

Author guidelines for research papers

1. Overview of PBS

Positive behavioural support (PBS) is a collaborative and person centred approach to supporting individuals at risk of behaviours that challenge. It integrates values and human rights, with ethical and compassionate use of the science of behaviour analysis, as well as other evidence-based approaches (such as augmentative and alternative communication, cognitive behavioural therapy and active support).

PBS aims to understand behaviours that challenge; work in partnership with individuals and their families, carers, educators and multidisciplinary partners; promote quality of life; develop capable environments; and reduce and remove restrictions that impede quality of life. Throughout, PBS practitioners work to ensure that support is collaborative, personalised, culturally responsive, proactive, and evidence based.

2. Aims of the journal

The *International Journal of Positive Behavioural Support* is a peer reviewed publication that aims to:

- lead the further development and evolution of PBS internationally;
- promote good practice in the use of PBS by bridging the gap between academic research and PBS practice;
- contribute to the evidence base for PBS, with a particular focus on improving quality of life;
- encourage collaborative PBS research and practice with professionals, family carers and the people that they support.

While the primary focus of the journal is the use of PBS approaches in supporting children and adults with intellectual disability, submissions concerning PBS with other populations are welcomed.

The journal particularly welcomes submissions authored by, or with, people who have intellectual disabilities, autistic people or people with lived experience of PBS.

The journal publishes the following types of papers:

- research papers;
- discussion/concept papers;
- practice papers;
- brief reports.

Each of these has specific guidance, so please ensure you follow the guidance for your type of paper.

3. Research papers

The journal welcomes the following types of research papers:

- single-case studies;
- group studies;
- accounts of wider organisational change;
- systematic reviews;
- qualitative studies;
- mixed method studies.

All submissions should include data that evidence the impact of described interventions, or the outcome of systematic reviews. In addition to papers describing more traditional experimental methodologies, manuscripts that report routine data collected by services or as part of dedicated audits are welcome. The journal will feature both quantitative and qualitative research studies.

Systematic reviews of existing literature that have relevance to research and practice in PBS will also be considered. The review should describe the procedures employed to select the literature that is reviewed; address the methodological strengths and limitations of the literature; summarise the major findings; and present implications for research and/or practice.

Research papers should be no more than 7,000 words including references, tables, figures, appendices and follow the structure outlined below.

4. Format and structure of research papers

All research papers submitted to the *International Journal of Positive Behavioural Support* should include:

Cover page: This should have only the title and any subtitle; this is so submissions can be reviewed anonymously. The authors' details should be supplied on a separate sheet and should include names and institutional affiliations, including country/region, of **all** contributing authors. The author for correspondence must be clearly identified and should include their contact details, including address, email and telephone number.

Summary: A summary of the contents of the manuscript of around 150 words, under four headings: Background; Method; Results; Conclusions. Do not include references in the summary.

Keywords: Up to six that are relevant to the content of the manuscript to aid indexing, citing and online searches.

Main text: The main part of the paper, which should have appropriate subheadings.

References

Tables, figures, and appendices: Tables, figures, and/or appendices should be placed after the references. The position of tables, figures, and/or appendices should be indicated within the text by use of Table 1, Figure 1, Appendix A, etc. Tables, figures and/or appendices should be presented in this order. They should be designed using Harvard Style formatting guidelines.

5. Submitting a paper

To submit a paper to the *International Journal of Positive Behavioural Support*, please send your manuscript by email attachment to ijpbs@bild.org.uk.

Manuscripts should be sent as a Word document and should not be write protected. Articles are accepted for publication only at the discretion of the editors.

6. Style

Language and terminology

Jargon, or unnecessary technical language, should be avoided. Non-discriminatory language should be used.

The journal accepts a range of terms for challenging behaviour, including behaviours of concern, behaviours that challenge, and challenging behaviour.

The journal uses the term intellectual disability, not learning disability. The journal uses UK English spelling.

Abbreviations and symbols

As far as possible avoid abbreviations, except for terms in common use. All symbols and abbreviations should be clearly explained. Abbreviations should not be used when they refer to people, e.g., intellectual disabilities, not ID. Abbreviations that are common enough to be in the dictionary (e.g., USA or IQ) are acceptable.

References

The journal follows the Harvard reference style. This system uses the authors' names and date of publication in the body of the text. In the reference section of the manuscript, references are sequenced alphabetically by author.

Examples:

'The author has highlighted the implications of this research in another paper (Davies, 1996). Other writers have commented on related issues, notably Bartholomew (1991, 1999) and McClean (1991).'

Names and dates are enclosed in parentheses unless the authors' names are part of the sentence. If two papers are cited by the same author, and both are published in the same year, the first should be referenced as (Bartholomew, 1991a), then (Bartholomew, 1991b), and so on.

When citing two or more articles enclosed in parentheses, then authors are cited in chronological order by year of publication. Example:

Positive Greetings at the Door (PGD) is compatible with the aim of building capable environments and enhancing quality of life, core aims in the delivery of PBS (Carr, 2007; McGill et al., 2010; Gore et al., 2013; Cook et al., 2018).

When citing a single article enclosed in parentheses with four or more authors then 'et al.' is used after the first author. Example:

'Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) is a values-led, person-centred framework that uses a proactive approach to optimise care, whilst reducing behaviours that are challenging to support and the need for restrictive interventions (Webber et al., 2012; Gore et al., 2013).'

The full citation is listed at the end of the article, which is arranged in alphabetical order by author. Journal names are given in full and are italicised, as are book names. References would be cited as follows.

Journal citation with volume number and issue number:

Sigman, M D, Kasari, C, Kwon, J and Yirmiya, N (1995) 'Responses to the negative emotions of others by autistic and normal children', *Child Development*, 33(3), 435-439.

Journal citation with only volume number:

Gore, N J, McGill, P, Toogood, S, Allen, D, Hughes, J C, Baker, P, Hastings, R P, Noone, S J and Denne, L D (2013) 'Definition and scope for positive behavioural support', *International Journal of Positive Behavioural Support*, 3, 14-23.

Book:

Happe, F (1995) *Autism: an introduction to psychological theory*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Book chapter:

McGill, P and Toogood, A (1994) 'Organising community placements', In E Emerson, P McGill and J Mansell (eds.) *Severe learning disabilities and challenging behaviours: designing high quality services*. London: Chapman and Hall, pp. 232-259.

Hyphenation

Turn the hyphenation function off.

Tables, figures and figure captions

Tables and figures should have short, descriptive titles, and be clearly numbered consecutively, e.g., Table 1, Table 2, etc., in order of their appearance in the text. All tables and figures should be listed after the references. They should be given a short caption. All footnotes to tables and figures and their source(s) should be typed below the table or figure. Tables and figures should be designed using Harvard Style formatting guidelines.

Tables

Tables must, as far as possible, include only essential data and be self-explanatory. All column headings should clearly define the data presented. Use a tab, not spaces, to separate data points in tables; if using a table editor, ensure each data point is in a unique cell, do not use carriage returns within cells.

Figures

All graphs, drawings and photographs are considered figures and should be numbered in sequence. Each figure should have a caption and all captions should be typed together on a separate page at the end of the manuscript and numbered correspondingly. All symbols and abbreviations should be clearly explained.

If all or parts of previously published illustrations are used, permission must be obtained from the copyright holder concerned. It is the authors' responsibility to obtain these in writing and provide copies to the publisher.

Quotations

Lengthy quotations (exceeding 40 words) should be indented in the text. It is the authors' responsibility to check all quotations for infringement of copyright and to obtain formal permission to use the quotation.

Confidentiality:

The names of all individuals, schools, establishments, local authorities, towns and cities should be changed or omitted, so that they are not identifiable.

7. Copyright

Papers are only accepted on the understanding that they have not been published previously, have not been submitted for publishing elsewhere and have been read and approved by all authors. A completed Copyright Transfer Agreement must be signed and sent when notice of acceptance is given by the editors.

8. Permissions

It is the responsibility of the authors to ensure that all those who have contributed to the paper or the work presented are acknowledged and that they have given their written permission for the article to be published. It is the authors' responsibility to obtain all necessary permissions for the use of previously published illustrations.

9. Proofs

Proofs will be sent via email as an Acrobat PDF file. The email server must be able to accept attachments up to 4 MB in size. Corrections must be returned to the production editor within five days of receipt.

10. Offprints

A PDF offprint of the online published article will be provided free of charge to the corresponding author and may be distributed subject to the publisher's terms and conditions.

11. Peer review policy

All submissions to the *International Journal of Positive Behavioural Support* are reviewed by the editors for adherence to the submission criteria and to decide whether they are suitable for peer review. Following this they are sent for peer review.

Editors will consider the peer reviewed reports when making a decision but are not bound by the opinions or recommendations contained within. A concern raised by a single peer reviewer or the editor may result in the manuscript being rejected.

Authors will receive peer review reports together with the editorial decision on their manuscript.

Where an editor is on the author list or has any other competing interest regarding a specific manuscript, another member of the Editorial Board will be assigned to oversee peer review.

12. Research and publishing ethics

You should only submit your research to us if the following conditions are met:

- The work is original.
- The work has not been submitted elsewhere and is not under consideration with any other publication.
- The work does not include libellous, defamatory or unlawful statements.
- Permission has been cleared for any third party material included.

- Authorship has been agreed prior to submission and no one has been ‘gifted’ authorship or denied credit as an author (ghost authorship).
- The research has been conducted with the highest standards of rigour and integrity.

For manuscripts reporting studies that involve human participants, a statement identifying the ethics committee that approved the study and confirmation that the study conforms to recognised standards is required, for example: Declaration of Helsinki; US Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects; or European Medicines Agency Guidelines for Good Clinical Practice.

It should also state clearly in the text that all persons gave their informed consent prior to their inclusion in the study or, in the case where there is a lack of capacity, that appropriate ‘best interest’ considerations have been made according to the legal jurisdiction of the participant. Participant anonymity should be preserved.

Photographs need to be cropped sufficiently to prevent human participants being recognised (or an eye bar should be used). Images and information from individual participants will only be published where the authors have obtained the individual's free prior informed consent.

Authors do not need to provide a copy of the consent form to the publisher; however, in signing the author license to publish, authors are required to confirm that consent has been obtained.

13. Declaration of Conflicting Interests policy

A Declaration of Conflicting Interests policy refers to a formal policy a journal may have to require a conflict of interest statement or conflict of interest disclosure from a submitting or publishing author.

The Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) states in its Guidelines on Good Publication Practice (2003) that:

‘Conflicts of interest arise when authors, reviewers, or editors have interests that are not fully apparent and that may influence their judgments on what is published. They have been described as those which, when revealed later, would make a reasonable reader feel misled or deceived.’

Many scholars, researchers and professionals may have potential conflicts of interest that could – or could be seen to – have an effect on their research. As a result, some journals require a formal Declaration of Conflicting Interests enabling a statement to be carried within the paginated published article.

A potential conflicting interest might arise from relationships, allegiances or hostilities to particular groups, organisations or interests, which may influence excessively one's judgements or actions. The issue is particularly sensitive when such interests are private and/or may result in personal gain.

Articles will be evaluated fairly and will not necessarily be rejected when any competing interests are declared.

Examples of conflicts of interest might include the following, although it is not an exhaustive list:

- Having received fees for consulting.
- Having received research funding.
- Having been employed by a related company.
- Holding stocks or shares in a company which might be affected by the publication of your paper.
- Having received funds reimbursing you for attending a related symposia or talk.

If there are other interests which the reasonable reader might believe has affected your research, you may also wish to declare them.

*Please note that it is not expected that details of financial arrangements be disclosed when a competing interest is declared.

How do I make a declaration?

Please include such a declaration at the beginning of your manuscript, using the heading 'Declaration of Conflicting Interest'. If no conflict exists, please state that 'The Author(s) declare(s) that there is no conflict of interest'.

Authors' obligations regarding conflicting interests

- All forms of financial support, including pharmaceutical company support, are acknowledged in your Contribution.
- Any commercial or financial involvements that might present an appearance of a conflict of interest related to the Contribution are disclosed in a covering letter accompanying the Contribution, and all such potential conflicts of interest will be discussed with the Editor as to whether disclosure of this information with the published Contribution is to be made in the journal.

- You have not signed an agreement with any sponsor of the research reported in the Contribution that prevents you from publishing both positive and negative results or that forbids you from publishing this research without the prior approval of the sponsor.
- You have checked the manuscript submission guidelines to see whether the journal requires a Declaration of Conflicting Interests and have complied with the requirements specified where such a policy exists.

Editor obligations regarding conflicting interests

The same obligations equally apply to editors or guest editors writing an editorial that will be published in the journal.

Additional Information

You may find the following useful resources to refer to for more information on Conflict of interest policies, existing codes of practices and more general good practice in relation to journal publication ethics:

- View the [guidelines published on good publication and the Code of Conduct by the Committee of Publication Ethics \(COPE\)](#).
- View the [example published by the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors \(ICMJE\)](#).
- View a [Common Standard for Conflict of Interest Disclosure](#), published by Center for Science in the Public Interest.