**Instructions for sample edit**

1. *General:*
2. For the purpose of this sample edit, copyedit the entire text starting from the article title, affiliations, abstract and all text matter including any figures (and the images)/tables/boxes and their captions until the References section for spelling, grammar, language and style per the instructions outlined below. For the purpose of this sample edit, kindly ignore the References section.
3. *Spellings:* Use UK English and UK spelling, eg ‘ise’ (not ‘ize’), ‘yse’ (not ‘yze’) spellings; preferred dictionary Chambers 21st Century Dictionary (<http://www.chambers.co.uk/dictionaries.php>). Use ‘ical’ (UK English spelling), not ‘ic’. For example, ‘biological’, for adjectives. However, watch out for classic/classical (outstandingly excellent/in Greek or Roman times), historic/historical (has gone down in history/occurred in the documented past)
4. *Front matter*

Article title needs to be sentence case; after a colon text should start with lower case letter; em-dash, spaced en-dash and spaced hyphen should be changed as colon in the article title

Postal code is not allowed in the affiliations

1. *Numerals for units:*

Year, month, week, day, hour, minute, second, etc (e.g. 3 years, 6 days, 8-hour programme)

1. *United States of America*

When referring to the United States of America, use US adjectively and USA when

referring to the country.

1. *Punctuation:*
2. Use single quotation marks—only use double marks for direct speech/conversation
3. Em rule as the parenthetical dash in text; use colons rather than em rules in titles and headings
4. No full points after author initials or after Dr, etc, et al; nor are full points used in ‘eg’ or ‘ie’ when they appear within parentheses; replace these with ‘for example’ and ‘that is’ respectively, when they appear in text
5. Do not use a comma before ‘and’ in lists: eg, tea, coffee, sugar and biscuits, except where the absence of a comma could be misleading: eg, ‘the Bishops of London, Bath and Wells, and Lincoln’
6. *Hyphenation:* A hyphen should not be used between a number and its unit if the unit is abbreviated (eg, ‘a 2-m piece of string’ is wrong; it should be ‘a 2 m piece of string’). However, if the unit is spelt out then add the hyphen (eg, ‘a 2 litre vial’ is wrong; it should be ‘a 2-litre vial’)

Use contiguous hyphens like meta-analyses, intra-active, inter-relation, etc

1. *Italics:* Latin phrases that have entered normal English should not be italicised (per se, inter alia, in vitro, in vivo, ex vivo, a priori, ad hoc, in situ). Exception: always italicise et al
2. *Abbreviations:*
3. Abbreviations should always be written out in full the first time they appear. If defined in an abstract, they must be defined again on first use in the main text of a paper; similarly, they should be defined in boxes, figures and table captions even if they have already been defined in the main text
4. Abbreviations that do not need to be defined include: AIDS, HIV, DNA, RNA, MRI, CT, SD, WHO, CI, OR (sd, S.D., s.d. for ‘standard deviation’, change all to SD), SE (se, S.E., s.e. for ‘standard error’, change all to SE)
5. Index, Score, Scale,,etc, needs to be in title case
6. *Style preferences, specific terminology, etc.:*
7. Abbreviations and symbols for units must be standard and SI units used throughout (‘min’ for minutes, ‘s’ for ‘seconds’, retain ‘hour/hours’ unabbreviated), except for blood pressure values which are reported in mm Hg. The metric system is preferred for the expression of length, area, mass, and volume
8. Spell out numbers less than 10 that stand alone (ie, are not a unit or measurement). Example: ‘Only two papers involving 25 patients’. Spell out numbers at the beginning of sentences (One hundred and forty-five cases were . . . ). *Note:* Compound numbers are hyphenated. In structured abstracts and tables, a sentence can start with a number—this number is not followed by a capital letter
9. ‘Student’s t-test’ takes a hyphen in between ‘t-test’ (not ‘Student t test’)
10. compare (compared) to/compare (compared) with: to compare to is to point out or imply resemblances between objects regarded as essentially of a different order; to compare with is mainly to point out differences between objects regarded as essentially of the same order. For example, Thus, life has been compared to a pilgrimage, to a drama, to a battle. Congress may be compared with the British Parliament. Paris has been compared to ancient Athens; it may be compared with modern London.
11. Firstly, secondly, thirdly, etc, should be changed to First, second, third, etc., respectively. However, Lastly should not be changed to Last.
12. *Queries:*
13. If you come across any “Copy Editor Query”, please make appropriate changes as needed to the text and delete the query to show that it has been addressed
14. To include any instructions to the typesetter (e.g. corrections to the images) insert these as queries to typesetter
15. *Versus* to be added (**Versus, versus, vs, Vs, vs., VS.** *Action:*Should be spelt out in narrative text (not italicised), but use abbreviation with numbers in text, or for contraction in parentheses - no full points, vs)
16. *Caption citations*

For Tables and Figures citations, cite them as ‘table 1’ and ‘figure 1’ respectively (lower case) (not Figure 1 or Table 1)

1. *Percent (%)*

Use per cent (two words); use ‘%’ after numerals like 93%, 5% etc.

1. *Thousand separators*

Four-figure numbers and upwards

Close up four-figure numbers (4000). Use a thin space in place of commas in numbers over 9999 including in tables, to divide into groups of 3: so 10 000; 125 000 000

1. *Table footnote*

|  |
| --- |
|  |

Order of footnote symbols is:\*, †, ‡, §, ¶,\*\*, ††, ‡‡, §§, ¶,¶, etc.

In figures, footnotes run on.

In tables, new line per footnote for unlinked footnotes and for those denoted with a symbol (unless too little text per footnote and is a waste of space).

Abbreviations on one line, semi-colon separated, and in alphabetical order).

1. Confidence intervals

Abbreviate confidence intervals to 'CI'.

Owing to the possible risk of confusion with minus signs use "to", not the hyphen, in CIs (and other ranges that may contain negative values); eg, '. . . (CI -7.0 to 0.9 kPa) . . . '

There is usually no need to repeat units when giving CIs: eg, 19 mmol/l (95% CI 14t to 27). However, when the CI is a perceentage, include the % sign: eg, '17% (95% CI 2% to 46%)'.

Confidence intervals should not be used for within-group estimates such as means, but for between-group comparisons, such as difference between means. They are not needed for baseline data

1. *Parentheses and brackets*

Always use parentheses (round brackets) even for parentheses within parentheses.

Exceptions: Square brackets around an ionised substance [Ca2+].

Square brackets are also used for an author's or editor's interpolation in a quotation: "He [John] was unhappy".

Square brackets are used to define an abbreviation used in quoted material: “The BMA [British Medical Association] spokesman said…”

1. *Mathematical symbols*

Symbols should be close up to the number (eg, p<0.01)