

Registered Reports – Sport, Exercise, and Performance Psychology

A ‘Registered Report’ is one form of empirical article offered at *Sport, Exercise, and Performance Psychology (SEPP)* in which the methods and proposed analyses are pre-registered and peer reviewed prior to research being conducted. Unlike conventional research articles (which will continue to be published at SEPP), Registered Reports are reviewed over two stages. Editors and reviewers initially consider a detailed study protocol before the research is undertaken, which is assessed based on the specificity and importance of the research question for current theory or applications, the strength of the scientific rationale, and the rigour of the proposed methodology and analyses.

High quality protocols are provisionally accepted for publication before data collection commences (*awarded ‘in-principle acceptance’ (IPA)*). There are a number of reasons for offering Registered Reports for hypothesis-driven research. These include minimizing publication bias and ensuring studies are published regardless of the study findings (null or negative results are as valued as positive results). Such an approach also helps to optimize protocols (including design characteristics, such as ensuring studies are sufficiently powered) before studies are conducted, while also avoiding inappropriate research practices (e.g., selective reporting, etc). Pre-registration does not preclude exploratory analyses; such analyses, and the corresponding findings, need to simply be reported as exploratory alongside the primary (pre-registered) hypotheses and analyses.

Registered Reports are now offered by many journals in psychology (including several APA journals) and now SEPP is pleased to offer such a publishing option. Below are guidelines for reviewers (and in a complementary document on the [SEPP website](#) we provide parallel guidance for authors).

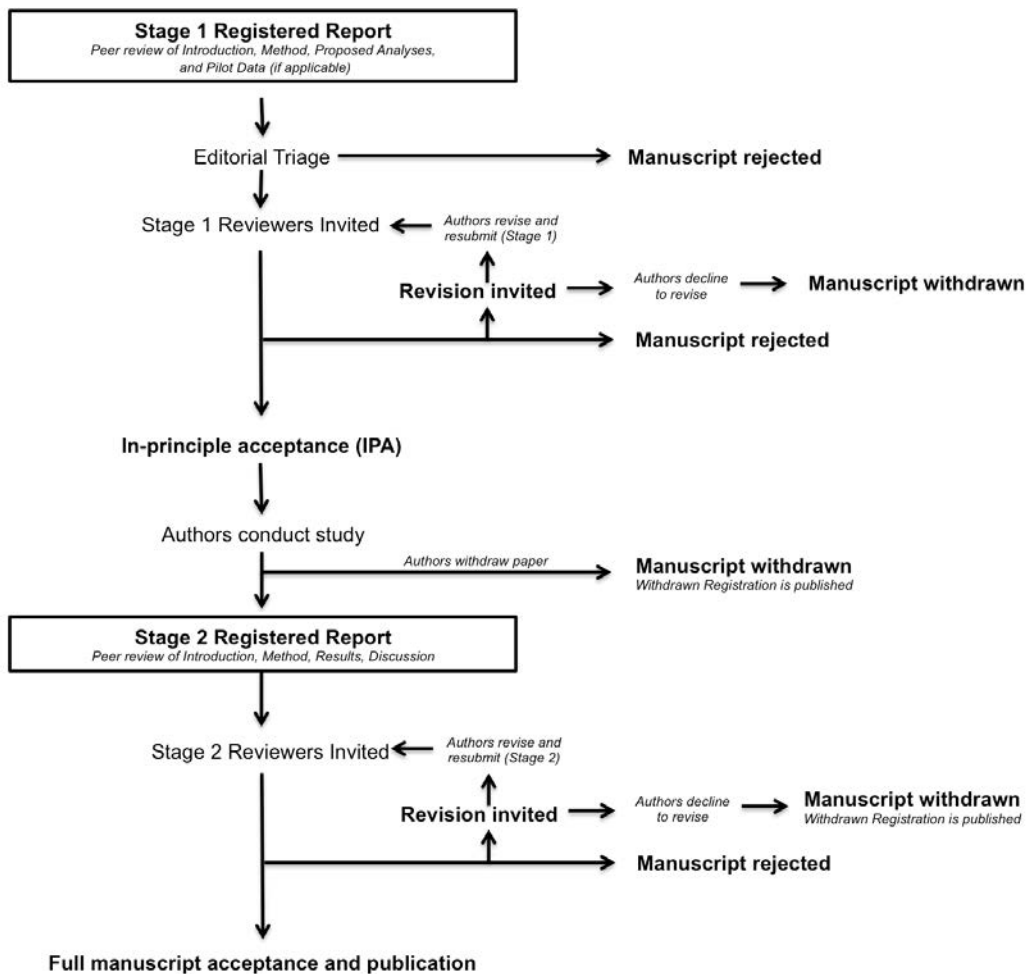
Guidelines for Reviewers

The cornerstone of the Registered Reports format is that a significant part of the manuscript will be assessed prior to data collection, with the highest quality submissions accepted in advance. Initial submissions will include a description of the key research question and background literature, hypotheses, study/experimental procedures, analysis pipeline, a statistical power analysis (or Bayesian equivalent), and pilot data (where applicable).

Initial submissions will be triaged by the editorial team (i.e., editor-in-chief in consultation with the journal’s associate editors) for suitability. Those that pass triage will then be sent for in-depth peer review (Stage 1). Following review, the article will then be rejected, accepted in-principle, or an invitation offered to revise the manuscript for further Stage 1 consideration. Following in-principle acceptance, the authors will then proceed to conduct the study, adhering exactly to the peer-reviewed procedures. When the study is complete the authors will submit their finalised manuscript for re-review (Stage 2) and will upload their deidentified raw data, digital study materials, and study/trial/laboratory log to a publicly accessible file-sharing service. Pending quality checks and a sensible interpretation of the findings, the Stage 2 manuscript will be published regardless of the results.

A flow diagram that maps out the Review Process for Registered Reports at SEPP is presented in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: The review process for Registered Reports at SEPP



Review Criteria for Stage 1 Manuscripts

Stage 1 manuscripts only include an Introduction, Methods (that includes a full reporting of the proposed study's procedures, participants, measures, as well as sample size justification, and proposed analytic plans), and pilot data (where applicable). In assessing manuscripts, we ask reviewers to assess:

- The specificity and importance of the research question(s) for sport, exercise, and/or performance. psychology.
- The logic, rationale, and plausibility of the proposed hypotheses and research questions.
- The extent to which the proposed study can address the proposed hypotheses.
- The soundness and feasibility of the methodology and analysis pipeline (including statistical power analysis).
- Whether the clarity and degree of methodological detail would be sufficient to replicate exactly the proposed study/experimental procedures and analysis pipeline.

- Whether the authors provide a sufficiently clear and detailed description of the methods to prevent undisclosed flexibility in the study/experimental procedures or analysis pipeline.
- Whether the authors have considered sufficient outcome-neutral conditions (e.g., absence of floor or ceiling effects; positive controls; manipulation checks) for ensuring that the results obtained are able to test the stated hypotheses.

Review Criteria for Stage 2 Manuscripts

For those manuscripts that progress to Stage 2, reviewers will be asked to adjudicate manuscripts with respect to the following criteria.

- Whether the data are able to test the authors' proposed hypotheses by passing the approved outcome-neutral criteria (such as manipulation checks or tests of intervention fidelity).
- Whether the Introduction, rationale, and stated hypotheses are the same as the approved Stage 1 submission (required). The Introduction section (in Stage 2 manuscripts) cannot deviate from the Stage 1 submission, except for correcting factual errors, typographic errors, and altering of tense from future to past; as such, reviewers are asked to refrain from making suggestions to revise the Introduction in Stage 2 manuscripts.
- Whether the authors adhered to the registered study/experimental procedures.
- Whether the authors' conclusions are justified given the data.
- Whether any unregistered exploratory analyses added by the authors are justified, methodologically sound, and informative.
- Reviewers may (where appropriate) recommend that authors conduct and report additional post hoc analyses; however, it is important to note that authors are not obliged to conduct and report on such analyses, unless they directly align with any of the Stage 2 criteria.