Asian Journal of International Law

A checklist for publishing your first journal article: tips from the *Asian Journal of International Law*

The *Asian Journal of International Law* has put this short list of tips together to support first-time authors. The journal is keen to attract scholarship from young and more junior scholars and in 2014 launched a young scholar's prize for the best article published in the journal to encourage authorship from this group.

Note this is not specialist guidance to aid creation of the intellectual content of an article but more general advice on the mechanics of getting your article published.

Choose a journal appropriate to your article

When choosing where to publish your article it is important to check whether the content of your article fits with the scope of the journal. Most journals publish their scope in the first pages of the journal or on its webpages. The *Asian Journal of International Law* publishes content on all aspects of public and private international law. It is particularly interested in scholarship with an Asian dimension i.e. consideration of an Asian issue, bringing an Asian perspective to a wider global concern, or more general international legal issues of interest to scholars, practitioners, and policymakers located in or working on Asia. You should also consider your intended audience and whether a generalist or more specialist journal would be most appropriate for your purposes. As a young scholar it may also be worth looking for journals that have a clear track-record for publishing material from more junior scholars or that explicitly encourage these kinds of submissions. Journals which offer prizes for articles written by young scholars (such as the *Asian Journal of International Law'*s prize) are one indicator of this.

Ensure your article is written in clear English

The *Asian Journal of International Law* only accepts articles written in English and this is the case with many journals seeking to attract a global audience. If you are not a native English speaker you should consider using a translator or asking a native to proof-read your article before submission. When checking your article think carefully about grammar. Make use of appropriate headings to give your piece structure and ensure your argument flows logically.

Attend suitable writing workshops

Make good use of the increasing number of sessions on offer at conferences and meetings on how to get published and how to write for journals.

Make an effort to follow the journal's style

Consult the journal's 'Instructions for contributors' (https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/asian-journal-of-international-law/information/instructions-contributors) which outlines the journal's style in detail including citation and reference format. This will also give you important information about word count and how to submit. Most journals have a style sheet of this kind. A clearly written article conforming with the journal's style guide will give a good first impression.

Read articles previously published in the journal
This will assist you in following the journal's style as well as helping you to determine if your article is appropriate to the journal.

Ensure your article is complete
This includes all citations and references (check the journal's 'Instructions for Contributors' for the level of detail needed). You should also realise that should your article be accepted the proofing stage is really just a chance to correct typos and you will not be given the chance to change your article substantially or add further text.

Ask colleagues for feedback on your article before submission
They may pick up on the kind of things that might give cause for an immediate reject or help you to ensure the article is in its best possible shape before submission. If you know anyone on the editorial board of the journal they may provide particularly helpful advice.

Follow the journal's procedures for submission
These are normally found inside the print journal or on a journal's webpages and might ask you to submit your piece directly to the Editor or in the *Asian Journal of International Law*'s case, to submit through its online submission system ScholarOne. It is important to follow these instructions or your piece may be lost.

Submit to one journal at a time
Unless expressly stated by a journal you should assume that a journal does not allow simultaneous submission and you should not submit to a second journal until your first journal has made its decision. The *Asian Journal of International Law* does not allow simultaneous submission.

Reacting to desk rejection
Some articles are rejected immediately without being sent out to peer reviewers. The most usual reasons for this are inappropriate topics for the journal and poor English. Should this happen to you think carefully about whether changes are needed before submitting to another journal and once more choose your journal carefully.

Treat peer feedback constructively
All articles progressing to peer-review will be double blind peer-reviewed; that is the anonymised article will be read by at least two reviewers who will remain anonymous to the author. Treat comments given to you by these reviewers with respect and react to them constructively. After all, these reviewers are trying to help you write the best article you can write.

Follow revision instructions carefully
Some articles may be accepted without revision but it is more likely that it will be accepted subject to some revisions or that you will be asked to revise and resubmit. In both cases respond to such direction promptly and be careful to respond to every revision you have been asked to make. If you have chosen not to follow a reviewer's suggestion make sure you explain why you have made that choice clearly and persuasively. If you ignore these revision instructions your article could well be eventually rejected.

Check proofs and respond to queries promptly
Should your article be accepted, it will be copyedited and typeset before publication. You will receive a set of proofs and queries and you should check and respond to these quickly. It is in your interest for the article to publish promptly. As mentioned above, proofing is for correcting serious errors not for changing your text or adding additional material.

Complete any copyright documentation with care
All authors of the *Asian Journal of International Law* will be asked to sign a licence to publish form. Please complete the form you will be given carefully. This is also a chance to ensure you have applied for any necessary permission for quotations from third sources; it is the author's responsibility to seek permission to re-use such material not the journal. Note that the licence to publish form will also give you clear advice on how you can and cannot re-use your own article including posting on personal webpages, institutional repositories and SSRN.

If you are unsuccessful try again
In the case that your article is rejected please take on board any feedback given and try again. It is important to remember that many articles are being submitted to journals such as the *Asian Journal of International Law* and they have a high threshold for publication. It may be that you have one article that was not quite appropriate for this publication where another one might be just what we are looking for. Do also consider alternative types of submission such as writing a book review which can be a good way to show you are eager to write as well as get your name out there.

Finally, be confident
Remember, your article will be reviewed anonymously and so a high quality article written by a junior scholar has the same chance of being published as one written by a more senior academic.

For more advice on how to get published and more specific advice on determining the content of your article do take a look at the following useful webpages:

http://www.ll.georgetown.edu/guides/Publishing.cfm
http://ssrn.com/abstract=1685422
http://guides.library.harvard.edu/friendly.php?s=gettingpublished&gid=4882
http://lib.law.washington.edu/ref/lawrev.html
http://www.law.nyu.edu/students/studentwriting

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