

## Turning your Dissertation into an Article Some Tips for publishing in the Journal of Social Care

With your dissertation you were showing the markers that you had explored a lot of relevant literature in the area as well as considering possible methodologies. For a journal article the amount of detail given should be much less. Below are suggestions for each section and word guidelines for an article of 6000 words.

### **Abstract (200 words approx)**

State clearly:

What your aim was

The relevance of your research to social care practice

The methodology and methods used

The sampling process, participants, eligibility criteria

The main findings

### **Introduction/Literature Review (1500 words approx)**

- The opening paragraph should provide context and rationale for your study so if you had an introductory chapter just use the main points in relation to context and rationale. Keep in mind the aim and scope of the Journal of Social Care Practice.
- If you are using some of your results in the article you can say it – for example ‘the data reported here was part of a broader study on.....’
- Divide into sections and give section headings as you did in your dissertation.
- Pick out the most important and up-to-date literature.
- Only include literature that is directly focused on the findings that will be presented.
- Try to blend the literature together more and give less descriptive detail – for example in the dissertation a discussion about how social care work differs from social work is:

“While there are similarities between social care work and social work with regard to being agents of society, working with groups as well as individual clients, using relationships in the work and working as part of a team (Crimmens, 1998) differences also exist, such as working within the client’s living conditions and developing a therapeutic relationship. For example Anglin (1999, p.145) distinguishes child and youth work in Canada from other social service professions as involving “the development of a therapeutic relationship” and “day-to-day work with children in their environment”. Similarly Smith (2003) discussing the residential childcare worker and Tuggener (1986, as cited in Crimmens, 1998) discussing the social pedagogue, include caring with the clients’ daily environment as central to the work. Davies-Jones (2000, n.p.) emphasises the “primary caring, life-space counselling, group-work using the ‘living group’ and the utilisation of creative and aesthetic activities” as intervention tools.” (146 words)

Becomes in the article:

“While there are similarities between social care work and social work, for example being agents of society, working with groups and individual clients, the primacy of the worker’s relationship with clients in achieving change and working as part of a team (Crimmens, 1998) differences also exist. For example in social care work caring occurs within the clients’ living environment (Smith, 2003); developing a therapeutic relationship is central (Anglin, 1999) and creative activities are used as tools for intervention (Davies-Jones, 2000). “

(80 words)

- Avoid using long direct quotes from the literature.

### **Methodology/Design (800 words approx)**

- The main difference between the article and your dissertation is that you leave out most of the discussion you used to demonstrate your understanding of different methodological approaches.
- State your methodology and its suitability in relation to your research question.
- You can point out epistemological underpinnings but do so very briefly.
- State your sampling method and how you accessed participants.
- Give relevant characteristics of participants.
- Discuss the ethical considerations regarding how participants were protected. Remember you don't have appendices to put in consent forms and explanatory letters so you need to explain all of this here though you say you used forms etc.
- State how you collected your data and link to methodology and research question.
- Explain briefly how you approached data analysis.

### **Findings/Discussion (3000 words approx – divide word count between sections if they are to be given separately)**

- While in your dissertation you probably discussed all of your findings you don't have the space so pick out the most interesting or relevant ones in relation to your research question.
- Avoid using tables and graphs unless absolutely necessary. At most two should be used.
- If you have narrative data you will need to be much more selective with supporting quotes and may have to shorten these. Use [...] to indicate you have left a bit of the quote out.
- Refer to commonality and differences to findings from literature.
- Be cautious about over interpreting the data and make sure quotes used fit well.

### **Conclusions/Recommendations (500 words approx)**

- Point out any limitations of the study but be brief.
- Summarise your main findings and link in with literature.
- Limitations of your study can be linked to suggestions for further research.
- Emphasise what your study means for social care practice in line with the aims of the journal.

### **Style**

- Read and follow the author guidelines regarding font, spelling conventions etc.
- APA referencing must be used. Link to guide is available on the journal site.
- Follow the article template. You can download and type directly into it.

### **Finally**

Articles are very rarely accepted without revisions so be patient and persistent!

*Minor revisions* means that there are only some referencing and grammatical errors.

Most articles will come back asking for *major revisions* which may not mean that you have to a lot for your article to be published.