

# RaPAL Journal

**GUIDANCE FOR WRITERS AND  
CONTRIBUTORS**

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## Welcome

Thank you for agreeing to contribute to the RaPAL journal. There has never been a more exciting time to write for us. We are now online and digital! Our peer-reviewed journal now reflects the changing world of literacies, offering you the chance to showcase what you are doing using colour, image, audio and video.

We welcome contributions from teachers, learners, researchers and anyone else involved in literacies whether you are an experienced writer or someone writing for the first time. The journal editors are happy to help you get started or to advise you once you have something down on paper.

These detailed guidance notes will also help you with all aspects of writing for the journal including page layout, using multi-media and referencing. **Please read these carefully before beginning to write.**

Our journal is published three times a year and represents an independent space, which allows critical reflection and comment linking research and practice in the field of adult literacies, numeracy and ESOL. The journal goes out to our individual members and also institutions both in the UK and abroad.

If you have any questions please contact the journal coordinator at [journal@rapal.org.uk](mailto:journal@rapal.org.uk).

## Introduction to the guidance

All contributions should be written in an accessible way for a wide and international readership.

- Writing should be readable avoiding jargon. Where acronyms are used these should be clearly explained
- Contributions should have a clear structure and layout using the Harvard referencing system
- Ethical guidelines should be followed particularly when writing about individuals or groups. Permission must be gained from those being represented and they should be represented fairly
- We are interested in linking research and practice; you may have something you wish to contribute but are not sure it will fit. If this is the case please contact the editors to discuss this
- Writing should encourage debate and reflection, challenging dominant and taken for granted assumptions about literacy, numeracy and ESOL

We want to encourage new writers as well as those with experience and to cover a range of topics. We aim to have three different kinds of articles in the journal plus a reviews section; these are slightly different in length and focus. The journal has a different theme for each edition but we welcome general contributions too.

Below you will see more details about the different themes and topics, but if you feel that what you want to write does not fit into any of these please contact the editors or the journal coordinator:

### 1. Ideas for teaching

This section is for descriptive and reflective pieces on teaching and learning. It is a good place to have a first go at writing for publication and can be based on experiences of learners and teachers in a range of settings. Pieces can be up to 1,000 words long.

### 2. Developing Research and Practice

This section covers a range of contributions from research and practice. In terms of research this could be experience of practitioner research, of taking part in research projects, commenting on research findings or of trying out ideas from research in practice. In terms of practice this could be about trying out new ideas and pushing back boundaries. Contributions should include reflection and critique. Pieces for this section should be between 1,000 - 2,000 words long including references.

### 3. Research and Practice: Multi-disciplinary perspectives

This section is for more sustained analytical pieces about research, practice or policy. The pieces will be up to 4,000 words long including references and will have refereed journal status. Although articles in this section are more theoretically and analytically developed they should nevertheless be clearly written for a general readership. Both empirical work and theoretical perspectives should be accessible and clearly explained. Writing for this section should:

- Relate to the practices of learning and teaching adult literacy, numeracy or ESOL
- Link to research by describing and analysing new research findings relating this and any critical discussion to existing research studies
- Provide critical informed analysis of the topic including reference to theoretical underpinning.

## Reviews

We regularly review books, articles and other materials (multi-media etc) in the RaPAL journal. The reviews editor usually emails the membership asking if anyone would like to review items for forthcoming journals (these are made available to the reviewer).

Alternatively a member of RaPAL may suggest a review of something they have read or used. The best way to contact the reviews editor is by email at [reviews@rapal.org.uk](mailto:reviews@rapal.org.uk).

Reviews should be between 50 and 800 words long. You can write the review based upon your experience of using the book, article or materials in your role as a practitioner, teacher trainer, and researcher or as a student.

Reviewers should follow the style guide in this guide and also provide the following:

- The publication details at the beginning of the review including the name of the piece being reviewed, the author, year of publication, name and location of publisher, ISBN, cost and number of pages (if it is a book).
- You must also include your name as you would wish to see it in the journal, a short 2-3 line biography and your contact details.

## Call for papers

There are a number of ways in which papers or other contributions to the journal find their way into our journal. The call for papers goes out via our RaPAL members' email list but editors also commission papers for particular editions of the journal. Other articles are sent to us on spec.

## The editorial process

Whichever way your contribution has come to us it will be read by our editorial team who will then offer you feedback. An editor will contact you acknowledging receipt of your contribution and agree a date by which you will receive some initial feedback (usually two weeks). This process takes a little longer if your contribution needs to be peer reviewed.

Editors will proofread your contribution and also may offer suggestions for amendments that will improve the article. Once you have agreed these with the editor and made any corrections or amendments to your contribution the editor will ask you to submit a final version.

## Tips for writing for the journal

Writing for a journal may seem daunting if you haven't done it before but here are some tips to help you get started. If you need any help please contact the editors who will be happy to work with you.

- Plan your article before you start writing. Think about a logical structure and sequence the points you want to cover
- Use the first paragraph of your article to signpost your readers through the article. Explain what you are going to be writing about, including whether you are reporting on work you have done, a research question you are posing and any conclusions you may be offering
- Use the final paragraph to sum up what you have said in your article and any conclusions you may have drawn
- Be aware that the journal is now online and in a digital format. Although the journal still conforms to many of the conventions of printed text it is worth thinking about the following:
  - using images, audio and video to enhance your article
  - breaking up your article using headlines and subheadings
  - keeping paragraphs and sentences short to help readers navigate online
  - using links sparingly. They are very useful and can take readers further reading but can also be a distraction
  - keeping your readers ‘on track’ by using signposts of linking sentences to take readers through your article. We read onscreen differently, often scanning pages, dipping in and out of pages and not always reading from left to right so you need to keep the attention of your readers!

## Using images, audio and video

The digital journal gives us far more scope and flexibility to use images and audio material. We can now embed most forms of media into the journal including streamed video (e.g. from YouTube).

Media should be formatted as follows: images should be 300dpi, audio MP3 and video MP4. It is essential to check that you have the appropriate permissions from people for the use of image and audio. You will need to complete a form that confirms you have sought permission of anyone appearing in an image or audio and that you are not infringing any copyright laws by using media that belongs to someone else. The consent form will be sent to you with this guidance.

You will need to indicate where in your contribution you would like images, audio clips and video to be placed and send them with your written contribution. If the files are large we can arrange for you to put them in a Dropbox folder.

## Page layout and style guidelines

It is important that we adopt a consistent approach to the way contributions are written and laid out in our journal. Although we want our journal to be accessible and user-friendly it is also important that we follow the conventions associated with academic journals. For these reasons we ask you to present your contribution using the following guidance.

Your contribution should include:

- Title of article/contribution
- Short biography
- Harvard referencing
- Page numbers

It helps us if you can follow the style guide below when completing your contribution.

<b>Font</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sans serif font e.g. Calibri</li> </ul>
<b>Spacing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Single space after a full stop</li> <li>• Single line space between paragraphs</li> <li>• Space between title of paragraph and paragraph</li> </ul>
<b>Article titles</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 16</li> <li>• Sentence case, i.e. initial capital for first word only</li> <li>• No full stops</li> </ul>
<b>Writer's name under title</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 16</li> <li>• Not bold</li> <li>• First name and surname/family name</li> </ul>
<b>Writer biography</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 11</li> <li>• Italics</li> <li>• Not bold</li> </ul>
<b>Articles</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12</li> <li>• Subheading in bold with initial capitals for first word only</li> <li>• Space between title of paragraph and paragraph</li> </ul>
<b>Publication titles within the article</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Italics</li> </ul>

<p><b>Punctuation for quotations</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Single commas for in-text quotations</li> <li>• No quotation marks for more substantial quotations</li> <li>• These should be indented and begin on a separate line</li> <li>• Double commas for words within quotations</li> <li>• See separate section on referencing for examples of referencing conventions</li> </ul>
<p><b>Inverted commas</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ‘digital divide’, comma or full stop <i>after</i> second inverted comma</li> <li>• When it’s quote, as in</li> </ul> <p>He said ‘that he wanted to go.’ The marks are outside</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If it’s a word or a quote within a quote they are inside (as in digital divide in your notes.</li> </ul> <p>For example: Hymes has said ‘that Chomsky in his article used the word “generative”.’</p>
<p><b>Footnotes &amp; endnotes</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is better to minimise the use of footnotes. If they are necessary they should be font 8</li> <li>• We do not use endnotes</li> </ul>
<p><b>Lists within an article</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 11</li> <li>• Round bullet points rather than numbers</li> <li>• Gap between text and bulleted list (equivalent to font size)</li> <li>• No punctuation at the end of each bullet, just a full stop at the end of the final bullet</li> <li>• If the bulleted list follows a heading then the first letter of each bullet should not be uppercase and the final bullet has a full stop</li> </ul> <p><b>Example</b></p> <p>Articles should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the title of the article</li> <li>• name of the author(s)</li> <li>• a short biography.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow grammatical sequence, for example.</li> </ul> <p>He said that they were three theories that bothered him:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The theory of relativity</li> <li>• He disproved Hymes’ ideas</li> <li>• The theory of generative grammar.</li> </ul> <p>Only 1 and 3 are valid; as “theory” is a noun, it should be followed by nouns in the bullet points</p> <p>Another example.</p> <p>He said they were going to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shoot the archduke</li> <li>• Although finding him is difficult</li> <li>• Hire a contract killer.</li> </ul> <p>1 and 3 are fine</p>
<b>Captions</b>	<p>10</p> <p>The preference would be for an indication of the content of the image etc in the main body of the text rather than captions</p>
<b>Hyphens</b>	<p>open-ended, out-of-date</p>
<b>Italics</b>	<p>New words, new concepts, foreign words, book titles, journal titles, newspapers, magazines, intonation stress, referring to a word e.g. ‘the word <i>sensitive</i> in misinterpreted by Spanish speakers’</p>
<b>Initial capitals of titles</b>	<p>Most titles are lower case e.g. journal coordinator. Some government departments do use initial capitals for the word Department.</p> <p>Subject names are lowercase e.g. maths, geography and history</p>
<b>Abbreviations and acronyms</b>	<p>Abbreviations should be given in full the first time they are used with the abbreviation in brackets after. The abbreviation can then be used</p>

	throughout the article e.g. Research in Adult Literacies and Practice (RaPAL). RaPAL is a charitable organisation etc etc
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You may also find the following helpful when writing your contribution.

A-Z	
A	adult literacy not Adult Literacy
B	The terminology changes on a regular basis. Basic Skills was replaced by Skills for Life. Current terminology is English and maths in England
C	coordinate (no hyphen)
D	dates 1970s (not 1970's) 3 June 2011 (not 3 <sup>rd</sup> June 2011 or June 3, 2011) 21 <sup>st</sup> century digital literacy (no capitals) DVD (not dvd)
E	e.g. (not eg or E.g.) email (not e-mail) Entry Level (not Entry level or entry level) ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) etc
F	Facebook Figure 1, fig. 1 focused, focusing
G	Google Earth government (lower case)
H	
I	Internet i.e. iPhone, iPad
J	Job titles – lower case e.g. English tutor, senior lecturer in education
K	Key Stage 3 then KS3
L	Level 1, Level 2
M	maths/mathematics Moodle
N	Numbers - one to nine in words then figures (n/a dates, %, £) 1,000
O	OK online (one word) organise, organisation (s not z unless a proper noun) or USA quote

P	Pre-Entry PowerPoint 100 percent or 100%
Q	
R	RaPAL Journal.... the Journal (capital J) realise
S	Second Life Skills for Life (SfL). This is no longer the term used in DfE but may still be used by providers the Six Book Challenge.... the Challenge (capital C) Street View (as in google maps) Sentence level
T	Twitter Text level TV (not T.V. or tv or t.v.)
U	UK (not U.K.) US
V	
W	Web, Web 2.0 Wiki Word
X Y Z	YouTube Word level

## Referencing texts and other resources in journal articles

When we refer to any book/article/website or any kind of reference in the RaPAL journal it is important that we acknowledge other people’s work and also help the reader find that work if s/he wants to read it or use it in some way. Like most journals we use a system called the Harvard referencing system.

### Harvard referencing system

When you first start to use the Harvard system it can seem a bit daunting. But if you follow these steps you will soon find it easy to do. The editors of the journal will help you with this too.

You need to annotate your article in **two** places: in the text where you have quoted or referred to a book/article/website and at the end of the article in the list of references.

In the text the author's or authors' family name(s), together with the date of publication and page number appears in brackets at the end of the sentence. At the end of the document the work is referenced in this order: author(s), date of publication, title of book or report, place of publication and publisher.

You may want to cite books, journals, electronic and other media. Here are some examples of how to use the Harvard system.

## Citing references in a text

### Direct quotation

Sometimes you will be quoting directly from an author or authors:

What was once a 'word-centred rationality both straightforward and descriptive with stable signs fixed to stable signifiers' is fast disappearing (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000: 223).

### Indirect quotation

You may be paraphrasing or referring to general ideas by the author(s):

Cope and Kalantzis (2000) refer to literacies rather than literacy throughout their work when talking about learning.

### Longer quotations

If you are including a longer quotation you should start on a new line, indent one space, and reduce the font size by one unit. There is no need for quotation marks with the longer indented quote and put the reference at the bottom:

The challenge then is not just one of equity of access (or lack of access) to such technologies and institutions, but also of the possibilities of using dis- course and literacy to reinvent institutions, to critique and reform the rules for the conversion of cultural and textual capital in communities and workplaces, and to explore the possibilities of heteroglossic social contracts and hybrid cultural actions. The challenge is about what kinds of citizenship, public forums for discourse and difference are practicable and possible. (Luke and Freebody, 1997:9)

## Listing references at the end of the article

The following are examples of ways of listing references:

### Books

**Cope, B. & Kalantzis, M.**, (eds) (2000) *Multiliteracies: Literacy Learning and the Design of Social Futures*. London: Routledge

### Book electronic

**Cope, B. & Kalantzis, M.**, (eds) (2000) *Multiliteracies: Literacy Learning and the Design of Social Futures* available from

[http://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=22renB8q274C&oi=fnd&pg=RA2-PA50&dq=cope+kalantzis&ots=gklbU1RUyL&sig=VFk4kFpXINVle1H\\_hvj9T5h91aU](http://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=22renB8q274C&oi=fnd&pg=RA2-PA50&dq=cope+kalantzis&ots=gklbU1RUyL&sig=VFk4kFpXINVle1H_hvj9T5h91aU) (accessed 19 July 2007)

### Chapter in edited book

Gee, P. J., (2000) New People in New Worlds. In **Cope, B. & Kalantzis, M.**, (eds) (2000) *Multiliteracies: Literacy Learning and the Design of Social Futures*. London: Routledge

### Quoting a writer quoted within another book

Much of the knowledge we as adults carry about ourselves and others is learned through tacit comprehension...from exposure to the culture in which we live' (Dixon, 1999 in Rogers 2003)

### Journal

**Ovens, P.** (2003) 'Using the Patchwork Text to Develop a Critical Understanding of Science'. *Innovations in Education and Teaching International*, Vol 40 (2)

### Journal electronic

**Ovens, P.** (2003) Using the Patchwork Text to Develop a Critical Understanding of Science. *Innovations in Education and Teaching International*, Vol 40 (2). Available from

<http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/content~content=a714039048~db=all>

(accessed 19 July 2007)

### CD roms, video, film

**Blackadder** (CD rom) (2002) London BBC

## Media (newspaper)

**Saner, E.**, (2007) Show me the honey. *Guardian* Thursday 19 July 2007 p15

## Government publication

**DfES**, (2001) Skills for Life – The National Strategy for Improving Adult Literacy and Numeracy Skills, London: DfES

## Reference and bibliography – what is the difference?

A **reference list** is an alphabetical list by author of all the sources quoted in a report or assignment. It is here additional bibliographical details are noted, such as the title and publisher. A **bibliography** includes **all** your cited works together with references to background reading that you have undertaken. This should also be in the Harvard style. However, for the purposes of the RaPAL journal we simply need a list of references.

If you can't find what you want here or are interested in finding out more about referencing the Open University publishes a PDF which you can access [here](#) or you can access the website [here](#) (you will need to generate an account)