

**Research and Perspectives on Development Practice: a series of peer-reviewed papers presented by the Department of International Development, Maynooth University. (ISSN: 2009-6976)**

**Guidelines for Contributors on the Submission of Papers**

**INTRODUCTION**

**Research and Perspectives on Development Practice** is a series of occasional papers, published bi-annually in an online, free outlet for recent research done within the broad arena that is ‘development practice’. The series of papers aim to integrate the theoretical and the practical and be relevant to development practitioners, educators and activists worldwide.

Using the platform of **MURAL**, the **Maynooth University Research Archive Library**, <http://mural.maynoothuniversity.ie/> the papers are connected to an extensive network of global sites and academic repositories. Previous papers in the series may be found [here](#).

Originally established to provide recent graduates of the International Development programmes with an early opportunity to disseminate their work more widely and to contribute to development thinking and practice in a variety of areas, it is now open to all contributors.

We have now initiated two paths for prospective writers to think about:

**1. Research and Perspectives on Development Practice**

These papers are drawn from recently completed dissertations and are designed to present an academic argument that is defended with reference to the primary research undertaken. However, we also welcome submissions based upon other relevant research recently undertaken.

**2. New Perspectives on Development Practice**

This new strand is open for those whose current work experiences have enabled them to reflect upon ideas and approaches used within their practice and which they would be interesting in writing about and thus benefit others working in this broad field.

## SECTION 1. OVERALL STRUCTURE AND FOCUS OF PAPERS

### General overview

The papers should give an outline of the topic, research undertaken and a summary of findings and analysis. Papers should be presented in an original, previously unpublished form, and should be within 3,000 and 5,000 words in length.

### Structure

To distinguish these papers from academic theses (see notes in the following section on how recent graduates can more effectively convert theses into publishable formats), we propose that writers structure their papers by responding to the following questions:

1. Research and Perspectives papers:
  - a. What's it about? (*The main focus of your recent research.*)
  - b. Why did you do it? (*What were your motivations, e.g., gaps in research, own interest, policy need or questions that hadn't been answered from practice?*)
  - c. How did you do it? (*Describe your research methodology, what choices you made and why.*)
  - d. What did you find? (*The key things you learned from the study.*)
  - e. What can we conclude from this paper about your topic? (*What additional value does this perspective offer to others in the field?*)
  
2. New Perspectives on Practice papers:
  - a. What's your work? (*Provide a clear context for your current practice.*)
  - b. Why is it important? (*Give a rationale for the significance of the particular aspect that you wish to write about.*)
  - c. What ideas or thinkers do you draw upon in your work? (*Outline some key influences from your reading and/or field of practice.*)
  - d. What insights does it offer for development practice broadly? (*What additional value might this perspective bring to others in the field?*)

## SECTION 2. PRESENTATION.

### Formatting and Style

Papers should be of a good standard of English, and presented in a clear, accessible format, i.e., with terminology not too specialized nor technical. Authors should provide well-structured arguments and demonstrate a clear understanding of the key issues under discussion. Clear referencing is essential, and the author's main arguments should always be strengthened with empirical evidence and/or support from relevant literature. The text should be formatted using Times New Roman Font (12 point), 1.5 line spacing and a margin of 3cm all round. The use of graphs and illustrations should be kept to a minimum.

### Citations and Referencing

All citations should follow the formats recommended in the **Maynooth University Guide to the Harvard Referencing System**. Footnotes should be avoided. A copy of this

Guide will be provided on request. Bibliographies should also be formatted in accordance with the conventions outlined in the Guide.

### **Spelling, Numbering, Percentages**

For consistency of style with all papers, authors are requested to employ UK spelling and usage (for example organisation not organization, centre not center) except in the case of proper nouns. In using numbers in a text, the recommendation is that numbers one to ninety-nine should be spelled out except when referring specifically to data or measurements. Ordinal numbers should be spelled out, e.g. 'thirteenth' or 'twentieth century'. However, it is preferred that decades be referred to numerically rather than colloquially, e.g. the 1990s rather than 'the Nineties'. We propose that a number or year at the start of a sentence should be spelled out, as in 'Five studies were carried out...' or 'Nineteen ninety-four began with a series...' Finally, regarding percentages, we prefer the format 'per cent', not %.

### **Acronyms, Capitalisation, and Use of Tenses**

While it is appropriate for well-known organisations known by acronyms, e.g. WHO, UNICEF, etc., to use these freely within a text, the convention here is for the first mention of the organisation to quote the full name followed by the acronym in brackets, e.g. World Health Organisation (WHO). Another convention is not to use full stops in acronyms, i.e. UK not U.K., USA not U.S.A. When a term is used frequently within a text, it is appropriate to use an acronym, for the sake of brevity. For example: development education (DE); non-governmental organisations (NGOs). It is recommended that the use of capitalisation is kept to a minimum. Exceptions include the use of proper nouns and recognised curricular subjects: the global North/South, East, West; North America, Western Europe, South East Asia; Geography, Politics, etc. We recommend that authors maintain a consistent use of a verb tense, e.g. either the past or the present tense, throughout the paper.

### **General Help for Converting Theses / Research Reports into Papers**

A research paper, such as those in this series, should not be a summary of all data and all findings. To quote from one website which offers suggestions, a few key differences are noted. These include:

- The results section in a thesis will include all your findings. In a paper, this would be too much detail. The data in this section should be only what you need to support your research problem or hypothesis. Often, the results in former may represent two to three different papers.
- The discussion in your paper will be much more focused than in your thesis. It will be guided by the results presented in the paper.

*[source for the above: <https://www.enago.com/academy/how-to-turn-your-thesis-into-a-journal-article/>]*

Another source suggests: a single paper should contain a central message that you want to get across. This could be a novel aspect of methodology that you have used in your study, a new theory, or an interesting modification you have made to theory or a novel set of findings. Decide what this central focus is. Then create a paper outline bearing in mind the need to:

- Isolate a manageable size
- Create a coherent story/argument
- Make the argument self-standing
- Target the journal readership
- Change the writing conventions from that used in your thesis

[see: <https://authorservices.taylorandfrancis.com/extracting-a-journal-article-from-your-thesis/> ]

Another good source of help is the Elsevier website:

<https://www.elsevier.com/connect/authors-update/eight-top-tips-to-help-you-turn-your-phd-thesis-into-an-article>

### SECTION 3. SUBMISSION PROCEDURE

Papers should be submitted in electronic format (word doc, docx) to Paddy Reilly at [paddy.reilly@mu.ie](mailto:paddy.reilly@mu.ie) and cc. to [internationaldevelopment@mu.ie](mailto:internationaldevelopment@mu.ie) All submissions should be accompanied by an abstract (150 words max.) summarising the main arguments and conclusions of the paper. A separate title page should also accompany the paper, with the title of the paper and the names, affiliations, brief biographical details and full contact details of the author. Please note that the titles of papers should be brief, i.e., they should not exceed ten words.

#### Review process

Papers will be reviewed anonymously by an Editorial Review panel, which will recommend which papers can be published. Contributors may be asked to revise early drafts of papers submitted prior to publication. The editors reserve the right to make amendments to articles prior to publication, following agreement on such with authors.

#### Final Submission Checklist

Each paper should contain:

- A title
- The author's name
- An abstract (150 words)
- short biographical details of the author. i.e. briefly describing the author's background, occupation, organisation (if applicable), and research and interests
- The author's address and contact details, including email. The author should indicate which of these details, he/she wishes to be published. (A recent practice has been to print an email address only.)
- A full bibliography of all sources cited in alphabetical order.

Any queries regarding submission of a paper can be made to: [paddy.reilly@mu.ie](mailto:paddy.reilly@mu.ie)

-----