

Critical Social Policy

Impact Factor: 2.2

5-Year Impact Factor: 3.1

Submission guidelines

This Journal is a member of the [Committee on Publication Ethics](#).

The Journal recommends that authors follow the [Recommendations for the Conduct, Reporting, Editing, and Publication of Scholarly Work in Medical Journals](#) formulated by the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE).

Sage is committed to upholding the integrity of the academic record. We encourage authors to refer to the Committee on Publication Ethics' [International Standards for Authors](#) and view the [author responsibilities section](#) on the Sage Journal Author Gateway.

We also encourage you to familiarize yourself with our [Editorial Policies](#) and our [Publication Ethics Policies](#).

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There are no fees payable to submit or publish in this journal. Open access options are available – see below.

 Hide all

Key information

Access: Subscription

Accepts preprints? Yes

Identity transparency: Single anonymized

Publishing fees and open access

There are no fees payable to submit or publish in this journal.

Figures submitted in color will be published in color in the online version of the journal at no cost. If you wish to have color figures in the printed version, the fee will be determined at Production.

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For information on funding body compliance, and depositing your article in repositories, please [visit Sage's Author Archiving and Re-Use Guidelines](#) and [Publishing Policies](#).

Preparing your manuscript for submission

If you are considering publishing with *Critical Social Policy* we hope this guidance will help you to decide if we are the right journal for you and give you some pointers for the development of your article. It is our aim to provide a space for publication for all of those interested in critical studies of social policy and as such we are keen to receive submissions from practitioners, policy makers, those working in local government or in third sector organisations, those who use services, activists and academics at all stages in their career.

We welcome articles relating to any area of social policy and from any part of the world. We adopt a broad definition of social policy as anything which focuses on government and societal responses to social need. However, we do expect all articles to adopt a critical approach to social policy. By this we mean that articles should develop an analysis and discussion based on critical theoretical, political or ideological understandings. Please read the journal's Aims and Scope to see if your article is appropriate.

Your article must be within the scope of the journal and be of sufficient quality. If not, it will not be reviewed.

The manuscript must be your original work, you must have the rights to the work, and you must have obtained and be able to supply all necessary permissions for the reproduction of any copyright works not owned by you, including figures, illustrations, tables, lengthy quotations, or other material previously published elsewhere.

Article types

Critical Social Policy publishes original research and critical analysis in any area of social policy that matches the [Aims & Scope](#) of the journal.

Detailed specialist knowledge on the part of readers should not be assumed.

Articles on social policy from all international contexts are welcome.

The following types of papers may be submitted for consideration:

- **Full articles**

Articles (6,000 – 8,000 words including abstract, keywords, references and endnotes) may either report original research, or review and critically analyse aspects of social policy which are within the journal's aims and scope. All articles are expected to be theoretically informed. Articles reporting original research must include an accessible overview of the research methods and analysis used, including a clear consideration of ethics in practice during the research process, and, where possible, information regarding ethical approval.

- **Living Activism contributions**

The editorial collective of CSP invites activists, advocates, practitioners, and users of service groups to submit contributions about how they work to end social injustice. [Read more here](#). Members of the CSP editorial collective are happy to discuss and offer advice on ideas for papers, particularly for inexperienced and non-academic contributors.

- **Commentaries**

Commentaries (3,000 - 4,000 words, including abstract, keywords, references and endnotes) differ from longer articles in that they do not usually report original research and they must be topical, i.e. they should relate to a change in policy or be concerned with a policy which has recently been newsworthy. Commentaries may be used to offer service user or frontline practitioner perspectives on the implementation of social policies. Commentaries may also be used to challenge or debate positions

adopted by authors of recently published CSP articles; where this happens the authors of the original article will normally be offered a right of reply. Commentaries from all national contexts are welcome.

- **Themed Issues**

CSP normally publishes one themed issue per year/volume on a topic which contributes to the journal's overall remit. Calls for proposals from prospective editors external to the editorial collective will be made via an announcement on the website and/or in the published journal. For details and guidance on submitting a themed issue proposal [click here](#). Potential themed issue editors may contact the Editorial Coordinator, Lizzie Ward at articlescsp@gmail.com for further information and an update on future dates.

CSP does not normally publish the following types of papers:

- Material which has already been published elsewhere
- Scoping Reviews, the exception being reviews in which the resultant analysis offers profoundly new policy insights which have not been evident from individual publications
- Systematic Literature Reviews

What to write and how to write it

Whilst the style of an article is a decision for the author, there are several issues which we recommend that you take into consideration when developing your article to maximise the chance of acceptance:

- Is your article broadly in sympathy with *Critical Social Policy's* distinct political perspective and values? *CSP* is committed to a number of core values, and we would expect to see these reflected in the articles submitted to us. You can read more about our [principles and values here](#).
- What does your article add to what has already been written on this topic?
- Has the subject matter of your article already been the topic of previous articles published in *CSP*? If so, you should aim, where possible, to engage with and further develop the debates and theoretical insights of our previously-published work.
- Is your article accessible to *CSP's* international readership? You should aim to provide succinct explanations of any policies which are country-specific..
- Have you provided some contextualising information? The articles which we accept typically include an introductory section which sets out key policy issues and/or key theoretical frameworks which will be used as the starting point for the remainder of the article.
- If your article is based on original empirical research, then we expect it to include a methods section. This need not be lengthy, but it must include an explanation of how data was collected and analysed, and a consideration of any pertinent ethical issues.
- The conclusion should do more than simply provide a summary of the article's content – it should demonstrate how the article has provided new understandings or insights. As a

general rule, new material should not be introduced in the conclusion; it is seldom a good idea to end with a quote from someone else's work.

- Try to keep your use of language as simple as possible – we value articles which are clearly expressed and avoid unnecessary jargon. Articles should be accessible to a broad social science readership.
- Use of acronyms should be kept to a minimum, as they make articles less accessible for an international readership. Where use of acronyms is unavoidable, their meaning should always be spelled out in full at the first time of use.

All manuscripts should include:

- **Title:** a succinct description of the paper's contents, typically 15-20 words.
- **Abstract:** summarising the key argument(s) and conclusion(s) of the paper, typically 100-150 words
- **Keywords:** a maximum of 5 keywords in alphabetical order. For advice on choosing your keywords and maximising the discoverability of your article see: <https://www.sagepub.com/help-readers-find-your-article>.
- **References:** CSP adheres to the Sage Harvard reference style. View the [Sage Harvard](#) guidelines to ensure your manuscript conforms to this reference style. If you use [EndNote](#) to manage references, you can download the [Sage Harvard EndNote output file](#). Endnotes should be kept to a minimum (please note that CSP does not accept footnotes).
- **Tables and figures:** Any included tables, diagrams and figures should be placed after references with an indication in the text where they should go (e.g., “[table one here]”).

UK English: CSP is published in UK English. Manuscripts which are written in American English (or other variations) will be returned for amendment. If your article is accepted for publication you have the option of providing an abstract and keywords in another language.

Anonymisation: There should be nothing in the manuscript indicating authorship. Self-citations should appear in the text as ‘Author, date of publication’ and nothing else, and appear in the same form in references, under ‘A’ for author.

Lengthy quotations of more than 40 words should be indented; shorter quotes should be retained within the body of the text.

Copyright: Authors are responsible for obtaining permission from copyright holders for reproducing any illustrations, tables, figures or lengthy quotations previously published elsewhere.

Formatting your manuscript

Accepted file types

The preferred format for your manuscript is Word. You do not need to follow a template, but please ensure your heading levels are clear, and the sections clearly defined.

Your article title, keywords, and abstract all contribute to its position in search engine results, directly affecting the number of people who see your work. For details of what you can do to influence this, visit [How to help readers find your article online](#).

Title

Your manuscript's title should be concise, descriptive, unambiguous, accurate, and reflect the precise contents of the manuscript. A descriptive title that includes the topic of the manuscript makes an article more findable in the major indexing services.

Abstract

Please include an unstructured abstract of 100-150 words between the title and main body of your manuscript that concisely states the purpose of the research, major findings, and conclusions. If your research includes clinical trials, the trial registry name and URL, and registration number must be included at the end of the abstract. Submissions that do not meet this requirement will not be considered.

For clinical trials, the trial registry name and URL, and registration number must be included at the end of the abstract.

Keywords

Please include a maximum of 5 keywords, listed after the abstract. Keywords should be as specific as possible to the research topic.

Translation

If accepted for publication, the author/s will be invited to submit an abstract and keywords in their own language.

Artwork, figures, and other graphics

For guidance on the preparation of illustrations, pictures, and graphs in electronic format, please read Sage's [artwork guidelines](#).

Figures supplied in color will appear in color online regardless of whether or not these illustrations are reproduced in color in the printed version. If you have requested color

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Please ensure that you have obtained any necessary permission from copyright holders for reproducing any illustrations, tables, figures, or lengthy quotations previously published elsewhere. For further information including guidance on fair dealing for criticism and review, please see the [Frequently Asked Questions page](#) on the Sage Journal Author Gateway.

Statements and declarations

Please include a section with the heading 'Statements and Declarations' at the end of your submitted article, after the Acknowledgements section [and Author Contributions section if applicable] including each of the sub-headings listed below. If a declaration is not applicable to your submission, you must still include the heading and state 'Not applicable' underneath. Please note that you may be asked to justify why a declaration was not applicable to your submission by the Editorial Office.

Ethical considerations

Please include your ethics approval statements under this heading, even if you have already included ethics approval information in your methods section. If ethical approval was not required, you need to explicitly state this. You can find information on what to say in your ethical statements as well as example statements on our [Publication ethics and research integrity policies page](#).

All papers reporting studies involving human participants, human data or human tissue must state that the relevant Ethics Committee or Institutional Review Board approved the study, or waived the requirement for approval, providing the full name and institution of the review committee in addition to the approval number. If applicable, please also include this information in the Methods section of your manuscript.

Consent to participate

Please include any participant consent information under this heading and state whether informed consent to participate was written or verbal. If the requirement for informed consent to participate has been waived by the relevant Ethics Committee or Institutional Review Board (i.e. where it has been deemed that consent would be impossible or impracticable to obtain), please state this. If this is not applicable to your manuscript, please state 'Not applicable' in this section. More information and example statements can be found on our [Publication ethics and research integrity policies page](#).

Consent for publication

Submissions containing any data from an individual person (including individual details, images or videos) must include a statement confirming that informed consent for publication was provided by the participant(s) or a legally authorized representative. Non-essential identifying details should be omitted. Please do not submit the participant's actual written informed consent with your article, as this in itself breaches the patient's confidentiality. The Journal requests that you confirm to us, in writing, that you have obtained written informed consent to publish but the written consent itself should be held by the authors/investigators themselves, for example in a patient's hospital record. The confirmatory letter may be uploaded with your submission as a separate file in addition to the statement confirming that consent to publish was obtained within the manuscript text. If this is not applicable to your manuscript, please state 'Not applicable' in this section.

Declaration of conflicting interest

The journal requires a declaration of conflicting interests from all authors so that a statement can be included in your article. For guidance on conflict of interest statements, see our [policy on conflicting interest declarations](#) and the [ICMJE recommendations](#).

If no conflict exists, your statement should read: 'The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article'.

Funding statement

All articles need to include a funding statement, under a separate heading, **even if you did not receive funding**. You'll find guidance and examples on our [Funding](#) page.

Data availability

The Journal is committed to facilitating openness, transparency and reproducibility of research, and has the following research data sharing policy. For more information, including FAQs please [visit the Sage Research Data policy pages](#).

Subject to appropriate ethical and legal considerations, authors are encouraged to:

- Share your research data in a relevant public data repository
- Include a data availability statement linking to your data. If it is not possible to share your data, use the statement to confirm why it cannot be shared.
- Cite this data in your research

Reference style and citations

The journal follows the Sage Harvard reference style. View the [Sage Harvard guidelines](#) to ensure your manuscript conforms.

Every in-text citation must have a corresponding citation in the reference list and vice versa. Corresponding citations must have identical spelling and year.

Authors should update any references to preprints when a peer reviewed version is made available, to cite the published research. Citations to preprints are otherwise discouraged.

EndNote

If you use [EndNote](#) to manage references, you can download the [Sage Harvard EndNote output file](#).

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This Journal can host additional materials online (e.g. datasets, podcasts, videos, images etc.) alongside the full text of the article. Your supplemental material must be one of our accepted file types. For that list and more information please refer to our [guidelines on submitting supplemental files](#).

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Authors seeking assistance with English language editing, translation, or figure and manuscript formatting to fit the journal's specifications should consider using Sage Author Services. Visit [Sage Author Services](#) for further information.

Acknowledgments

If you are including an Acknowledgements section, this will be published at the end of your article. The Acknowledgments section should include all contributors who do not meet the criteria for authorship. Per [ICMJE recommendations](#), it is best practice to obtain consent from non-author contributors who you are acknowledging in your manuscript.

Writing assistance and third party submissions: if you have received any writing or editing assistance from a third-party, for example a specialist communications company, this must be clearly stated in the Acknowledgements section and in the covering letter. Please see the [Sage Author Gateway](#) for what information to include in your Acknowledgements section. If your submission is being made on your behalf by

someone who is not listed as an author, for example the third-party who provided writing/editing assistance, you must state this in the Acknowledgements and also in your covering letter. **Please note that the journal editor reserves the right to not consider submissions made by a third party rather than by the author/s themselves.**

Submitting your manuscript

As part of the submission process you will need to confirm that this is your original work, that you have the rights in the work, that this is for first publication in this Journal, that it is not being considered for/has not already been published elsewhere, and that you have obtained and can supply all necessary permissions for the reproduction of any copyright works not owned by you.

Please see our [guidelines on prior publication](#) and note that the journal may accept submissions of manuscripts that have been posted on preprint servers.

Submission site

If you are considering publishing with *Critical Social Policy* we hope this guidance will help you to decide if we are the right journal for you and give you some pointers for the development of your article. It is our aim to provide a space for publication for all of those interested in critical studies of social policy and as such we are keen to receive submissions from practitioners, policy makers, those working in local government or in third sector organisations, those who use services, activists and academics at all stages in their career.

We welcome articles relating to any area of social policy and from any part of the world. We adopt a broad definition of social policy as anything which focuses on government and societal responses to social need. However, we do expect all articles to adopt a *critical approach* to social policy. By this we mean that articles should develop an analysis and discussion based on critical theoretical, political or ideological understandings.

Please read the information below. Please note that manuscripts not conforming to CSP requirements may be returned.

As part of the submission process you will be required to warrant that you are submitting your original work, that you have the rights in the work, and that you have obtained and can supply all necessary permissions for the reproduction of any copyright works not owned by you, that you are submitting the work for first

publication in the journal and that it is not being considered for publication elsewhere and has not already been published elsewhere. Please see our guidelines on prior publication and note that *CSP* may accept submissions of papers that have been posted on pre-print servers; please alert the Editorial Office when submitting (contact details are at the end of these guidelines) and include the DOI for the preprint when making your submission.

All submissions must include two documents in Word format:

- The anonymous manuscript
- A completed cover letter using the *CSP* template which can be downloaded [here](#).

Please note, any submissions which do not include these two documents will be returned. All submissions should be emailed to the Journal Administrator, Jenna Allsopp at articlescsp@gmail.com.

We aim to acknowledge all submissions within 48 hours of receipt. However, occasionally this may take a little longer. If you have not received an acknowledgement of your submission within seven working days, please follow up with the Journal Administrator, Jenna Allsopp at articlescsp@gmail.com.

Authorship

Please [view our authorship policies](#), which includes information on criteria for authorship, who should be the corresponding author and more.

Please note that AI chatbots, for example ChatGPT, should not be listed as authors. For more information see the [policy on Use of ChatGPT and generative AI tools](#).

Peer review policy

The following summary describes the peer review process for this journal:

Identity transparency: Single-anonymized

Reviewer interacts with: Editorial Collective

Review information published: None

Unlike most academic journals, but in keeping with its core values, *CSP* does not have a single editor but instead operates as an Editorial Collective (EC). Whilst individual EC members may volunteer to take on specific roles for a defined term of office, all members are equal and all play an equal role in editorial decisions. All editorial decisions, including whether or not to publish individual articles, are taken by

members of the collective; we do not use external reviewers. However, we do operate a rigorous double blind peer review process, as follows.

All submissions to *Critical Social Policy* are refereed anonymously by three members of the EC. The Journal Administrator allocates articles for review to EC members, based on their expertise and interests. EC members do not know who else is reviewing each article. Fully anonymised articles are emailed to EC members approximately 5 weeks prior to each EC meeting. A convenor is appointed for each article who will write to the corresponding author with a collective decision 2-3 weeks after the EC meeting. The EC meets 4 times per year (in late January, late April, late June and late October). Manuscripts should be submitted at least 6 weeks in advance of an EC meeting to be considered. The Journal Administrator is a paid role and, whilst central to the smooth functioning of *CSP*, is not a member of the EC.

Each article is discussed by the three referees at the EC meeting and a joint decision is reached on whether or not to accept the article. The possible decisions are:

- **Publish:** the article is accepted for publication with no requested changes. This outcome is rare.
- **Publish edit:** the article is accepted for publication subject to the satisfactory completion of minor edits.
- **Re-write:** the authors are invited to re-write the article and resubmit for further review at the next EC meeting; no guarantee of publication is made.
- **No publish:** the article is not considered suitable for publication in *CSP* and is rejected.

Letters to corresponding authors clearly state the editorial decision and provide a summary of the reasons for that decision. Where the decision is rewrite, the letter will set out the revisions the author needs to make. There is no guarantee that re-submitted articles will be accepted; re-submitted articles which pay close attention to the points raised by the reviewers have a far greater chance of acceptance than those which do not. Any resubmission should be accompanied by a letter setting out what changes have been made in response to the reviewers' feedback.

CSP does not provide authors with comments from individual reviewers. The feedback is a collective view. This process is both in keeping with our values and aims to avoid the situation (common in traditional academic peer review processes) where authors are given contradictory feedback from two or more reviewers.

The editorial decision is final.

Once an article has been accepted for publication it is uploaded to ScholarOne by the Journal Administrator and passed to our publisher, Sage, who manage the production process. Sage will contact authors directly to request final amendments to proofs. The production process normally takes several weeks. After this time the article will appear

'online first' on the Sage website within 6 weeks of upload. The exception to this timescale is Themed Issues which are uploaded as a whole. The time between online and hard copy publication can be considerable.

As a COPE member we engage with multiple forms of post-publication discussion in line with wider guidance from Sage: [Commentaries, Critiques and Responses](#).

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After acceptance

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Publication

OnlineFirst publication: This enables us to publish final articles online immediately, without waiting for assignment to a future issue of the Journal. This usually significantly reduces publication lead time. Visit the [Sage Journals help page for more details](#), including how to cite OnlineFirst articles.

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Publication is not the end of the process. Between us, we can ensure that your article is found, read, downloaded and cited as widely as possible. Many of the most effective tactics are those you can do quickly and easily to your network of contacts and peers. Visit the [Promote Your Article](#) page on the Sage Journal Author Gateway for numerous resources to help you promote your work.

Further resources

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You can direct any questions to the journal's editorial office:

Jenna Allsopp-Douglas, journal administrator, at: articlescsp@gmail.com

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