

Journal of the National Institute for Career Education and Counselling

GUIDELINES FOR AUTHORS AND JOURNAL POLICIES

February 2025

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ABOUT THE NICEC JOURNAL

Journal of the National Institute for Career Education and Counselling is informally referred to as 'the NICEC Journal'. It was founded in 2000 under its former title of *Career Research and Development: the NICEC Journal*, ISSN 1472-6564, published by CRAC, and the final edition under this title was issue 25. To avoid confusion, we have retained the numbering of issues used under the previous title.

There are no fees of any kind to authors for article submission and publication. The Journal is open access, and articles are freely available to all. It is hosted on the Open Journal Systems (OJS) platform: www.nicecjournal.co.uk and indexed in the [Directory of Open Access Journals](https://doaj.org/) <https://doaj.org/>

The NICEC journal is owned by the National Institute for Career Education and Counselling (NICEC) which is a learned society for researchers, policymakers and reflective practitioners in the broad field of career education, career guidance/counselling and career development. The Institute seeks to promote research-based scholarly dialogue and development. It is based in the United Kingdom but attracts international fellows and members. Further information about NICEC is available at <https://www.nicec.org>

The **Career Development Institute (CDI)** is the professional body for career development, supporting UK and international members in all areas of careers work and championing the profession with governments, employers and the public. As part of its commitment to improving the evidence base of the careers field, the CDI is proud to sponsor the Journal. Further information about the CDI and its membership options is available here: <https://www.thecdi.net/Home>

[All enquiries and communications with the editorial team should be sent by email to: editor@nicec.org](mailto:editor@nicec.org)

Editorial Board

The Editorial Board provides a forum for developing strategy and editorial policies for the NICEC Journal. It acts as an advisory group for the editors. The Board consists of:

- The Chief Editor, who has overall responsibility for the leadership of the Journal, and chairs the Editorial Board
- Editors (c.2-4 people), who take responsibility for editing specific issues and articles. Journal editors are appointed by the NICEC Board and are required to have the appropriate scientific and technical competence and extensive experience of writing and editing scientific work. Normally editors would be drawn from universities and research institutes.
- Editorial board members (approximately 8 people), drawn from among the NICEC Fellowship. Membership ensures a pool of academic, technical and professional practice expertise. To ensure the Journal takes a global perspective, members include international fellows of NICEC.
- A nominated representative from the CDI.

Suitable topics for submissions to the Journal

The Journal publishes articles on the broad theme of career development in any context:

- Career development in the workplace: private and public sector, small, medium, and large organisations, private practitioners.
- Career development in education: schools, colleges, universities, adult education, public career services.
- Career development in the community: third age, voluntary, charity, social organisations, independent contexts, public career services.

Career development is understood here to encompass *both* discussions of how individuals and groups make their way through life, learning and work *and* interventions that take place within education, employment, and welfare systems to support human flourishing.

It is designed to be read by individuals who are involved in career development related work in a wide range of settings including information, advice, counselling, guidance, advocacy, coaching, mentoring, psychotherapy, education, teaching, training, scholarship, research, consultancy, human resources, management, or policy. The journal has a national and international readership.

The Journal does not publish articles that address the following areas without including material of explicit relevance to career development:

- Human resources, such as recruitment and selection
- Education
- The psychology or sociology of work

Authors should make the relevance of their topic to the field of career development explicit.

Use of literature

All submissions are expected to make appropriate use of the published literature on careers, career counselling, and career education. Authors should consult the Journal archive to familiarise themselves with the Journal style, and the nature of articles previously published on their topic.

Authors should not assume that readers are familiar with the contexts that they are writing about. This means that all articles should include sufficient background material to make them intelligible to readers who are learning about this area for the first time. The readership is predominantly in the UK and Europe, but becoming increasingly global. Authors should consider the literature that will connect with the readers' understandings and help to contextualise the article.

Issue format

Issues of the Journal usually contain the articles which have most recently been accepted through the Journal's review process. Editors have the authority to vary the issue in which an accepted article appears to increase the coherence of the journal.

The journal also features special sections – a group of themed articles within an open call issue. This format is likely to be used more often going forward.

In the past the Journal regularly published Special issues which focused on articles relating to a theme identified by the editors. Special issues may still be produced in the future, but these are expected to be less common. In addition to a call for papers, authors with specific expertise may be invited by the editor to submit to a special issue.

Deadlines for submission will be published on the Journal website. However, articles may be submitted at any time and may be considered for future issues if a deadline is missed.

Publication schedule

The Journal publishes two issues per year, one in the spring (normally April) and one in the autumn (normally October). In addition to online open access publication of articles at www.nicecjournal.co.uk, full issue pdfs are made available via the NICEC website www.nicec.org and also to CDI members.

STYLE GUIDE FOR AUTHORS

Article format

Article length

There are two options available to authors – full length articles, and short articles. The word counts indicated do not include the listing of references at the end of the article.

Full length articles: The target length is 5000 words and submissions will be accepted in the range 4000-6000 words. These articles will be expected to include strong academic content. They may be empirical or discursive.

Short articles: The target length is 2000 words, and submissions will be accepted in the range 1,200-2,500 words. The guidance on article structures will be interpreted more flexibly for short articles. These are intended to attract diverse submissions such as:

- A rapid update on policy developments
- Reporting an evaluation of a new service
- Reflections on practice
- A 'point of view' article

In addition to articles, the Journal also publishes book reviews. Their target length is 600-800 words. All book reviews should be discussed with the editor prior to submission.

Obituaries may be published in the 'news' section of the Journal and the format should be discussed with the editor prior to submission.

Front page details for all articles

Article title: For layout purposes, titles need to be brief. Authors are advised to avoid poetic phrasing and to keep the title simple, functional and closely related to the content – this makes it easier for potential readers using search engines to find the article.

Author details: The Journal has a policy of open reviewing. Submissions are not anonymous, so include author names on the submission. The front page of the submission should not be separated.

- Author names should not include titles (Dr; Professor etc)
- Where possible include an organisational affiliation. Keep this brief. The name of an employer is adequate; avoid giving lengthy details of departmental location, or multiple affiliations.
- Identify one author as the corresponding author and supply their email address.

Abstract: Each article should be prefaced by an abstract of no more than 100 words.

Key words: Identify a minimum of three and maximum of six key words or phrases. Where the word 'career' is used it should be singular (e.g. 'career guidance'; NOT 'careers guidance'). If the article

relates to services in a specific nation, then include that name of the nation as a key word. Note this requirement specifically includes England.

Article structure for empirical articles

This relates to articles reporting research data. They should normally adopt a conventional structure:

Front page including abstract

Introduction

Literature review

Methods

Results

Discussion

Conclusion (which may include recommendations)

References

This approach can be adapted to best communicate the research process and outcomes. For example, authors reporting qualitative research may choose to merge the results and discussion section. Authors using uncommon research methods may need a bespoke structure.

Where empirical data has been generated from human participants, or concerns living people, the methods section must include a paragraph that addresses research ethics.

Article structure for non-empirical/discursive articles

This relates to articles discussing a topic, but not presenting empirical data.

Front page including abstract

Introduction

Section headings (typically 2-4)

Conclusion (which may include recommendations)

References

Articles with the prime purpose of presenting a literature review should also include a methods section describing the process that was undertaken to source and select material.

A clear argument should be presented.

Structure for book reviews

Book reviews will normally be in the region of 600-800 words. They should begin by supplying the following information:

Title of book, names of authors/editors, place of publication, publisher, year of publication, number of pages, cost (if known), and the ISBN number, name of reviewer and their organisation/affiliation

The review should:

- Describe the kind of book it is e.g. textbook, monograph, edited collection, general, advanced research, popular.
- Briefly describe the author(s)
- Summarise the key ideas, structure and layout of the book
- Indicate the extent to which it is part of an established genre, or innovating/ground-breaking
- Assess the suitability of the book for its potential users e.g. practitioners, lecturers, researchers, students, general users / readers.
- Outline strengths and weaknesses of the book and provide a brief rationale.
- Allow a reader to be able to decide whether the book is worth buying and/or using.

The review can include reference to other literature. In which case, cite and list references using the standard journal guidelines available from the editor.

Book reviews should be submitted to the editor by email. Do not upload them to the Journal web platform.

Presentation and English

Use UK English spelling and grammar consistently for all articles. Authors familiar with other English styles should note the required UK spelling of common words in this field: counsellor; counselling; labour; centre; CV (curriculum vitae instead of 'resume'). Avoid the use of spoken English contractions, for example instead of 'don't' use 'do not', except when giving a verbatim quotation.

Formatting, page layout and typeface:

- Please keep formatting simple i.e. do not use style sheets or heading formatting.
- Left justify headings and text (i.e. align left).
- Use Arial typeface in 12 point size.
- Use 1.5 line-spacing throughout unless text is within tables or figures.
- Use a single space after a full stop, comma and semi-colon.
- Always insert a line space at the end of a paragraph. Do not indent a new paragraph.

Use of headings

A clear hierarchy of headings is required.

- First level subheadings should appear in bold (not underlined) and with one line space above the subheading. Only the first letter in the first word within the subheading should be capitalised unless a proper noun.
- Second level subheadings should not appear in bold. Sub-headings should only be used if there is more than one sub-heading/section. Use sub-headings sparingly and avoid using more than two levels of sub-heading to aid clarity.

Quotations

Quotations from published sources:

Use single quotation marks for quoting within a paragraph, and double marks for quotations within quotations. Quotations of over 40 words in length should be indented from the left margin using the indent function. Do not use word spaces or tabs to indent text. There should be a line space above and below the extract. The source of quotation should be in brackets on right, on the line below – this citation should include a page number where possible. The exact spelling and punctuation of the original must be copied faithfully. When indented, quotation marks should not be applied unless the quotation includes a conversation, in which case, single quotation marks should apply. Your own interpolations into quoted matter should be enclosed in square brackets. Avoid using quotations from secondary sources.

Quotations from artistic sources

Direct quotation from poetry, song, film, fictional literature etc. should be avoided as this may require special copyright permissions.

Quotations from research participants:

Use italics for all verbatim quotations. Indent all participants' comments of more than 6 words. Short phrases may be included in main body text in single quote marks and italicised.

Punctuation

- Do not put a space in front of a question mark or in front of any other closing punctuation mark. To punctuate et cetera use 'etc.' and to punctuate for example use 'e.g.'.
- Use the 'Oxford comma' in a list to clearly separate the final two elements e.g. 'bananas, figs, apples, and pears'.
- Do not place a comma after 'e.g.' or 'i.e.'.
- Unless it is part of a citation in brackets, do not use an ampersand (&) in the main text.
- Do not use more than six bullet points in a single run. Try to keep use of bullet points to a minimum.

Numerals

Spell out numerals under 10 (e.g. seven). Exceptions to this rule include measurements, percentages and ages (e.g. 9cm; 5%; 7 years old). Use numerals for numbers greater than 10.

Capital letters

Keep the use of capitals to a minimum. Use lower case for government, church, state, party, etc. unless a specific one is named (e.g. the Labour Party; the Scottish Government). Consider if a word is a proper noun (name), and if not favour lower case.

Footnotes and end notes

Avoid these where possible. Please keep these to an absolute minimum. Restrict their use to explanatory statements that would be a distraction in the main body text.

Track changes and comments

It is the author's responsibility to strip out all track changes and comments prior to submission/resubmission.

Citations and referencing

Citations and referencing should follow the style guide of the American Psychological Association (APA 7th Edition). Note that this Journal only follows the citation and referencing elements of APA style, NOT the presentational and writing style elements.

A brief summary of the style is given below. Prior to contacting the Journal editor with queries, for further referencing details please refer to: American Psychological Association. (2020). Publication manual of the American Psychological Association (7th edition). American Psychological Association. Use this web resource for quick queries: www.apastyle.org

In-text citations

Citations in the main text should be given as follows: Smith and Brown (1998) or (Smith & Brown, 1998). Where there are three or more authors, give the name of the first author and insert et al., including at first use, unless doing so would create ambiguity (italics not needed): Smith et al. (1997) or (Smith et al. 1997).

For a direct quotation, wherever possible the page number should be given in the citation: Smith and Brown (1998, p.175) or (Smith & Brown, 1998, p.175).

List of reference

The following examples illustrate how typical sources should be presented in the reference list:

Arulmani, G., Bakshi, A. J., Leong, F. T. L., & Watts, A. G. (Eds.). (2014). *Handbook of career development: International perspectives*. Springer.

Inkson, K. (2004). Images of career: Nine key metaphors, *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 65(1), 96-111. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0001-8791\(03\)00053-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0001-8791(03)00053-8)

McCash, P. (2008). *Career studies handbook: Career development learning in practice*. <https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resource/career-studieshandbook-career-development-learning-practice>

Savickas, M. L. (2013). Career construction theory and practice. In S. D. Brown & R. W. Lent (Eds.), *Career development and counseling: Putting theory and research to work* (2nd ed., pp. 147-183). Wiley.

Arranging the list: The list should be subtitled 'References' in bold with all references arranged alphabetically in a single run i.e. no separation of books and web references.

Digital Object Identifier (DOI) reference: All journal articles should include a DOI reference where this is available. Do not insert a full stop following the DOI reference. See Inkson (2004) above. Use the prefix: <https://doi.org/>

Italics: Use italics for journal and book titles.

Please note that the town/city, country/state of publication is no longer required in APA 7th edition. Also note that date of retrieval of web sources is not required except where one might expect rapid changes, for example an online news media source.

Diagrams, images, and illustrations

Any diagrams or illustrations must be sent in a separate file (in high quality .jpeg or gif format) with an indication in the text of where they should be placed. Photographs will not normally be used – consult the editor if this is necessary for your submission.

Colour can be used in diagrams but with restraint, bearing in mind that some readers may print out articles in black and white. Monochrome is perfectly acceptable. If a single colour is used then consider green (in MS Word the custom colours for the NICEC livery are Hex: 4BA82D or RGB 75, 168, 45). Colours in diagrams supplied may be edited to fit in with the visual layout of the Journal.

Simple tables in MS Word do not need to be sent as a separate file.

Submission

Articles should be submitted online at www.nicecjournal.co.uk using the 'make a submission' [button](#).

First draft articles should be submitted as MS Word documents. Files should be named with the first author surname + date of submission (DD.MM.YYYY), for example: Smith21.03.2023.docx

Additional files should adopt the same convention e.g. Smith21.03.2023.diagram.jpeg

In the event of the named author submitting more than one paper, then distinguish them clearly e.g. by adding the name of an additional author or keyword.

Subsequent drafts should be distinguished by version numbering. For example, a second draft would be Smith21.03.2023.v2.docx

JOURNAL POLICIES

Review process

Articles will undergo an initial desk review by the chief editor to check that they are broadly within the scope and expected standard for the Journal. Articles may be rejected at this stage. Those progressing will be allocated an editor and will be subject to an open peer review process. Reviews are not anonymous. Authors are known to reviewers. Reviewers are also known to authors and are accountable for their feedback. NICEC has an extensive network of peer reviewers, drawn both from the fellows and members of the learned society and from the wider scientific community. Two reviews are required for each submission with at least one reviewer who neither shares an institutional affiliation to, nor has worked closely with, either the author or the editors. Editors may also act as reviewers, but not on an article that they are editing.

Reviewers are required to declare to the editor if they have a conflict of interest that may prevent them providing an objective judgement on a submission.

Reviewers will be asked to consider the following criteria:

- The relevance of the topic for the Journal and its readership
- Structure, length and format
- Clarity of communication of ideas, including use of (UK) English
- Effective use of the published literature
- Suitability of methods
- Ethics and academic integrity
- Conformity of the submission to the guidelines for authors
- Conformity of citations and referencing to the APA 7th edition requirements
- The overall contribution of the article to knowledge in the field of career development

Normally a single round of reviews will be adequate, but editors reserve the right to refer re-submissions for review. In the later stages of preparation for publication editors may require some changes to ensure an article meets the Journal standards. Authors will have an opportunity to check and correct article proofs before publication – this must be done promptly to prevent delaying an issue.

Reviewers' judgements have the status of a recommendation. In all matters relating to acceptance, rejection, or requirements for re-submission, the decision of the designated editor is final.

Editorial independence

The Journal has editorial independence from NICEC. Decisions are based on the quality of submissions and the review process. NICEC fellows and members who are not currently in an editorial or reviewer role may not influence the process of decision making about article submissions.

Journal funding, revenue, and advertising

The Journal is provided through unpaid voluntary activity by NICEC Fellows. There are no charges of any kind to authors for article submission and publication. The Journal does not accept advertising. The Journal is open access, so there is no charge to readers.

This is possible because of the commitment of NICEC and the sponsorship of the Journal by the Career Development Institute (CDI) the UK professional body for career practitioners.

Research ethics and academic integrity

Originality, authorship, and plagiarism

Articles must be the author(s)' own original work. Text must not be reproduced from other sources including the author's own publications. Submissions must not be under consideration by other publications.

All authors must be aware of the submission and agree to being named as authors. Named authors must accurately reflect who contributed to the article. Submitting work written by unnamed authors, or conversely naming individuals who have made no significant contribution to the article is not acceptable.

The editors reserve the right to use plagiarism detection software and similar methods at their discretion.

Artificial intelligence

Any use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools in the writing of an article must be declared to the editor. The appropriateness will be considered on a case-by-case basis. When submitting an article add a message to the editor notifying them on the tool used and the purpose it was used for. This message should also be sent by separate email to the editor.

Ethics in empirical research

Authors who are affiliated with a university or research unit are expected to have undergone a formal ethical approval process for their research. This should be briefly reported in the submission.

Practitioners in career services may not have access to an ethical approval process. In this case they would be expected to indicate what steps they have taken to protect research participants e.g. providing participant briefing information; ensuring informed consent; anonymity and confidentiality; the right to withdraw; and data protection arrangements.

Evaluation exercises in career services may be a normal activity for practitioners and not conceptualised as academic research. Articles reporting on these would be most suited to the Journal's short article format. A paragraph explaining how participants were protected will be adequate.

No ethical approval process is expected for work on pre-existing published/public data sets. Here the expectation is that data will already be fully anonymised and in the public domain. In the case of unpublished but anonymised administrative data sets, please consult the editor.

Failure to meet the Journal's standards for research ethics and academic integrity

Submissions will be rejected if they do not conform to the Journal's expectations in relation to ethics and research integrity. Concerns are referred to the editor-in-chief, who may initiate an investigation if they are deemed substantive. Articles already published may also be subject to investigation. See the section on corrections and retractions for more information.

Copyright

Material published in the Journal is licenced under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License](#). This means that the article may be shared freely, provided the source/author is clearly acknowledged and no changes are made to the text. Authors may share their final published version of the article on their own website or institutional repository. We ask that this is done by sharing the article weblink (not the pdf), as this will raise awareness of the Journal among potential readers.

By submitting an article, authors agree to the following terms:

1. In submitting an article, the Author hereby grants to NICEC the exclusive first publication right to the paper submitted by him / her for inclusion in the publication named above and the non-exclusive rights thereafter to publish and authorise the publication of all articles and all parts, adaptations and abridgements thereof in all forms and media throughout the world.
2. In consideration for the above grant of rights, and subject to delivery of acceptable material, NICEC hereby undertakes to prepare for publication and publish the paper unless prevented by circumstances beyond its control.
3. The Author agrees that NICEC may make minor changes to areas such as formatting, spelling, referencing, layout or punctuation, to ensure quality and uniformity of style.
4. NICEC agrees that the Author may share the final published PDF of their article (e.g. publication to the Author's web profile, or institutional repository).
5. The Author warrants to NICEC that in respect of the paper submitted: (i) it does not infringe any existing copyright or licence; (ii) except where the Author, at the time of submission of the paper, notifies NICEC, the paper is original; (iii) the Author has the full power to make this assignment and that this assignment does not infringe the rights or licence of any other person, and that where there a co-author, the co-author also fully agrees to the terms in this document; (iv) the paper contains nothing defamatory or otherwise unlawful and no information has been obtained in contravention of legislation currently in force (v) submission of the paper demonstrates acceptance of all these conditions.

Corrections and retractions

In the event that incorrect information has been published in an article in the Journal, then this should be brought to the attention of the editor-in-chief at the earliest opportunity. In the case of minor errors or omissions then a short correction statement will be issued in the next published issue.

In the event there are substantial incorrect findings in an article, or substantive concerns raised about plagiarism, fabrication of data, unethical research processes, failure to disclose relevant interests, compromised review process, legality or copyright, then an investigation will be undertaken. The procedure will follow the guidelines set out by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE). The Editorial Board will have the final decision on the outcome, and this may include a retraction of the article. In this event a brief statement will be published in the first available issue giving the reasons for the retraction.

Complaints and appeals

Complaints should in the first instance be sent to the editor-in-chief. Authors will receive a response within three working weeks.

In the event that the response is not satisfactory, or the complaint relates to the conduct of the editor-in-chief, then complaints can be escalated to the Chair of the National Institute for Career Education and Counselling.

Editorial decisions about articles are final. Articles may be rejected at any point in the process prior to publication if the Journal's requirements are not met. The only grounds for appeal against a decision is if the author can supply evidence that the Journal's review and editorial processes have not been correctly followed. In this instance the author should make a written submission to the editor-in-chief who is then obliged to refer the matter to the editorial board.

Archiving

In addition to publication of articles on the Open Journal System platform, full issue pdfs of the back catalogue are available to the public on the NICEC website (www.nicec.org), and are also available to CDI members on the CDI website: www.cdi.net

An archive of individual articles is held by the editor-in-chief and two other NICEC Fellows. To further ensure safety, the Journal is part of the PKP Preservation Network (PKP PN), which enables Open Journal Systems (OJS) publications to preserve their digital content.