

Detailed Explanations of Submission Categories for the DKG *Bulletin*

Each issue of the *Bulletin* includes a copy of the Submission Grid to help potential authors understand the various types of submissions that are welcomed and to provide general guidelines for those types. The following provides additional details regarding the key submission types.

1. Research: Action/Classroom; Qualitative/Quantitative/Mixed Methods

In all research submissions, reviewers expect to see the following elements:

- **A clear thesis statement**, often presented as a *problem statement* or as a specific *hypothesis*. The author should make clear the rationale for conducting the specific research and should detail the research question(s).
- **Review of the pertinent literature**. Generally, resources should be no more than 10 years old, except for seminal research, which can be older. In the case of using seminal research, the author should make it clear why she is referencing such material. Literature should be clearly relevant to the research area and to the research question(s). All resources should be clearly documented with in-text citation. The author must have and cite permission to use tables, figures, and long quotations from outside sources. The literature review should open with a statement of the key strands of literature and close with a summary of how the literature informed the research.
- **Explanation of methodology**. The author should state the research methodology used (i.e., quasi-experimental, experimental, case study, etc.) and provide details about the
 - setting,
 - participants (number, demographics),
 - specific instruments used, including validity and reliability and scoring protocols
 - implementation process
- **Results**. The author should provide an overview of the results of the research: specific quantifiable data, data from qualitative measures, observation checklist results, and so forth. The method of analysis (descriptive statistics, inferential statistics, etc.) should be explained as results are detailed.
- **Synthesis or discussion**. The author should explain the meaning of the data analysis in relation to the research question(s). In other words, the reader wants to know how the data answered the research question(s) and what that answer was.
- **Implications or recommendations**. The author should explain the significance of the research in terms of advancing theory or practice in education.

Specifics according to type of research are as follows:

Action/Classroom:

According to ASCD (<http://www.ascd.org/publications/books/100047/chapters/What-Is-Action-Research%C2%A2.aspx>), action research is “a disciplined process of inquiry conducted *by* and *for* those taking the action. The primary reason for engaging in action research is to assist the “actor” in improving and/or refining his or her actions.” In articles for the *Bulletin*, the “actor” is generally a teacher or group of teachers working to understand or improve what transpires in their own classrooms. Because such research has a very practical impetus, reviewers will look most closely at the implications and recommendations. Authors should acknowledge the limitations of action research—generally small sample sizes and possible bias because the author is active in the setting.

Quantitative:

Quantitative research relies primarily on collection and analysis of numerical or statistical data in order to draw conclusions about a topic, problem, or hypothesis. Measurement is central to quantitative research, so reviewers will look closely at the instruments used to measure the variables; such instruments should be explained thoroughly and the author should include some measure of the instruments’ reliability and validity, if available.

Another key focus for reviewers is the author's analysis of data, which should be statistically sound and should include reflection on the statistical significance of results.

Qualitative:

In contrast to quantitative research, qualitative research depends more on perceptions and words than on numbers. The main tools of qualitative research are interviewing, observation, and artifact analysis. Authors should include interview protocols and observations tools (such as checklists) either in the article or as an appendix. Data analysis often involves looking for and summarizing key words or themes. Authors should use direct quotations from participants as data to support conclusions. Generally, qualitative research is considered to be more subjective because the researcher is more intimately involved in data collection; thus, potential researcher bias is a key limitation of qualitative research and should be noted in the qualitative research article.

Mixed Methods:

Quantitative and qualitative research attack an issue or problem from essentially one point of view—either mathematical/statistical or perceptual/verbal. Mixed methods research seeks to examine an issue from multiple points of view in order to get the clearest possible understanding. Mixed methods research offers “the best of both worlds: the in-depth, contextualized, and natural but more time-consuming insights of qualitative research coupled with the more-efficient but less rich or compelling predictive power of quantitative research” (<http://blog.dedoose.com/2012/10/what-is-mixed-methods-research/>). Reviewers will focus on how the author relates the qualitative and quantitative results to reach a conclusion.

2. Position Paper/Viewpoint

The goal of a position/viewpoint paper is to present one side of an issue that is debatable. To convince a reader that one's position is valid and defensible, an author must present evidence to support claims—not just present an opinion. The author should

- set the topic area and the importance of the debate—i.e., define the issue
- express a clear thesis statement asserting one's position
- provide reasons for one's position, with clear references to outside authorities
- include a refutation—i.e., a statement of the opposing viewpoint and one's rationale for rejecting that opposing viewpoint
- provide a conclusion that emphasizes the significance and relevance of the viewpoint or position.

3. Review of literature

A review of literature should not be confused with an annotated bibliography. The key difference is that a review of literature synthesizes and evaluates available literature on a given topic; it does not simply describe or summarize the literature but develops a key idea as a result of reading the literature. A literature review provides an overview of key writings on a specific topic that seeks to

- inform the reader;
- set the stage for additional research;
- synthesize diverse thinking;
- clarify a topic.

Reviewers look for currency of resources; use of reputable sources; and clear focus on the most relevant points relative to the main thesis. The author should explain procedure for reviewing literature—i.e., use of meta-analyses, databases, author searches, discipline-based searches, websites, dissertations, etc.

4. Program Description:

Educators are interested in reading about programs that colleagues have developed or implemented. In some cases, the interest is general, but in most cases, the reader wants a sense of whether the program might be useful in his or her own setting and whether the program actually made a difference. Thus, the author must provide both an overview and details of a specific program in a program description article. The overview should explain the overarching purpose of the program, the setting for the program, and its major goals. Details should include resources needed and specific outcomes attained. Inclusion of organizers' and/or participants' comments about the program adds interest to descriptions. Authors must be cautious about tone in a program description: direct marketing or promotion of the program is not permitted.

5. Book or Technology Review:

Like the literature review, the book or technology review must go beyond a simple reporting about the topic. A summary of the key purpose of the book or website/app is in order, but the review must also include the author's personal critique of elements such as style, accuracy, readability or user-friendliness, and relevance. The title of the review should reflect the author's thinking about the subject of the review—not just provide the title of the book or name of the particular technology application. Reviewers will look specifically for the importance of the book or the technology to the field of education. In the case of technology, relevance may include topic or process—i.e., the technology may relate to a specific discipline or issue in education OR it may provide a tool that is useful to educators. As with the program description, authors should not directly market or promote the book or technology.

NOTE: The Submission Grid includes suggested word length for each type of submission. The suggested word count excludes the abstract and reference list.