

Creating an article for *Kai Tiaki Nursing Research* from your study or thesis

This guideline is designed to help nurse researchers move from the intention to write from their thesis or study to create a completed manuscript. We know that there are many blocks in this process, and offer the following notes as a start-up for you. Clearly, many will not need advice, but we would appreciate feedback from you on the material so we can provide the best information for newer authors.

Getting Started

Bear in mind that writing for publication takes many hours of work, just as writing assignments did while you were doing your degree/s. You may find it helpful to put aside **time** in one of the following – or other! - ways:

- > Set a deadline for completion and put aside time each week until your first draft is done. You might be able to do, say, 3 hours regularly on one weekday evening.
- > Identify a 'study day' or 'half-day' for yourself in which you remove to some quiet space with your resources and a plan of work. Resist invitations that encroach on this time.
- > Engage a colleague or two for a mini-writing workshop, where you all come with the writing tasks that are underway to a quiet place where you can work undisturbed. You set an agenda for the time together that includes periods of individual writing and coming together for report, critique and support.

It can be helpful to engage a **partner** for the writing process. This might be the supervisor of your thesis research, one of your co-researchers, an academic friend or a work colleague. As your supervisor can expect to be a secondary author on your article, they will have a vested interest in helping you complete your manuscript (ms). Be clear what help you are seeking, as this can range from being an encourager to deep involvement in the writing or editing. Discuss at the outset how you will share the author credit for the article if it is accepted. Especially agree on the order of author listing – this can be an issue of concern in relation to PBRF, and the pressure of employers to increase rating can make friends suddenly competitive.

In preparation for making your plan

- > Scan issues of Kai Tiaki Nursing Research to find an article on a similar topic and/or using a similar research approach
- > Read the article, noting the headings, logical direction, use of summary of steps in the research process and how the authors limit the volume of information to fit the word limit.
- > Visit our website: www.nzno.org.nz/ktnr
- > To read all articles published in KTNR online go to: academic one file via NZNO/KTNR website. Remember to log in as a member so that links work for you
- > for writing guidelines go to:
<http://www.nzno.org.nz/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=%2bnaGJqrDENU%3d&tabid=558>

Making your plan to write

- > Open a new document and create headings that you are likely to use in your manuscript. You may shift these, or alter the headings, but having them gives you some initial content management

- > For each section, make notes about
 - Content – what key points will be necessary
 - Sources – existing and new
 - 'Up-to-date-ness' of information and literature
 - The word limit/range you have allocated
 - Observations and notes to self

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- > Begin writing a section. You will have your own logic about where you begin and how you progress your writing. Give yourself a time limit to get the section to 'draft' and then move to another section. Making a section 'perfect' at this early stage can be poor use of your time, as you may well make alterations as the whole work emerges.
- > After each period of writing 'step aside' from the work and read what you have written, asking your own review questions. For many of us, these questions include:
 - Are my statements clear?
 - Have I made the essential points?
 - Have I included unnecessary information? And so on...
- > Before you stop for the day make some written notes on what you intend to do at your next writing time. This action engages you quickly in your next session, as well as maintaining momentum.
- > If you get stuck recognise it as quickly as you can, and get a message off to your writing partner. Summarise what you have done, what is blocking you and the key concerns you have. Sometimes this summary process will help you see what to do.
- > Keep noting your goals as you complete sections and use that momentum to keep moving along.
- > When you have a full draft, send it off to your writing partner (depending on how you have agreed to work together) and get onto your abstract, tidying up the references etc.
- > When you begin your re-write ask yourself:
 - Is the material in a logical order?
 - Is the information complete to make the key argument?
 - Do I have material that is not relevant, distracting or surplus?
 - Is my key message clear?
 - Have I written economically but with sufficient support for key points?
 - Would a fresh reader trust my argument? Why or why not?
 - And a further hint here! Don't just answer yes or no to these questions but answer yes because.... Or no because.....
- > Check again the requirements for publication, noting also the variations accepted in the published mss in KTNR.
- > Before sending off, it can be good to get a 'new' reader to read through for logic, grammar, 'grab' and general elegance. Ask them to check that every in-text reference is in your list and vice versa, and that each one is complete and both entries match.
- > When it is perfect, send it to kaitiakinursingresearch@nzno.org.nz

NZNO Research guideline:

What happens next

When your work arrives we decide whether to send it out to review (mostly) or whether to decline your work (can happen). We decline if the ms is not yet ready for publication, and may request a major re-write before sending out for review. We also decline if we have already published a good deal on this topic recently (which for a journal that is 3 years old would include all our issues). Sometimes we decline if the ms does not meet our requirements of *NZ, nursing focused and research*. Thus, sometimes a topic will not be a good match for our content.

If your ms is potentially suitable for publication, we will send it out to at least 2 independent reviewers who we believe can read your work with knowledge and understanding. Your work goes anonymously. We do request a fairly quick turnaround, but our reviewers are busy people and sometimes delays happen. Their reports are returned to you with some advice from the editor.

Review comments

It is normal for the reviewers to have a range of suggestions, comments, and challenges as they will have read your work very carefully. The standard of KTNR depends on the commitment of the reviewers to high scholarly standards. It is also normal to feel a shock when you are asked to change the work that you have sent off as 'perfect'. Interestingly, our very experienced authors comment that 'as always, the reviewer comments improve and strengthen our work'.

We suggest you get straight onto the responses when you get the reviews back. Normally they do not take very long, but can be held up by your feeling that the comments are unexpected. Our letter with the feedback from reviewers will give you some guidance.

Once your work is accepted it is formatted for publication, which may involve editing. We will invite your input and comment on the 'journal-ready' version, and we are nearly there.

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Mission statement

NZNO is committed to the representation of members and the promotion of nursing and midwifery.

NZNO embraces Te Tiriti o Waitangi and works to improve the health status of all peoples of Aotearoa/ New Zealand through participation in health and social policy development.

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