How to write a scientific paper

The course will address various aspects of writing a research paper for a biomedical journal. It will be suitable for junior or mid-level researchers who have participated in research projects but do not have much experience of being the lead author on a paper.

The course will cover:

- organizing the material and structuring your article correctly
- full and accurate reporting in compliance with the appropriate guidelines
- writing a good abstract and title
- selecting the most appropriate journal
- navigating the peer review process.

The course will use the CONSORT guidelines for reporting clinical trials as the main guide to the structure of the paper and introduce *The Lancet*'s Reduce Waste and Reward Diligence campaign. Topics will include reporting of primary and secondary outcomes and adverse events; the trial profile; sex and gender specific reporting; and clear, concise communication. Journal selection will address what to look for in a target journal and how to avoid 'predatory' journals, as well as a brief description of open access options. Participants will be introduced to the peer review process and be guided on how to respond to peer reviewer and editorial comments.

The course will include short exercises to be conducted in small groups and participants are encouraged to bring an abstract or outline of a paper concerning their own work.

Learning objectives

By the end of the course, participants should

- understand how to draft the outline of a research paper
- appreciate the importance of publication guidelines and know where to find these
- know the key points to writing a good abstract and title
- know what to consider when selecting a target journal
- have a basic understanding of the peer review process

Background reading

CONSORT 2010 Statement: updated guidelines for reporting parallel group randomised trials: www.equator-network.org/reporting-guidelines/consort/

Reducing waste from incomplete or unusable reports of biomedical research:

http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(13)62228-X/fulltext