



Editorial

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INASP journal publishing practices and standard course for the editors: an initiative to change the quality of academic journals



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Editorial

It is our pleasure to share a recent event in INASP, which was a part of INASP's sustainability plans for the INASP Journals Online and AJOL. INASP has developed an online course entitled "Editorial Processes for Journal Editors". It was run as a pilot for a small group of editors in order to get honest feedback on the content and design of the course – what works well and what should be improved before the rollout of the whole course. The full course will be available later in this year when the other editorial board members of different journals hosted by INASP will be included.

Different member journals of INASP, across the globe, were invited to participate in this pilot. In the full course, there are seven modules but for the purposes of this pilot, all participants were requested to do the first module and then select ONE other module. Participants were asked some baseline questions, and then at the end of the pilot, there were some additional questions and the opportunity to provide feedback. Participants worked through Module 1 and the selected module at their own pace, noting down the time it takes to complete and how often and for how long they engaged with the course and any observations they have about the module.

After successfully completing the module, participants were awarded a certificate of completion.

The pilot began on 26th February 2018 and ended on 20th March 2018. Participants were given ample time to work on Module 1 and their selected module and provide feedback.

The course modules were:

Module 1: Design elements for journals

Module 2: Editorial office Part 1 – The Editor and the Editorial Office

Module 3: Editorial office Part 2 – Working with Authors and Copyediting

Module 4: The peer review process

Module 5: Publication Ethics

Module 6: Copyright and Licensing

Module 7: Indexes and increasing impact

The moderators of the course were Mrs Sioux Cumming, Programme Manager for INASP's Journals Online project and Mr Andy Nobes, Programme Officer, Research Development and Support at INASP. At the start of the course, Editors were first invited to complete a short survey, and then the first module was made available in the moodle platform.

Module 1 was developed based on design elements for journals. The aim of this module was to draw attention to the elements that editors should consider including text and cover pages as part of generally accepted good journal practice. There was also a discussion forum for module 1, where participants could post their questions and thoughts about the content in this module. There was also an action plan, where editors were invited to share their action plan on this forum and seek feedback from your course colleagues. The template for the action plan was given in the core content for this module. After completion of the course, it was submitted on the assignment page.

In Module 4: Peer review, there was pre-assessment quiz followed by other activities. The importance of peer review and how it can best be managed was the main important highlight. The module provided some instruction in how to identify reviewers and provide them with guidance and consider some techniques for improving feedback and response times. The discussion forum was also made available for the editors in this module. An action plan was also submitted.

It was a wonderful experience to be a part of this pilot project. Contents, legibility and construction of course materials were excellent. The Moodle platform for this type, of course, was really helpful. To be editors of a journal hosted by INASP is really worthy, because of these events, various workshops conducted from time to time for the journal publishing practices and standards. It increases editorial potential, revealing the drawbacks and rectifying it [1].

References

1. Journal Publishing Practices and Standards. Available online, accessed from the URL on 30.4.18:
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