CLEAR EXAM REVIEW JOURNAL STYLE GUIDE

The Council on Licensure, Enforcement and Regulation (CLEAR) is the premier international resource for professional regulation stakeholders.

CLEAR promotes regulatory excellence through conferences, educational programs, webinars, seminars, and symposia. The organization provides networking opportunities, publications, and research services for those involved with, or affected by, professional and occupational regulation. As a neutral forum to encourage and provide for the sharing of best practices, CLEAR serves and supports the international regulatory community and its vital contribution to public protection. CLEAR has defined its own educator role as proactively identifying critical issues; providing a dynamic, interactive forum for exploration of these issues; and collecting and disseminating relevant information on them. There are four core areas of substantive inquiry that CLEAR supports through its annual conference and other venues: compliance, discipline, and enforcement; testing and examination issues; entry to practice standards and continuing competence; and regulatory agency administration.

CLEAR publishes the *CLEAR Exam Review* (*CER*). The *CER* is a bi-annual journal with useful discussions of current licensing examination issues and is geared toward a general audience. *CLEAR Exam Review* is distributed in an electronic format.

This style guide is a basic resource and reference for authors wishing to submit articles for consideration for the *CER*. It provides answers to the common questions about the *CER* Journal's required style, which follows the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Seventh Edition (2020).* The *Publication Manual* covers the following:

- Submissions
- Lists
- Numbers
- Punctuation
- Tables and Figures
- Academic Degrees and Titles
- APA Format: In-text Citations, References, and Resources
- General and Miscellaneous
- Author Bios
- Disclosure of the Use of A.I. Technology

Submissions

Articles for consideration should be digitally submitted online at: [CLEAR Exam Review article submission](#). Articles must be submitted in Microsoft Word, Times New Roman 12-point font, single spaced, paragraphs indented (not justified). Articles typically range in length from approximately 2,000 to 4,000 words, although longer articles will be considered. Ultimately, the article should be of an appropriate length to cover the topic.

Articles should be related to examinations or assessments in the context of professional licensure and certification and should not be advertisements or endorsements of a particular vendor, proprietary product, or solution. Articles should focus on broad-based practices and not one specific method or specific solution unless the solution described would generalize and be useful to others.

Lists

Lists should conform to APA style. Very short lists of no more than five items can easily be set as run-ins to the text. Longer lists should be displayed in a vertical list format, numbered or bulleted, and introduced by a complete grammatical sentence typically ending with a colon:
1.
2.
3.
etc.

Numbers

According to the APA, in general, use numerals to express numbers 10 and above, and use words to express numbers zero through nine. Exceptions to this include when working with scores or ratings from 1 to 4. Using numerals makes it clear that specific scores are meant, not descriptors.

- Spell out large whole numbers such as three billion or ten thousand. But use numerals after the $ sign (e.g., $1 trillion).
- For age ranges, use numbers: 60s, not sixties.
- Always spell out numbers at the beginning of a sentence. However, it's best to avoid this by revising the sentence. For example: "The year 1998 was exciting," rather than "Nineteen-ninety-eight was exciting."
- *Percent.* Use the % sign: 10%, not 10 percent.
- *Degrees.* Spell out *degrees* but not the number; that is, 100 degrees, not one hundred degrees.
- *Time of day.* Spell out even, half, and quarter hours in running text: "The meeting begins at ten thirty and ends at a quarter to twelve." But use numerals for exact times: "The train leaves at 9:23 a.m."
- *Ages*. Spell out ages: "He is sixty-five years old."
- *Decades.* Use numerals, as in 1990s.
- *Centuries.* Spell out, as in twenty-first century.

Punctuation

- *Spacing.* Use a single space after a period at the end of a sentence. Add a space between dots in ellipsis.
- *Serial commas.* All items in a series are separated by commas (also known as the Oxford comma). For example: The grocery basket held eggs, apples, milk, bread, and cookies.
- *Contractions.* Contractions are generally accepted as more user-friendly for ease of reading.
- *Periods.* Omit periods for figure headings.

Tables and Figures

Tables, as well as figures and other illustrations, should be as simple as possible and

understandable on their own. Typically, tables are used for numerical and technical information. Tables and figures should be referenced in the text, as in "See Table 1.1." They should be labeled at the top with the table number in bold, followed by the description:

Table 1.1. The Increase of Animals in Shelters Since 2000

Academic Degrees and Titles

Omit periods in academic degrees, with the exception of M.D. and Ph.D. Always include the academic credentials M.D. or Ph.D. when referring to someone the first time. After that, the person can be referred to as Dr. Use uppercase for author job titles.

APA Format: In-text Citations, References, and Resources

- *Citing Sources.* Whenever you draw information from a source, cite the source to tell the reader where the information comes from. In other words, include citations for quotes, paraphrases, and summaries of all previously published work. Any direct quotations over 40 words should be indented as block quotes.
- *In-text citations: Author-date system.* In-text citations should include the author and date of the reference, such as, "In a study of the U.S. population (Jones, 2012). . . ." For two authors, use **&**: (Jones & Wei, 2012). For more than two authors, use **et al.,**: (Jones et al., 2012). For each citation, a full reference entry should follow at the end of the article.
- *References.* A reference list should follow each article in which the author includes in-text citations. Use APA format for the reference list. For example, the APA format for a journal article follows this template:

Author, A. A., Author, B. B., & Author, C. C. (Year). Title of article. *Title of Periodical*, *volume number*(issue number), pages. https://doi.org/xx.xxx/yyyy

- *Resources.* Authors may include a list of resources in addition to references. Resources are not cited in the article but provide useful information for readers. Include the same identifying information for each resource as for a reference entry.

General and Miscellaneous

- *Vocabulary Terms.* CLEAR maintains a glossary of general terms and testing terms used in Professional and Occupational Regulation. These terms may be found on CLEAR's website here: [Glossary of General Terminology Used in Professional and Occupational Regulation](). CLEAR's [DEI Definitions]() Working Group has developed definitions of key terms frequently used in discussions about diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). Use these terms as they are described and published by CLEAR.
- *Use first person as needed.* According to the APA manual, use first-person pronouns to describe your work as well as your personal reactions. If you are writing a paper by yourself, use the pronoun "I" to refer to yourself. If you are writing a paper with coauthors, use the pronoun "we" to refer to yourself and your coauthors together.
- *Bias-free language guidelines: Pronouns.* According to the APA manual, always use a

person's self-identified pronoun, including when a person uses the singular "they" as their pronoun. Also use "they" as a generic third-person singular pronoun to refer to a person whose gender is unknown or irrelevant to the context of the usage. Do not use "he" or "she" alone as generic third-person singular pronouns. Use combination forms such as "he or she" and "she or he" only if you know that these pronouns match the people being described. Do not use combination forms such as "(s)he" and "s/he." If you do not know the pronouns of the person being described, reword the sentence to avoid a pronoun or use the pronoun "they."

- *Place names.* In running text, spell out names of cities, states, and countries. Do not abbreviate. "U.S." may be used as an adjective.
- *Age of references:* Use sources that are no more than five years old, except in cases such as seminal work and government studies where more current material is not available.
- *Bias-free language guidelines: Terms for specific groups*. According to the APA some American people of African ancestry prefer "Black," and others prefer "African American"; both terms are acceptable. When writing about people of European ancestry, the terms "White" and "European American" are acceptable. In general, use commonly accepted designations (e.g., census categories) while being sensitive to your subjects' preferred designation.

Author Bios

Authors should include professional bios of 60-70 words and a photo. Including contact information (email, phone, or website) is encouraged.

Disclosure of the Use of A.I. Technology

If authors choose to use generative A.I. tools during the writing process, they are required to include a declaration before the reference list. The disclosure statement should follow this format:

> Disclosure of A.I. technology in the writing process: *The author(s) used **[NAME OF TOOL]** while preparing this article to **[REASON]**. The author(s) have reviewed and edited the content with care and assume full responsibility for the content of the article.*

This policy doesn't apply to basic tools like spelling and grammar checkers. (This policy is based upon the Elsevier author guidelines, May 2023.)

Review Process

Articles submitted will be reviewed by the editors and the editorial committee. Please be prepared to receive feedback including the need for revisions and suggestions for improvement. Be advised that the review process may take 6 months or more before publication.

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