EDITORIAL

AMEE MedEdPublish Version 2 Launch Editorial [version 1]

Richard Hays

University of Tasmania

Abstract
This article was migrated. The article was marked as recommended.

AMEE MedEdPublish was launched two years ago as a new outlet for scholarship in medical education (Hays, 2016). The on-line journal format broke new ground in a context where the proportion of papers submitted to medical education journals achieving publication was falling sharply. All academic journals face challenges obtaining sufficient reviews to make sound judgements about the quality of the scholarship. Indeed, a substantial proportion of submitted papers are now rejected prior to reviews being invited. Further, while review processes are becoming increasingly open, concerns remain about the potential for various forms of bias in reviews (Smith, 2006). Authors may be confused with editorial decisions to reject manuscripts, despite positive peer reviews. These potential helpful trails of original submission, reviews, feedback, discussion and revision are generally hidden from the readership.

MedEdPublish has taken the approach of conducting initial, 'light touch' reviewing by editors, rapid on-line publication and facilitating open, 'live' discussion between reviewers, authors and the general readership on the strengths and weaknesses of each paper. Two years after implementation, it is timely to review the initial phase, explain the revised editorial management process and provide information about the software that is being introduced with this issue.

Keywords
AMEE MedEdPublish, Opening Editorial

Open Peer Review

Migrated Content
"Migrated Content" refers to articles submitted to and published in the publication before moving to the current platform. These articles are static and cannot be updated.

1. Barbara Jennings, Norwich Medical School
2. Tripti Srivastava, Datta Meghe Institute of Medical Sciences Deemed University
3. Sateesh Babu Arja, Avalon University School of Medicine
4. Jonathan McFarland, Sechenov University, Moscow
5. P Ravi Shankar, American International Medical University

Any reports and responses or comments on the article can be found at the end of the article.
What have we published?
During the last two years, we have published eight themed issues at three-monthly intervals. Themes are summarised in Table 1. Each themed issue has had a guest Theme Editor to coordinate a series of articles related to the theme and manage other papers relevant to the theme submitted by the readership. All themed articles are indicated by a T symbol in the contents pages. Articles on topics outside the theme for the particular issue continue to be submitted, managed by the editorial team and published alongside themed papers.

A total of 593 papers have been submitted, with 512 (86.3%) accepted and 81 (13.7%) rejected. Most decisions to reject papers were based on formatting difficulties in the management software that were able to be fixed and re-submitted. A small number of submitted papers were judged to be not in scope or to not have appropriate ethics statements.

Reviews
Several hundred reviews were received from the panel of about 90 registered reviewers and registered readers. At least two reviews have been submitted for 76.6% of all published papers and some have received 10 or more reviews (see Table 2). Initially, editors contributed a substantial proportion of reviews, but this is decreasing as panel and readership reviews increase in numbers. A high proportion of reviews are submitted within 72 hours of publication. The quality of reviews has varied, but most follow the guidelines for reviewers. In general, the better papers attract higher quality reviews. Reasons for attracting fewer reviews appear related to the format (personal opinion and editorials attract fewer responses), a narrow focus on a less popular topic, topics that may not be relevant to a larger health professions education audience, and poor readability. Another factor may be timing of publication, as papers published late in the theme cycle have high visibility for a shorter period. Managing Editors invite further reviews where no or few reviews are submitted within four weeks of publication.

No cases of abusive reviews or responses have been reported. While some of the discussions have been robust, the tone has remained constructive, thus we have published so far all reviews, comments and responses in the interest of openness.

There have been 20, 115, 168, 167 and 28 papers awarded, respectively, 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 stars. The number of stars generally reflects the review activity outlined above. From a total of 512 papers submitted during the first 2 years, 193 have achieved ‘Recommended’ status. These data are summarised in Table 3.

Published articles with several reviews, responses by authors and comments from readers have provided an interesting and potentially instructive narrative. This open discussion thread should be of value in assisting educators to develop as scholars in medical education, improving their understanding of how to publish academic articles and contributing to our community of practice – scholars in health professional education.

The revised management software is being used from the current issue, commencing July 2018. While most improvements have been at the ‘back end’ to improve the editorial management process, the readership view is ‘re-freshed’, with more papers listed by recency and format. Search functions have improved. Authors will notice differences during submission. An appropriate ethics statement has become a mandatory field for papers that report research and evaluation activity, and authors are advised strongly to nominate at least two (up to four) potential reviewers, based on expertise but unrelated to the authors’ institutions and immediate professional networks. Papers submitted without reviewer nominations will be accepted, but the review process is likely to be slower and achievement of a meaningful star rating more difficult. We are also introducing tighter timelines for themed issues and delaying publication in the final weeks of each issue, because we have noticed that papers published late in each issue are visible for shorter time and thus attract fewer reviews.

Measuring the impact
Two years is not sufficient time to gain an accurate sense of the impact of the new journal on scholarship in health professions education, but there are some early signs of strong dissemination. There have been 224,991 unique page views and 132 citations of 92 articles identified in Google Scholar. The latter provides a strong platform on which to build citation impact once listing in indexing services is achieved.

Where to next?
The priority for the next year is to gain recognition in indexing services, such as PubMedCentral. The initial goal of achieving listing of papers awarded ‘Recommended’ status remains. This means that we will focus on the quantity and quality of reviews as we submit our case to indexing services. Other changes to the software are being considered for the next version. Depending on how well the author nomination of reviewers’ works, this may become mandatory. Connecting themed papers across issues is a priority, as what constitutes an ‘issue’ is a rather arbitrary decision around
three monthly periods, whereas many conversations should be, and are, ongoing. We are considering introducing two parallel star ratings, one each for Panel members and the general readership, to separate those reviews and potentially generate more discussion. All changes are aimed at improving the openness and quality of communication about scholarship in medical education within our community of practice and encourage ongoing scholarly dialogue.

In conclusion, after the successful, initial two years of this new AMEE journal, the future looks bright. We invite more colleagues to participate through submitting articles, reviewing and joining in the discussion threads around each paper.

**Take Home Messages**
This paper is an introduction to Version 2 of AMEE MedEdPublish Website and a review of the past two years of the publication.

**Notes On Contributors**
Richard Hays is Professor of Medical Education with appointments at James Cook University and the University of Tasmania, both in Australia. He was a rural medical generalist in northern Queensland before becoming a teacher and education researcher, gaining further qualifications in educational psychology and medical education. He has had roles in the development of several medical education programmes, including new medical schools in Australia (JCU), the United States and the United Kingdom. He has also been involved in national and international research and education work in Australia, Malaysia, India, China, the United States, South Africa, and the United Kingdom.
Kingdom (Keele), Ireland (Limerick), Canada (Northern Ontario and Northern British Columbia) and in South-East Asia. He has also participated in many international medical education quality assurance reviews in Australia, New Zealand, the Western Pacific region, Asia, Europe and the UK. He has a strong record of gaining research grants and publishing, primarily on assessment, curriculum design and educational quality assurance (see orcid.org/0000-0002-3875-3134). He has continued part-time clinical practice throughout his career.

**Declarations**
The author has declared the conflicts of interest below.
Professor Richard Hays is the Editor of the journal AMEE MedEdPublish.

**Ethics Statement**
No Ethics Approval is required for this paper.

**External Funding**
This article has not had any External Funding.

**Acknowledgments**
I am grateful to my colleagues on the editorial team for their assistance in preparing this report on the last two years of AMEE MedEdPublish: Trevor Gibbs, Ken Masters, Subha Ramani, Pat Lilley, Ronald Harden and Kerrie McKay.

**Bibliography/References**

Hays, R. (2016) *A new outlet for medical education scholarship*. MedEdPublish 5(1).

Smith, R. (2006) *Peer review: a flawed process at the heart of science and journals*. Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine. 99(4), pp. 178–182.
Open Peer Review

Migrated Content

Version 1

Reviewer Report 07 July 2018

https://doi.org/10.21956/mep.19606.r29125

© 2018 Shankar P. This is an open access peer review report distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

P Ravi Shankar
American International Medical University

This review has been migrated. The reviewer awarded 5 stars out of 5

I read with great interest the editorial by Dr Hays about AMEE MedEdPublish. He provides a concise overview of the journal during its first two years of publishing. I am an avid reader, occasional contributor and reviewer for the journal. The journal publishes a wider range of manuscripts compared to more traditional journals. Many papers are very practical and I have learned a lot from the papers published in MedEdPublish. Articles are usually published within seven days of submission and the post publication peer review process allows for dialogue and communication between educators. These are exciting times for the journal and I wish the journal and everyone associated with it all the best and continuous growth and development. COI: I am an occasional reviewer and a member of the panel of reviewers for the journal

Competing Interests: No conflicts of interest were disclosed.

Reviewer Report 06 July 2018

https://doi.org/10.21956/mep.19606.r29127

© 2018 McFarland J. This is an open access peer review report distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

Jonathan McFarland
Sechenov University, Moscow
As the Theme Editor for the new theme on Humanities in Medical Education I read this editorial with great interest. It explained very well how far MedEdPublish has come in such a short time, giving interesting and important information on what has been published in the two years since the journal was launched. It also gives an insight into the review system, with details about the reviews per paper and the star ratings. I am very excited by this whole initiative as, for me, it is a very important step in the right direction. Richard Smith in his seminal paper, referenced in this editorial, talks about opening up the whole reviewing process, and transforming it from a black box into an open scientific discourse. I firmly believe that MedEdPublish is leading the way in this respect, and this editorial explains how this has been made to date, and what the next steps will be. I agree that the future looks bright and would suggest that this editorial is a “must read” for all those who are interested in the future of medical education. * COI - I should declare that I am Theme Editor for the theme on Humanities in Medical Education

**Competing Interests:** No conflicts of interest were disclosed.

---

AMEE MedEdPublish has established an optimistic and welcome approach to scholarships in education which is much evident from the author’s analysis of past two years of the websites’ meaningful existence. The editorial gives a clear insight into what the team aims for MedEdPublish in near future and their strong commitment to encourage visibility of enormous work and scope in medical education worldwide. It is indeed an encouraging platform to patronize the efforts of various contributors which otherwise would have been lost in oblivion. As a review panel member, it has helped me stay abreast with the new ideas, viewpoints, trending issues and learn a bit from every manuscript. Looking forward for a rewarding experience with the new and engaging features! All the Best for future endeavors!

**Competing Interests:** No conflicts of interest were disclosed.
Sateesh Babu Arja  
Avalon University School of Medicine

This review has been migrated. The reviewer awarded 5 stars out of 5

This commentary is very useful and clearly explained the need for MedEdPublish. There is a strong need for a platform like AMEE MedEdPublish for the educators to disseminate their scholarly work. No only disseminating the work, there is a requirement for the platform like MedEdPublish where educators can have open access to medical education articles. This is very useful for rapid publication of articles in large number with wider access. The vision and the objectives of MedEdPublish are clearly detailed in this commentary. This is very useful for all members. All the best.

**Competing Interests:** No conflicts of interest were disclosed.

Barbara Jennings  
Norwich Medical School

This review has been migrated. The reviewer awarded 5 stars out of 5

In another landmark editorial for MedEdPublish, Richard Hays summarises some of this online journal's achievements and innovations. These include the handling of 593 manuscripts and 8 successful themed-editions so far; and the continuous improvement of the management software. I have just had a browse of the newly launched site and I found the layout intuitive and I love some new features; for example, I can now open a list of all the manuscripts that I have submitted reviews for. This will be a valuable curation tool for active reviewers.The ethos and practicalities of open peer-review are explored and it is encouraging to note how constructive the process has been. The impact of this journal is set to grow and grow, with PubMed indexing being the next priority for the MedEdPublish team. In the meantime we can all enjoy interesting open-access papers and more collegiate discussion about educational research.*  

**COI:** I should declare that I am a member of the journal's editorial board as well as a regular reviewer & avid reader.
**Competing Interests:** No conflicts of interest were disclosed.