Open Scholarship at the University of Melbourne

Registered Reports  
Preregistration, Part 3

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# Registered Reports

Finally, it's worth taking a look at Registered Reports.

When a preregistration or study design is submitted to an academic journal for peer review, it becomes part of a Registered Report.

If the study design is accepted in this initial peer review stage, during which it may be revised in response to feedback, the journal will offer in-principle acceptance of the final research article.

The peer-reviewed study design might be published in the journal itself, uploaded to a registry, or in some cases embargoed until the final article is published.

After the acceptance of the study design, the researcher collects and analyses the data and writes up the final report - a research article that includes the introduction and methods already reviewed, plus the new results, discussion, and conclusion.

Upon submission to the journal, this research article undergoes peer review - mostly to ensure it has not deviated from the initial study design - before being accepted and published in the journal.

Registered Reports were proposed in 2012 to counter publication bias and questionable research practises.

Over 300 journals now publish Registered Reports, either regularly or in special issues.

# Benefits of Registered Reports

There are many benefits of this kind of approach to publishing research.

First, it allows the researchers to act on peer reviewer feedback on the study design, which might allow problems to be avoided.

Importantly, it also reduces or eliminates the risk of publication bias.

Research articles that confirm original hypotheses or show positive results are much more likely to be published than those that don't, leading to uneven reporting.

In-principle acceptance based on study design means that researchers can rest assured that even if their hypotheses are disproven or results are negative, their research will still be published.

# Example Journal: *PLOS ONE*

Let's look at an example to better understand the publication process of Registered Reports.

*“*[*Registered Reports: One Year at PLOS ONE*](https://everyone.plos.org/2021/03/30/registered-reports-one-year-at-plos-one/)*.” PLOS EveryONE Blog, 30/3/21.*

The open access journal *PLOS ONE* has been publishing Register Reports since 2020, and here we have their publication workflow:

Once the researcher has developed a study design, they can submit this to the journal as a proposal.

If the study design is accepted following peer review, it is published in *PLOS ONE* as a Registered Report Protocol.

The researcher then undertakes their research and writes the final report, which they submit to the journal as an article.

Once this article, which has already received in-principal acceptance, has passed peer review, it is published as a Research Article.

Both the Registered Report Protocol and the final Research Article are published open access with Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) licences.

It's also worth noting that *PLOS ONE*, like many journals today, requires that research data and related information are shared openly upon publication of the research article, whenever possible.

# Example Registered Report: [“Effectiveness of the non-pharmaceutical public health interventions against COVID-19; a protocol of a systematic review and realist review”](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0239554)

Here's an example of a Registered Report Protocol published in *PLOS ONE*.

It's clearly identified as being an open access and peer reviewed Registered Report Protocol, and the citation and DOI URL are provided for the resulting Research Article, which was published 14 months later.

# Outro

Thank you for joining us for this video on preregistration.

If you'd like to find out more about this topic, you can visit our [Open Research guide](https://unimelb.libguides.com/openresearch/) or [Open Scholarship website](https://library.unimelb.edu.au/open-scholarship/), and if you have any questions, please feel free to contact your Faculty or Subject Liaison Librarian or reach out to the Scholarly Communications team.

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