Instructions to Authors provide authors with the details required by a journal for manuscript preparation and submission. In addition to general formatting guidelines, journals play a critical role in the research process by identifying best practices for publication ethics. The checklist below is designed to assist publication professionals interested in strengthening their guidelines or revising an existing one. The checklist is not exhaustive, but provides a framework by which journals can best inform their readers of a journal’s publication practices.

I. Copyright Practice

___ All authors sign copyright
___ One author signs copyright

II. Authorship

___ Authorship criteria
___ Revisions approved by all authors
___ Final versions approved by all authors
___ All authors sign off prior to submission
___ Listing of author contributions
___ Acknowledgment criteria

III. Reference Practices

___ Permission for personal communications
___ Submit “in press” or “submitted” manuscript

IV. Publishing Practices

___ Notification of prior publication
___ Data deposited in clinical or other structured database
___ Duplicate publishing (language)
___ Simultaneous submission

V. Financial Disclosures

___ Identifying financial support for research
___ Full financial disclosure for authors
VI. Peer Review

___ Reviewer conflict of interest
___ Financial disclosure
___ Referee suggestions made by author
___ Confidentiality of manuscript ensured by reviewer

VII. Human Subject Research

___ Helsinki Declaration
___ IRB Review
___ Permission to use pictures

VIII. Animal Research

___ Use and care of animals

IX. Correcting literature

___ Does the journal address retractions?
___ Does the journal address corrections?
___ Do the details regarding literature corrections address what signatures are necessary before literature corrections are made?

X. Research Misconduct

___ Defines research misconduct; what it does and does not include
___ Explains process for handling manuscripts in question
___ Does the journal address the types of administrative sanctions it will impose should scientific misconduct be determined?
___ Is a letter of reprimand issued to author, institution, funding agency?