyses. The appendix will be considered by the editor and referees, and will be published on the journal website alongside the article. Quantitative articles without an accompanying appendix may be returned to the author if the main article does not include sufficient information for the editor and referees to evaluate it. Please note that quantitative appendices are not included in the word limit of 8000 words. More information on writing quantitative articles for WES can be found in [this editorial](#) by Charlwood et al. (2014).

Language

Papers demonstrating a poor standard of English are less likely to be considered for review. If you think your manuscript may benefit from professional language services such as editing, translation, or formatting, details of SAGE language services are available [here](#). Authors are also strongly advised to consult previous issues of the journal for article style, structure and type.

Journal Style

All submissions (including the main text, tables, references, figures and supplementary materials) must be prepared and edited in accordance with the Journal's house style, which can be found [here](#).



Guidance: Debates and Controversies (D&C)

Debates and Controversies (D&C) are shorter pieces aiming to contribute to critical knowledge production and counter-discourses. D&C pieces are subject to the same academic rigour and double-blind peer review as main research articles. The maximum word length for D&C is 5,000 words including tables, endnotes and references.

D&C contributions should meet one or more of the following criteria:

- A think-piece or reflection on key concepts or bodies of knowledge in the sociology of work and employment that aims to stimulate new debates;
- An engagement with a body of literature that produces a new interpretation or proposes a new theoretical or empirical direction;
- A polemical critique of accepted wisdom on a topic. This must be serious in intent and considered in tone – no diatribes, please!

The D&C section is a forum for ongoing debate. Therefore, manuscripts should engage with previous D&C articles and/or other contributions in WES where appropriate and relevant. Contributions will not be accepted if they are:

- Underdeveloped versions of a standard article;
- Descriptive literature reviews that do not add to the existing body of knowledge and do not engage in an innovative way with ongoing debates;
- Not making a specific contribution to sociological debates on work and employment.

Authors submitting to D&C should explain in their cover letter the specific contribution that their research aims to make. D&C articles are submitted as distinct manuscripts and should include original work, not published or under review elsewhere. Regular manuscripts that have been rejected from WES should not be resubmitted as D&C unless at the specific request of an editor.

Guidance: Research Notes

Research Notes (RN) are shorter research articles aiming to serve as a form of incubator for new sociological thinking in the field of work and employment. The maximum word length for RN is 5000 words including tables, endnotes and references. Research notes are subject to the same academic rigour and double-blind peer review as main research articles.

The typical submission for RN will aim to make a contribution in at least one of the following ways:

- Critically analysing current research methodology associated with a particular work and employment phenomenon, including arguments for why and how the methodology should be amended and providing sound evidence that the proposed amendment makes a significant contribution to the understanding of the phenomenon;
- Critically reflecting on fieldwork that sheds light on existing theories, practices and models of analysis of a sociological phenomenon, including clearly articulating proposed amendments to theories, practices and models of analysis;

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- Using original or existing data to test novel hypotheses that could expand our understanding of work and employment phenomena, including clearly articulating how the novel evidence makes a contribution to the sociological understanding of work and employment.

Contributions will not be accepted if they are:

- Underdeveloped versions of a standard article;
- Premature reports from early stages of research or notes on the research that do not raise substantive theoretical, empirical or methodological issues;
- Not making a contribution to sociological research on work and employment.

Authors submitting to RN should explain in their cover letter the specific contribution that their research aims to make. Research notes are submitted as distinct manuscripts and should include original work, not published or under review elsewhere. Regular manuscripts that have been rejected from WES should not be resubmitted as RN unless at the specific request of an editor.

Guidance: On the Front Line

On the Front Line (OtFL) gives a voice to frontline workers who otherwise would not have the space to write about their lived experience in their own words. The purpose of the section is to let workers speak for themselves, and to enable their voices to convey sociological insight into the contemporary realities of work and employment. OtFL articles are designed to appeal to a wider audience than the academy and are an important element of WES's commitment to public sociology. The maximum word length for OtFL is 5000 words including tables, endnotes and references.

Given that OtFL articles are first person worker accounts, these articles *are not intended* to meet the same criteria for 'academic excellence' as main research, RN or D&C articles. Authors are strongly encouraged to consult the journal for recent examples of the distinctive approach and format of OtFL articles, as well as to ensure that their own submission has a new contribution to make. Another useful resource for prospective OtFL authors is [this article](#) by Taylor, Warhurst, Thompson and Scholarios (2009).

OtFL articles are co-authored with the worker participant(s) and usually consist of first-person narratives or other forms of reportage that foreground worker voice and experience. Co-authorship by the worker means that they should play an active role in preparing and agreeing the content, and editing of their own narrative, including any revisions made during the peer-review process. However, ethical considerations require that the worker's identity and any details in the narrative suggesting their identity or others' identity (e.g., colleagues and managers), must be anonymized

OtFL contributions should include a short explanation that situates the narrative in its most appropriate contexts, whether organisational, sectoral or geographical, and briefly indicates how it engages with relevant sociological debates or developments. As OtFL articles are designed to be unmediated accounts by workers, they should end with the first-person narrative, thereby giving the worker the 'final word'. For this reason a reflective and summative academic-style conclusion is not appropriate.



Contributions will not be accepted if they are:

- underdeveloped versions of a standard article;
- recycled and/or reconstituted pre-existing interview data or other empirical material.