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Journal Of Business Ethics Submission Guidelines

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Navigating the Journal of Business Ethics Submission Guidelines: A Complete Guide for Researchers

Publishing in a top-tier academic journal is a milestone for any scholar. When it comes to the field of business ethics, few outlets carry the prestige and rigor of the **Journal of Business Ethics (JBE)**. Whether you are a doctoral candidate preparing your first submission or an established professor seeking to disseminate your latest research, understanding the **Journal of Business Ethics submission guidelines** is essential to moving your manuscript through the editorial pipeline successfully. These guidelines are not mere formalities; they are a roadmap that helps authors align their work with the journal's mission, ethical standards, and methodological expectations.

In this comprehensive guide, we break down every critical element of the JBE submission process—from formatting and ethical compliance to peer review and common pitfalls—so you can submit with confidence. By the end, you will have a clear, actionable understanding of how to prepare a manuscript that meets the journal's high standards while telling a compelling story about responsible business conduct.

Overview of the Journal of Business Ethics

Founded in 1982, the *Journal of Business Ethics* is an internationally recognized, peer-reviewed academic journal published by Springer. It occupies a unique space at the intersection of management, philosophy, law, and social responsibility. The journal's scope is broad: it welcomes theoretical, empirical, and practice-oriented studies on ethical issues in business, including (but not limited to) corporate social responsibility, stakeholder theory, ethical decision-making, sustainability, leadership ethics, and business and human rights.

With a strong impact factor and a global readership, JBE sets a high bar for originality, methodological rigor, and ethical relevance. Its editorial board is composed of leading scholars who value clear writing, robust evidence, and a commitment to advancing ethical practice in business. Understanding the **JBE submission requirements** is therefore not optional—it is a prerequisite for serious consideration.

Key Submission Requirements

Manuscript Format and Style

The journal expects manuscripts to be prepared in a specific format. All files must be submitted via the journal's online manuscript tracking system (Editorial Manager) in a standard word-processing format (e.g., .doc or .docx). The text should be double-spaced, using a readable font such as Times New Roman (12 pt), with 1-inch (2.5 cm) margins on all sides. Page numbers and line numbers must be included to facilitate the review

process.

JBE follows the **Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA)**style, currently the 7th edition. This applies to citations, references, headings, and the overall structure of the manuscript. Authors unfamiliar with APA style should consult the manual or a reliable online guide before submitting.

Length and Structure

Manuscripts should typically be between 8,000 and 12,000 words, inclusive of everything (title page, abstract, main text, references, tables, figures, appendices). Longer manuscripts may be considered if the scope justifies the length, but authors are advised to be concise. The journal does not impose a strict word limit, but editors favor papers that are tightly argued and free of redundancy.

A standard JBE manuscript includes the following elements in order:

- Title page (with full author details, ORCIDs, and corresponding author information)
- Abstract (150–250 words, structured or unstructured)
- Keywords (4–6 terms, including at least one JEL code where appropriate)
- Main body (introduction, literature review, methodology, results, discussion, conclusion)
- Compliance with ethical standards statement
- References
- Tables and figures (each on separate pages at the end)

Ethical Considerations and Plagiarism

As a journal dedicated to ethics, JBE places extraordinary emphasis on the integrity of the submission process. All manuscripts are screened for plagiarism using iThenticate. Cases of textual overlap—even in the literature review—can trigger immediate rejection. Authors must ensure that their work is entirely original, properly cites all sources, and has not been submitted simultaneously elsewhere (**no duplicate submission**). The journal requires a signed statement of competing interests and, where applicable, ethics committee approval for studies involving human participants.

Step-by-Step Submission Process

Online Submission System

All submissions are made through the **Editorial Manager**portal at the journal’s Springer website. After registering as an author, you will be guided through a series of steps: uploading manuscript files, entering metadata (title, abstract, keywords), suggesting preferred and non-preferred reviewers, and confirming compliance with the journal's policies. The system allows you to save your progress and return later before final submission.

Initial Checks and Desk Rejection

Once submitted, the manuscript undergoes an initial assessment by the editor-in-chief or a section editor. This desk review checks for (a) fit with the journal’s scope, (b) adherence to formatting and ethical guidelines, (c) basic quality of writing, and (d) presence of all required elements. A large proportion of submissions—often around 30–40%—are rejected at this stage without external review. Common reasons: the topic is not sufficiently related to business ethics, the methodology is flawed, or the paper reads like a teaching case rather than a research article.

Peer Review Process

Manuscripts that pass the desk check are sent for double-blind peer review. Typically, two to three reviewers (selected by the editorial team) evaluate the paper’s theoretical contribution, empirical rigor, clarity, and ethical relevance. Reviewers are asked to provide constructive feedback and a recommendation: accept, minor

revisions, major revisions, or reject. The journal aims for a first decision within 60–90 days, although timeframes vary.

Authors who receive a “revise and resubmit” decision should carefully address every comment from reviewers and the editor, providing a point-by-point response along with the revised manuscript. Resubmissions are often sent back to the original reviewers for further evaluation.

Preparing Your Manuscript

Title Page and Abstract

The title page must include the manuscript title (concise but informative), the full names, affiliations, and ORCID identifiers of all authors, and the contact details of the corresponding author. Acknowledgments and funding information should also appear here. The title page is separate from the main manuscript file to preserve anonymity during review.

The abstract is a critical sales tool. It should summarize the purpose, approach, key findings, and implications of your study in 150–250 words. Avoid jargon and excessive references. Many editors and reviewers decide whether to read further based on the abstract alone.

Keywords and JEL Codes

Select 4–6 keywords that accurately represent your article’s content. These help the journal index your work and make it discoverable in databases. In addition, JBE often requests **JEL (Journal of Economic Literature) codes** for papers with an economic or quantitative focus. Including them is a sign of professionalism.

Main Body Structure

While JBE does not mandate a specific organizational pattern, the most common structure follows a modified IMRaD format (Introduction, Methods, Results, and Discussion). However, the journal also welcomes alternative formats for conceptual, philosophical, or review articles. What matters is that the argument is logical, the literature review is comprehensive yet focused, and the methodology is transparent and replicable.

In the **Introduction**, clearly state the research problem, the gap in the literature, the research question(s), and the contribution of your study. The **Literature Review** should engage critically with existing work, not merely summarize it. For **Methodology**, provide enough detail that another researcher could replicate the study; for qualitative work, discuss the sampling strategy, data collection procedures, and analytical approach. The **Discussion**should interpret the findings, relate them back to the literature, and address limitations and future research directions.

References and Citations

All in-text citations and the reference list must follow **APA 7th edition**style. The list should include only works cited in the manuscript. JBE particularly values comprehensive referencing of key sources in business ethics, so ensure you have covered seminal works (e.g., Freeman’s stakeholder theory, Donaldson & Dunfee’s integrative social contracts theory, etc.). Use reference management software (Zotero, EndNote, Mendeley) to avoid errors.

Tables, Figures, and Appendices

Tables and figures should be placed on separate pages at the end of the manuscript (after references) during the review phase. Each must be numbered, titled, and referenced within the text. Ensure that all figures are of sufficient resolution and that tables do not use vertical lines (APA style prefers a clean, professional look). Appendices are acceptable but should contain material that is essential but would interrupt the flow of the main text.

Ethical Guidelines and Authorship

Originality and Duplicate Submission

JBE enforces a strict policy against duplicate or overlapping publication. Any evidence that a manuscript is under review elsewhere or has been published in substantially similar form (including in conference proceedings or working papers openly accessible) will lead to immediate rejection. Authors must also declare if the paper builds on a previously published dataset or extends an earlier conference presentation.

Conflict of Interest

All authors must disclose any financial or personal relationships that could be perceived as influencing the research. This includes funding sources, employment, board memberships, or close personal ties with the editors. The journal provides a template for the conflict of interest statement, which should appear after the main text and before the references.

Data Availability and Transparency

As part of its commitment to open science, JBE encourages authors to provide a data availability statement. For empirical research, authors are expected to make their data and analytical materials available upon request (or by repository deposition), unless ethical or legal constraints prevent it. The statement should specify where and how the data can be accessed.

Informed Consent and Human Subjects

Research involving human participants (surveys, interviews, experiments) must include a statement that informed consent was obtained and that the study was approved by an appropriate ethics committee or institutional review board. The journal may ask for documentation upon request. Failure to provide ethical clearance can result in rejection even after acceptance.

Common Reasons for Rejection

Lack of Novelty or Contribution

The most frequent reason for rejection is that the paper does not add sufficiently to existing knowledge. JBE looks for theoretical, empirical, or practical advancement. A study that merely replicates known findings in a slightly different context will likely be desk-rejected. Authors should articulate their contribution explicitly in the introduction and conclusion.

Poor Methodological Rigor

Whether quantitative or qualitative, the method must be sound. Common issues: small or biased samples, inadequate controls, missing data handling, questionable measurement

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