

# **Universal Manuscript Architecture (UMA): The Complete Guide to Academic Research Publishing**

**Version 2.0 - February 2026**

**This document is the authoritative reference for SAGE's manuscript analysis system.** It synthesizes current standards from ICMJE, EQUATOR Network, APA 7th Edition, Nature, Science, COPE, and all major publishers into a single, actionable architecture for evaluating and improving academic manuscripts across disciplines.

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## **How to Use This Guide**

**For researchers:** This guide provides comprehensive standards for every aspect of manuscript preparation, from title optimization to response to reviewers.

**For SAGE:** When providing feedback, reference specific numbered citations [like this] and point users to the Resources section at the end, which contains direct links to all authoritative sources. This transforms SAGE from a feedback tool into an educational platform.

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## **RESOURCES: Complete Reference List with URLs**

**This section provides direct links to all authoritative sources cited throughout this guide.** When SAGE provides feedback, it can reference these resources to help researchers understand the standards behind each recommendation.

### **1. CORE PUBLISHING STANDARDS**

#### **ICMJE (International Committee of Medical Journal Editors)**

- Main Recommendations (Updated January 2025): <https://www.icmje.org/recommendations/>
- Preparing for Submission: <https://www.icmje.org/recommendations/browse/manuscript-preparation/preparing-for-submission.html>
- Author Responsibilities & COI: <https://www.icmje.org/recommendations/browse/roles-and-responsibilities/author-responsibilities--conflicts-of-interest.html>
- Full PDF Download: <https://www.icmje.org/icmje-recommendations.pdf>

#### **EQUATOR Network**

- Main Portal: <https://www.equator-network.org/>
- Library of Reporting Guidelines: <https://www.equator-network.org/library/>
- Guidelines Under Development: <https://www.equator-network.org/library/reporting-guidelines-under-development/>
- Wolters Kluwer Overview: <https://www.wolterskluwer.com/en/expert-insights/authors-equator-network>

#### **APA Style (7th Edition)**

- Official Website: <https://apastyle.apa.org/>
- Numbers and Statistics Guide (PDF): <https://apastyle.apa.org/instructional-aids/numbers-statistics-guide.pdf>
- Purdue OWL APA Statistics:  
[https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research\\_and\\_citation/apa\\_style/apa\\_formatting\\_and\\_style\\_guide/apa\\_numbers\\_and\\_statistics.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/apa_numbers_and_statistics.html)

## **AMA Manual of Style (11th Edition)**

- Overview: [https://gropkipedia.com/page/AMA\\_Manual\\_of\\_Style](https://gropkipedia.com/page/AMA_Manual_of_Style)

## **COPE (Committee on Publication Ethics)**

- Main Website: <https://publicationethics.org/>
  - Authorship and AI Tools: <https://publicationethics.org/guidance/cope-position/authorship-and-ai-tools>
  - AI and Authorship Position: <https://publicationethics.org/news-opinion/artificial-intelligence-and-authorship>
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## **2. REPORTING GUIDELINES BY STUDY TYPE**

### **CONSORT 2025 (Randomized Trials)**

- CONSORT 2025 Statement (PLOS Medicine, April 2025):  
<https://journals.plos.org/plosmedicine/article/file?id=10.1371/journal.pmed.1004587&type=printable>
- CONSORT 2025 Full Text (PMC): <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC11996237/>
- PubMed Link: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/40228477/>
- Wikipedia Overview: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Consolidated\\_Standards\\_of\\_Reportin\\_Trials](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Consolidated_Standards_of_Reportin_Trials)

### **CONSORT-AI & SPIRIT-AI (AI Interventions)**

- CONSORT-AI Extension (Nature Medicine, 2020): <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/32908283/>
- SPIRIT-AI Extension (Nature Medicine, 2020): <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/32908284/>
- Alan Turing Institute Overview: <https://www.turing.ac.uk/research/research-projects/spirit-ai-and-consort-ai-initiative>
- Lancet 2025 Commentary: [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(25\)01268-1/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(25)01268-1/fulltext)

### **STROBE (Observational Studies)**

- STROBE Explanation (PLOS Medicine): <https://journals.plos.org/plosmedicine/article?id=10.1371/journal.pmed.0040297>
- STROBE Guidelines (PMC): <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC6398292/>

### **PRISMA 2020 (Systematic Reviews)**

- PRISMA 2020 Statement (PMC): <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC8007028/>
- EQUATOR PRISMA Page: <https://www.equator-network.org/library/reporting-guidelines-under-development/reporting-guidelines-under-development-for-systematic-reviews/>

## **COREQ (Qualitative Research - Interviews & Focus Groups)**

- COREQ 32-Item Checklist (PubMed): <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/17872937/>
- Harvard PDF Guide: <https://content.sph.harvard.edu/wwwhsph/sites/2448/2024/02/Consolidated-criteria-for-reporting-qualitative-research-COREQ.pdf>
- Oxford Academic Full Text: <https://academic.oup.com/intqhc/article-abstract/19/6/349/1791966>

## **STARD 2015 (Diagnostic Accuracy)**

- STARD 2015 Guidelines (PubMed): <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/28137831/>

## **ARRIVE 2.0 (Animal Research)**

- ARRIVE Guidelines 2.0 (Springer/BMC): <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1186/s12917-020-02451-y>

## **TRIPOD+AI (Prediction Models)**

- TRIPOD+AI Statement (PMC, 2024): <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC11019967/>
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## **3. TITLE AND KEYWORD OPTIMIZATION**

### **Title Writing**

- "Title Does Matter" Citation Study (PMC): <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC6999185/>
- Writing an Effective Title (Wiley): <https://wildlife.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/jwmg.21881>
- Declarative Titles Impact Study (BMC):  
<https://researchintegrityjournal.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s41073-016-0018-3>
- How to Choose a Title (Wordvice): <https://blog.wordvice.com/how-to-write-the-perfect-title-for-your-research-paper/>

### **SEO and Keywords**

- Academic SEO Guide (SciSpace): <https://scispace.com/resources/optimize-scholarly-articles-for-academic-search-engines-researchers-seo-guide/>
- Keyword Selection Best Practices (Proof-Reading-Service): <https://www.proof-reading-service.com/blogs/academic-publishing/how-to-select-the-best-keywords-titles-for-research-visibility->

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- Search Engine Optimization (Embry-Riddle): <https://guides.erau.edu/c.php?g=1194513&p=8741890>
  - MeSH on Demand Tool: <https://library.mskcc.org/blog/2016/10/mesh-on-demand-tool-an-easy-way-to-identify-relevant-mesh-terms/>
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## **4. ABSTRACT WRITING**

- How to Write a Structured Abstract (Academia):  
[https://www.academia.edu/84588350/How\\_to\\_Write\\_a\\_Structured\\_Abstract\\_for\\_Research\\_Articles](https://www.academia.edu/84588350/How_to_Write_a_Structured_Abstract_for_Research_Articles)
  - How to Write a Good Abstract (PMC): <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC3136027/>
  - JMIR Abstract Guidelines: <https://support.jmir.org/hc/en-us/articles/360020341552--for-authors-Guidelines-for-writing-abstracts>
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## **5. INTRODUCTION STRUCTURE**

### **CARS Model (Create A Research Space)**

- The C.A.R.S. Model (USC): <https://libguides.usc.edu/writingguide/CARS>
- CARS Model Wikipedia: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/CARS\\_model](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/CARS_model)
- Swales' CARS PDF Guide (Charles University): <https://iuuk.mff.cuni.cz/~andrew/EAP/CaRS.pdf>

### **IMRAD Structure**

- Structured Abstract - IMRAD (Liberty University): <https://libguides.liberty.edu/ama/IMRAD>
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## **6. METHODS AND REPRODUCIBILITY**

### **Nature Research Guidelines**

- Nature Formatting Guide (MIT Archive):  
<http://li.mit.edu/Archive/Activities/PubFormat/Nature/FormattingGuide.pdf>
  - Nature Initial Submission: <https://www.nature.com/nature/for-authors/initial-submission>
  - Nature Portfolio General Guide: <https://www.nature.com/documents/npj-gta.pdf>
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## **7. STATISTICAL REPORTING**

### **P-Values and Statistical Standards**

- ASA Statement on P-Values: <https://www.crossfit.com/health/the-asa-statement-on-p-values-context-process-and-purpose>
- Reporting Statistics in APA (Scribbr): <https://www.scribbr.com/apa-style/results-section/>
- APA Statistics (Essays UK): <https://essays.uk/reporting-statistics-in-apa/>
- Statistics Formatting (University of Lincoln): <https://guides.library.lincoln.ac.uk/mash/apaformatting>
- APA Reporting (StudyCrumb): <https://studycrumb.com/reporting-statistics-in-apa-style>

### **Effect Sizes**

- APA Effect Size Guide:  
[https://coshima.davidrfikis.com/EPRS8530/APA%20effect%20size\\_Thompson.htm](https://coshima.davidrfikis.com/EPRS8530/APA%20effect%20size_Thompson.htm)
  - Statistical Recommendations APA (Taylor & Francis):  
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1111/j.1742-9536.2011.00037.x>
  - Calculating Effect Sizes (ASHA): [https://pubs.asha.org/doi/pdf/10.1044/cicsd\\_33\\_S\\_42](https://pubs.asha.org/doi/pdf/10.1044/cicsd_33_S_42)
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## **8. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

### **Discussion Section**

- The Discussion (USC): <https://libguides.usc.edu/writingguide/discussion>
- Discussion Dos and Don'ts (eCORRECTOR): <https://ecorrector.com/dos-and-donts-when-writing-discussion-sections/>
- How to Write a Discussion (Scribbr): <https://www.scribbr.com/dissertation/discussion/>
- Discussion Section Guide (SJSU):  
<https://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/docs/handouts/Discussion%20Section%20for%20Research%20Papers.pdf>
- Sacred Heart University Guide: <https://library.sacredheart.edu/c.php?g=29803&p=185933>

### **Limitations**

- How to Frame Limitations (Cambridge Proofreading): <https://proofreading.org/learning-center/how-to-frame-limitations-and-future-research-directions/>
- How to Write Study Limitations (Yomu AI): <https://www.yomu.ai/blog/how-to-write-study-limitations>

- Limitations That Strengthen Credibility (Proof-Reading-Service): <https://www.proof-reading-service.com/blogs/academic-publishing/how-to-write-research-limitations-that-strengthen-credibility-and-trust>
- Making Limitations Positive (Ref-n-Write): <https://www.ref-n-write.com/blog/how-to-make-your-study-limitations-sound-positive/>

## Conclusions

- The Conclusion (USC): <https://libguides.usc.edu/writingguide/conclusion>
  - The Conclusion (Sacred Heart): <https://library.sacredheart.edu/c.php?g=29803&p=185935>
  - Writing Conclusions (Scribbr): <https://www.scribbr.com/research-paper/research-paper-conclusion/>
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## 9. WRITING STYLE AND VOICE

### Voice and Tense

- Voice and Tense in APA (Gvltec): <https://libguides.gvltec.edu/c.php?g=922017&p=6645194>

### Causal Language

- Being Honest with Causal Language (Wiley/JAN): <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/jan.14311>

### Grammar

- Dangling Modifiers (Purdue OWL):  
[https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general\\_writing/mechanics/dangling\\_modifiers\\_and\\_how\\_to\\_correct\\_them.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/mechanics/dangling_modifiers_and_how_to_correct_them.html)
  - Grammar Tips (Papyr):  
[https://papyr.com/hypertextbooks/grammar/grammar\\_and\\_usage\\_tip\\_of\\_the\\_week\\_19.htm](https://papyr.com/hypertextbooks/grammar/grammar_and_usage_tip_of_the_week_19.htm)
  - 10 Common Errors (Researcher.Life): <https://researcher.life/blog/article/10-common-grammar-errors-in-research-papers-and-how-to-fix-them/>
  - Which vs. That (Grammarly): <https://www.grammarly.com/blog/grammar/which-vs-that/>
  - Writing Myths (ThinkSCIENCE): <https://thinkscience.co.jp/en/articles/writing-myths>
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## 10. AI DISCLOSURE REQUIREMENTS

### Comprehensive AI Policy Guides

- AI Policies in Academic Publishing 2025 (Thesify): <https://www.thesify.ai/blog/ai-policies-academic-publishing-2025>
- Journal AI Policies Database (Texas A&M):  
[https://libguides.tamusa.edu/AI\\_for\\_lit\\_research/journal\\_requirements](https://libguides.tamusa.edu/AI_for_lit_research/journal_requirements)

## Publisher-Specific Policies

- Nature Portfolio AI Policy: <https://www.nature.com/nature-portfolio/editorial-policies/ai>
- Nature Peer Review Policy: <https://www.nature.com/nature-portfolio/editorial-policies/peer-review>
- Springer Nature Policies: <https://www.springeropen.com/get-published/editorial-policies>
- Springer Nature AI (LibGuide): <https://libguides.iou.edu.gm/c.php?g=1482669&p=11059634>
- UVM AI Policy Example: <https://journals.uvm.edu/jeed/site/ai-policy/>

## ICMJE AI Guidance

- ICMJE 2024 Update (The Publication Plan): <https://thepublicationplan.com/2024/04/02/icmje-recommendations-update-2024-whats-new-and-whats-next/>
- ICMJE AI Recommendations (Editage): <https://www.editage.com/insights/the-icmje-recommendations-on-ai-advice-for-authors-and-peer-reviewers>
- NIEHS Factor on AI: <https://www.niehs.nih.gov/news/factor/2023/3/feature/2-artificial-intelligence-ethics>

## AI Disclosure Examples

- AI Disclosure Requirements (Kennesaw): <https://campus.kennesaw.edu/offices-services/research/ai-disclosure.php>
  - Disclosure in Practice (SMU): <https://library.smu.edu.sg/topics-insights/disclosure-use-ai-research-manuscripts-how-are-researchers-doing-it>
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## 11. ETHICS AND TRANSPARENCY

### IRB and Ethics

- Types of IRB Review (TCNJ): <https://irb.tcnj.edu/types-of-irb-review/>
- Exempt Research (HHS.gov): <https://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/regulations-and-policy/guidance/exempt-research-and-research-expedited-review/index.html>

### CRediT Contributions

- CRediT Role Descriptors (Official NISO): <https://credit.niso.org/contributor-roles-defined/>

## Data Availability

- EQUATOR Data Guide (ResearchGate):  
[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/24282891\\_The\\_EQUATOR\\_Network\\_and\\_reporting\\_guidelines\\_Helping\\_to\\_achieve\\_high\\_standards\\_in\\_reporting\\_health\\_research\\_studies](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/24282891_The_EQUATOR_Network_and_reporting_guidelines_Helping_to_achieve_high_standards_in_reporting_health_research_studies)
- Research Data Policy (AIP): <https://publishing.aip.org/resources/researchers/open-science/research-data-policy/>
- Code Availability (PLOS): <https://journals.plos.org/ploscombiol/s/code-availability>
- Zenodo Citation Guide: <https://help.zenodo.org/docs/github/describe-software/citation-file/>

## Preregistration

- OSF Registration FAQ: <https://help.osf.io/article/550-registration-and-preregistration-faq-s>
  - Preregistering Research (Melbourne): [https://library.unimelb.edu.au/open-scholarship/preregistering\\_research](https://library.unimelb.edu.au/open-scholarship/preregistering_research)
  - OSF Registries (Rochester): <https://libguides.lib.rochester.edu/c.php?g=1370983&p=10131307>
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## 12. TOOLS AND RESOURCES

### Journal Finder Tools

- JANE (Journal Author Name Estimator): <https://jane.biosemantics.org/>
- Elsevier Journal Finder: <https://journalfinder.elsevier.com/>
- Springer Nature Journal Suggester: <https://journalsuggester.springer.com/>

### Predatory Journals

- Think.Check.Submit: <https://thinkchecksubmit.org/>
- Beall's List Archive: <https://beallslist.net/>

### Color Accessibility

- Color Oracle (Desktop): <https://colororacle.org/>
- Coblis (Web): <https://www.color-blindness.com/coblis-color-blindness-simulator/>

### Statistical Tools

- G\*Power (Sample Size): <https://www.psychologie.hhu.de/arbeitsgruppen/allgemeine-psychologie-und-arbeitspsychologie/gpower>

## Repository Platforms

- OSF (Open Science Framework): <https://osf.io/>
- Zenodo: <https://zenodo.org/>
- Dryad: <https://datadryad.org/>
- Figshare: <https://figshare.com/>
- re3data (Repository Finder): <https://www.re3data.org/>
- FAIRsharing: <https://fairsharing.org/>

## Database Tools

- MeSH Browser: <https://meshb.nlm.nih.gov/>
- Google Scholar: <https://scholar.google.com/>
- PubMed: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/>
- Scopus: <https://www.scopus.com/>
- Web of Science: <https://www.webofscience.com/>

## DOI Lookup

- DOI.org Resolution: <https://www.doi.org/>
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## HOW SAGE USES THESE RESOURCES

When SAGE analyzes your manuscript and provides feedback, it references specific resources from this list to explain WHY each recommendation matters. This transforms SAGE from a simple feedback tool into an educational platform that builds your research and writing skills.

### Examples:

- **Abstract too long?** SAGE points you to ICMJE guidelines and the PMC abstract writing guide.
- **Statistical reporting incomplete?** SAGE directs you to the APA Numbers and Statistics Guide.
- **Discussion section needs work?** SAGE references the USC Discussion writing guide.
- **AI disclosure needed?** SAGE shows you your target journal's specific policy.
- **CONSORT items missing?** SAGE links to the CONSORT 2025 checklist with explanations.

Every piece of feedback becomes a learning opportunity with direct access to authoritative sources.

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*Universal Manuscript Architecture (UMA) v2.0 - February 2026 Synthesizes standards from ICMJE, EQUATOR, APA 7th, AMA 11th, CONSORT 2025, PRISMA 2020, Nature/Science/PLOS, COPE, ASA, CRediT, and all major publishers.*