

BJPIR

British Journal of Politics and International Relations

Editorial style guide: February 2018

This sheet offers guidance to help authors format papers for the BJPIR. It is to be read in conjunction with Sage's BJPIR [Submission Guidelines](#) and its general [Manuscript Submission Guidelines](#). It is the responsibility of authors to ensure that their paper is correctly-formatted along lines specified below. Any failure to do so risks delays. Please contact the editors if further guidance is needed.

Spelling, capitalisation, abbreviation and punctuation

1. The journal uses British English and generally follows first preference of the Oxford English Dictionary: *labour* in preference to *labor*; *programme* to *program*; *analyse* to *analyze*; *defence* to *defense*.
2. However, the exception is that 's' spellings are preferred to 'z' spellings in words like *organisation*, *centralisation*, *criticise* and so forth.
3. Avoid 'i.e.', 'e.g.', 'etc.' 'cf.' in favour of 'that is', 'for example', 'and so forth'. This protocol extends to references: '(see for example Smith, 2016)'; '(compare Smith, 2016 with...)'.
4. Do not use abbreviations in the title, abstract or keywords of a manuscript unless unavoidable. Define an abbreviation on first usage (except the abstract), with the abbreviation in parentheses and use consistently thereafter, including in headings.
5. Full stops used after all initials and abbreviations, except when final letter is the same as for the original word. E.g. *ed.* but *eds*, *Dr*, *Mr* (without a stop). Abbreviations consisting of capital letters and acronyms should not take points: for example *UK*, *US*, *NATO*.
6. The journal prefers the use of single quotes in the first instance, with double quotes within quoted material.
7. Anglicised foreign words should not be italicised and should be without accents, for example *cafe*; *et al.*; *vis-a-vis*.
8. For specific titles use initial caps. For instance: the *British Foreign Minister*; the *President* (when referring to a specific one); *Congress*. For generic titles use lower case: *several government ministers*; *a president*. Capitalise a specific event such as *The Iraq War* but otherwise lower case: there was opposition during the war.
9. Capitalise politically or geographically defined places. For example: *the West*, but otherwise lower case: *western Europe*; *the south of the country*.

Numbers and dates

10. Spell out numbers one to nine; for numbers 10 and over use numerals, except at the beginning of a sentence.
11. Dates should be written out as: *18 February 2018*. When referring to decades do not insert an inverted comma: *2000s*, *mid-1990s*.

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Constructions to avoid

12. Do not use 'this' (or 'these') as the subject pronoun of a sentence but to refer to a noun. For example, '*This notion is portrayed as*' is preferred to '*This is portrayed as*'. In the absence of a noun, the reader must work out to what 'this' refers, reducing clarity.
13. Please facilitate anonymous refereeing by: avoiding 'as I have argued previously' or 'drawing on my recent work'; and keeping self-references to a minimum. As a rule of thumb, no more than three separate self-authored sources should be cited and listed in the references. If appropriate and it helps ensure anonymity, authors may (re)insert references to self-citations (listed in the submission as 'author' only) at the final stage of the editorial process, prior to the article being sent to production.
14. Avoid splitting infinitives where possible; '*thoroughly to address the question*' is preferred to '*to thoroughly address the question*'.
15. Avoid long-winded, complex sentences. If a sentence enters a fifth line, check if it can be broken up into two or more sentences.

Structuring the manuscript

16. Do not divide your article into more than 4 or 5 main sections. Second order headings (not numbered) may be italicised. Used unnumbered main and sub-headings only.
17. Avoid long-winded section titles. Keep them short, punchy, descriptive. Try to ensure that your section headings, including larger main headings, will occupy a single line in the *BJPIR* (check an article in the journal for guidance).
18. A list – of factors, variables, findings and so on – should be presented as a numbered, lettered or bullet points list. Numbered lists should be full sentences. Each numbered item should start with a capital letter and end in a full stop. Incomplete sentences should be (a), (b), and so on; precede with a colon, each item starting with a lower case letter end ending in a semi-colon (last item ends in full stop). Use bullet points for items where the order is not significant; items may be full or part sentences and punctuated as such.

For example:

Numbered variables as follows.

1. First consideration.
2. Further consideration.

Entries in a lettered list could include:

- (a) example 1;
- (b) example 2.

Bullet list (in no particular order):

- political agenda;
- political science; and so on.

Referencing style

The journal adheres to the SAGE Harvard reference style. Note this style cites in-text (Author Last Name, Date: Page number if appropriate). As an example: (Smith, 2016: 22). To reference a source (in-text) with 3 authors or more, use: (Smith et al., 2016).

View the [SAGE Harvard](#) guidelines for full information.

Please keep endnotes to a minimum and use only for essential contextual background, details of variables or methods, or for similar material which, while essential, would nonetheless be disruptive to the flow of the main text, or of interest only to a minority of readers. Please do not exceed one endnote per word (for instance ‘word^{[1][2]}’ will not be accepted).

Special submissions

The *BJPIR* publishes a number of different types of article:

1. **Original research articles** – a ‘standard’ submission of an article of 8000 words.
2. **‘Policy matters’ articles** – we also welcome submissions of work focused on a particular policy sector or issue, particularly ones that impact on the Academy (such as on matters of educational policy). ‘Policy matters’ articles may be shorter than a standard, 8000 word submission.
3. **Special Issues** – the *BJPIR* is one of the only top-rated journals in our subject area(s) to issue an annual competitive [open call](#) for special issue proposals that focus on a particular theme. Our call is opened in the autumn of each year with a deadline of **1st March**. Special issue proposals are considered by our Edinburgh editorial team (including our Consultant Editors) and Guest Editors of proposals chosen for publication normally are alerted of a decision by the end of April. The journal reserves the right not to choose any proposal for publication in a given year. All draft articles that are proposed to be included in a Special Issue must undergo anonymous review by referees. It is entirely the responsibility of Guest Editors to ensure that all Special Issue articles conform with the provisions set out in this Editorial style guide; any articles that do not may be dropped from a Special Issue.
4. **‘Breakthrough’ Political Science/Theory or IR articles** – the *BJPIR* occasionally publishes articles commissioned by our editorial team by scholars who have either contributed seminal work in an established field of study or who are the brightest, emerging talents engaged in establishing new such fields. ‘Breakthrough’ articles are relatively short (6000 words maximum), focused on debates to which the author’s work has given rise, and are designed to be ideal for teaching. Most such articles are accompanied by short (4000 word) commentaries by leading scholars whose work has been influenced by ‘breakthrough’ authors. The *BJPIR* normally will help fund – on a 50/50 ‘matching funding’ basis – workshops or symposia that bring together ‘breakthrough’ authors and their commentators for discussion and debate.