Chapter 18
Educational Studies in Mathematics: Shaping the Field

Merrilyn Goos

Abstract This chapter provides a description of the distinctive features of *Educational Studies in Mathematics*, a major journal in mathematics education, together with information and advice on manuscript submission, reviewing processes, and editorial decision making. Key aspects of the journal's history are also highlighted to draw attention to its role in developing editorial policies and processes that are now common in all major mathematics education journals. Although the journal's content and procedures have evolved significantly since its founding in 1968, its unique ethos has remained unchanged and is characterised by an emphasis on high-level articles of international significance, encouragement of manuscript submissions from a wide range of countries, an inclusive orientation to research content and methods, and consistency in editorial approach and standards.

Keywords Journals in mathematics education · Educational Studies in Mathematics · Academic publishing · Manuscript submission and review · Editorial decisions

18.1 Introduction

In this chapter I describe the distinctive characteristics of *Educational Studies in Mathematics (ESM)*, one of the first international journals in mathematics education founded in 1968, and outline issues to bear in mind when submitting manuscripts to this journal. The journal's evolution reflects not only the development of mathematics education as a field of research, but also the formalisation of editorial procedures and policies that are now common in all major mathematics education research journals. In the next section of the chapter I provide a brief historical overview of the journal's development. I then discuss the distinctive features of *ESM* in the context of deciding on which journal to target as an outlet for your

M. Goos (✉)
University of Limerick, Limerick, Ireland
e-mail: merrilyn.goos@ul.ie

G. Kaiser and N. Presmeg (eds.), *Compendium for Early Career Researchers in Mathematics Education*, ICME-13 Monographs,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-15636-7_18

research. Next I describe the manuscript submission and review processes, and offer advice on interpreting editorial decisions, responding to reviewers, and preparing revisions. Finally, I outline the role of special issues and the emergence of editorial policies for their management. The overarching aim of the chapter is to open the 'black box' of journal publishing so as to reveal the workings of one of the leading journals in mathematics education.

18.2 Some History

Readers interested in *ESM*'s history are encouraged to consult the paper by Hanna and Sidoli (2002), which celebrated the publication of Volume 50. In that paper the authors noted that *ESM* was born out of the International Commission on Mathematical Instruction (ICMI), with ICMI President Hans Freudenthal its founding Editor. The first issue, published in 1968, began with Freudenthal's address at a 1967 ICMI Colloquium titled "Why to teach mathematics so as to be useful". In the journal's early days Freudenthal exercised significant autonomy: for example, although he appointed an Editorial Board, its role was unclear in terms of influencing journal content since "papers were selected at Freudenthal's discretion" (p. 126). However, the beginnings of *ESM*'s editorial policies can be observed in Freudenthal's interest in publishing articles "by authors from as many different countries as possible" (p. 127). This international flavour remains a feature of *ESM*.

ESM's second Editor, Alan Bishop, succeeded Freudenthal in 1978. During his tenure Bishop introduced the practice of having every manuscript reviewed by at least two members of the Editorial Board. This approach created a distinct style for the journal and laid the foundation for consistency and continuity of standards that has underpinned the work of the *ESM* Editorial Board over subsequent years. Bishop was also responsible for writing the first statement of editorial policy that articulated the journal's aims and scope:

> *Educational Studies in Mathematics* presents new ideas and developments which are considered to be of major importance to those working in the field of mathematics education. It seeks to reflect both the variety of research concerns within this field and the range of methods used to study them. It deals with didactical, methodological and pedagogical subjects rather than with specific programmes for teaching mathematics. All papers are strictly refereed and the emphasis is on high-level articles which are of more than local importance.

This editorial statement communicated Bishop's desire to make *ESM* both academically rigorous and inclusive, in terms of research aims and methodologies. A version of Bishop's statement of aims and scope still appears, in almost exactly the same form, on the journal's website (https://www.springer.com/education+%26+language/mathematics+education/journal/10649).

Willibald Dörfler took on the role of *ESM* Editor-in-Chief in 1990, for the first time with the support of two additional editors due to increases in the journal workload. Under his editorship the Editorial Board was expanded "to represent as

broad as possible a range in terms of location, culture, nationality, and theoretical orientation" (Hanna and Sidoli 2002, p. 130). Dörfler also formalised and documented the manuscript review process, although most reviews were still done by members of the Editorial Board. He was the first *ESM* Editor to communicate quality criteria for publishable papers, which he described in an invited symposium talk as follows:

> (1) the rationale for the research should be explicitly formulated and explained; (2) the background philosophy should be stated and recognisable; (3) the research results should be presented and separated from their interpretation; and (4) the relevance of the research to mathematics education should be made clear. (Dörfler 1993, cited in Hanna and Sidoli 2002, p. 131)

It was not until Kenneth Ruthven took over as Editor-in-Chief in 1996 that these criteria became part of the journal's editorial policy, and since then they have been published in the form of "Advice to Prospective Authors" at the beginning of every Volume of *ESM*. While successive Editors-in-Chief have introduced additional measures to manage the journal, its distinctive ethos has remained unchanged and is characterised by an emphasis on high-level articles of international significance, encouragement of manuscript submissions from a wide range of countries, an inclusive orientation to research content and methods, and a consistent editorial approach achieved through relatively stable membership of the Editorial Board and selection of Associate Editors and Editor-in-Chief from amongs its members.

18.3 Selecting a Target Journal: Why Choose *ESM*?

Decisions about which journal to target as a publication outlet for your research can be guided by three questions: (1) Is the journal a good fit for your research? (2) What is the standing of the journal? (3) What practical issues should be taken into account? Each of these questions is addressed in what follows, in the context of *ESM*'s distinctive features and publication format.

18.3.1 Goodness of Fit

A first 'rule of thumb' for evaluating whether a journal is a good fit for your research involves looking at the journal's statement of aims and scope. One of the key requirements of papers published in *ESM* is that they should be of more than local importance. This means that, although the data for a study may have been collected in a specific context, the research questions and findings need to be framed so that they are relevant and accessible to audiences beyond this context. The role of theory is crucial in demonstrating such relevance, since a strong theoretical framework allows readers to reinterpret the findings of a study in light of their local circumstances.

A second, related, consideration is the journal's intended audience. *ESM* has always sought to engage with an international audience: an indicator of its success in achieving this goal comes from an analysis of visits to the journal website by geographic region. For the last few years the largest reader groups have been in the Asia-Pacific region, Europe and North America, with smaller but still significant numbers accessing the website from Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America. The author of a publishable manuscript will be sensitive to this broad and diverse audience, and will avoid making assumptions about what readers know of the local educational context and the language used to describe this context. Another measure of the journal's international reach is the large number of countries of origin of authors of submitted manuscripts, usually exceeding 50 different countries each year. The number of countries from which authors of accepted manuscripts come is around 20 per year. Although the source of most of these articles tends to be countries in which English is the dominant language, in recent years *ESM* has published articles from many other countries, such as Chile, China, Colombia, Indonesia, Japan, Kenya, Lebanon, Peru, and Turkey.

18.3.2 Journal Standing

Beginning researchers are often curious as to how to evaluate a journal's quality and academic standing. While the rejection rate can give an indication of how easy or difficult it might be to have a manuscript accepted for publication, it can also be an artefact of the very large number of manuscript submissions received by high-quality journals (more than 300 per year for *ESM*) combined with the fixed number of journal issues per year that limits the number of articles that can be published. Other indications of journal standing can be derived from three sources: (1) knowledge of the academic reputations of the journal Editors and Editorial Board members, (2) the journal's record of publishing ground breaking research, and (3) journal impact data and ranking studies. Information on the first of these indicators can be obtained from a journal's website: Are the editorial team and Editorial Board members leaders in their fields? Do they represent a range of theoretical and methodological perspectives? Knowledge related to the second indicator can result from familiarity with your own research field: Which landmark studies inform your own research, and in which journals were they published?

Information on journal impact and ranking can come from either quantitative sources, such as citation-based metrics, or qualitative sources, such as surveys that seek expert assessments of journal quality. Although citation-based measures such as journal impact factors and similar indices are widely used by universities to evaluate the work of academics for promotion and tenure, these metrics have shortcomings that suggest they should be used with caution. For example, one problem with the three major journal ranking systems—the Web of Science's Impact Factor, Scopus's SCImago Journal Rank, and Google Scholar Metrics' *h5-index*—is that citations for each are only tracked within their own databases.

For mathematics education, this practice excludes many important journals. (See Nivens and Otten 2017, for a discussion of journal metrics).

Expert peer assessment provides an alternative methodology for judging journal quality, although a difficulty here is possible lack of consistency amongst peer assessors in deciding what is meant by 'quality'. In addition, surveys seeking such assessments rarely achieve wide international coverage, which might raise questions about the influence of academic cultures in different countries on journal rankings obtained via these methods. Williams and Leatham (2017) addressed these problems in a recent study that compared rankings of mathematics education research journals from citation-based and opinion-based (i.e., peer assessment) methods. There was substantial agreement between the rankings yielded by both these approaches, which identified the *Journal for Research in Mathematics Education* and *Educational Studies in Mathematics* as "the two most cited and respected journals in our field by a substantial margin" (p. 389). Their study also found that many other mathematics education journals are regarded as being of at least medium to high quality. A further valuable finding of their study was a list of factors that had influenced survey respondents providing their journal quality rankings. The top three factors judged as "Very Influential" were the high quality of most of the articles published, the quality of the peer-review process, and the high reputation of the journal amongst colleagues and experts. With regard to peer review, high-quality journals used reviewers who provided "rigorous and constructive" feedback, and had editorial teams that "worked closely with authors to improve the articles, both with respect to shepherding authors through the revision process and through quality editing in preparing the final version for print" (p. 388).

18.3.3 Practical Issues

Prospective authors are usually interested in finding out about such practical matters as article length limitations and the time taken for manuscripts to be reviewed and then published if accepted. *Educational Studies in Mathematics* has a longstanding preference for articles no longer than 8000 words, including references and estimation of an equivalent word allowance for the space taken up by any Tables and Figures. This results in finished articles usually no longer than 20 pages when published. As most revisions make a manuscript longer, accepted manuscripts often end up being somewhat longer than 8000 words.

The time period from submission to publication depends on a number of factors, including the journal's publication schedule. *ESM* publishes three Volumes per year, each comprising three issues, and so there are nine journal issues produced each year. Every journal issue contains six to eight articles, resulting in around 70 articles being published per year in numbered journal Volumes and Issues. However, all articles are published *Online First* on the journal's website within days of being accepted, and they have the status of published articles even before they are allocated to a journal issue. The time from submission to publication also

depends critically on the speed of reviewing and the number of review cycles before the handling editor makes a final disposition. These matters are discussed in the next section, which describes the manuscript submission and review procedures.

18.4 *ESM*'s Manuscript Submission and Review Processes

Like most international journals, *ESM* uses an online manuscript submission platform that allows its editors to manage the review process and communication of decisions to authors. Figure 18.1 gives an overview of the manuscript submission and review process. However, this is a simplified representation that shows only the first round of reviewing, when in practice several review iterations are usually carried out.

18.4.1 Technical Check

The most important technical check of manuscripts, carried out before they are screened by the Editor-in-Chief, involves submitting each manuscript to text similarity screening software that checks journal submissions against the thousands of published articles in the software database. The output is a similarity report, communicating the percentage overlap between the manuscript submission and previously published sources. The report also identifies these sources, which allows the Editor-in-Chief to investigate the nature and extent of the overlap and determine what action should be taken. Journal publishers and editors adhere to a publishing ethics policy that sets out ethical principles including guidelines on originality, copyright, approval by all co-authors, and assurance that the work has not been

Fig. 18.1 Manuscript submission and review workflow

previously published and is not under consideration for publication elsewhere. There are also guidelines for editors on handling suspected plagiarism and redundant publication.

Plagiarism involves presentation of the work of others as though it were one's own, while redundant publication refers to the practice of splitting a study into several parts and publishing the parts in different journals without adequate cross referencing or permission. Sometimes these practices are unintentional, resulting from lack of knowledge or differences in cultural background in relation to behaviours concerning copying. The Editor-in-Chief needs to exercise careful judgment in dealing with such cases. Prospective authors are advised to consult information on "Ethical Responsibilities of Authors" in the "Instructions for Authors" found on the journal website (https://www.springer.com/education+%26+language/mathematics+education/journal/10649).

18.4.2 Screening of Manuscripts

Following the technical check of submitted manuscripts, the Editor-in-Chief screens manuscripts to decide whether they should be sent out for review. I ask myself two questions when making this decision:

1. Is the manuscript within the journal's scope? That is, does it report on an "educational study in mathematics"?
2. Is the manuscript of sufficient quality to warrant sending it out for review?

When answering the first question, I think about whether the manuscript has a clear educational focus, deals in some way with mathematics, and could be regarded as a 'study'. In my view, the latter requirement permits inclusion of not only empirical studies but also theoretical and philosophical papers and critical reviews of mathematics education research literature that yield new insights with potential to advance knowledge in our field. (See recently published articles by Simon 2017, and Darragh 2016, as examples of theoretical and review studies respectively.) Manuscripts that I consider to be out of scope, and thus reject without review, typically fall into one of the following categories:

(i) The manuscript is about mathematics and not mathematics education.
(ii) The manuscript reports on a study that primarily draws on and contributes to the literature in educational psychology, with mathematics learning as the research context.
(iii) The manuscript reports on the psychometric properties of a new instrument, in the context of mathematics education but without contributing new knowledge to our field.
(iv) The manuscript reports on an evaluation of a new teaching approach or course, typically at university level in service teaching of mathematics, with limited theoretical support and inadequate data (e.g., student satisfaction surveys and examination marks).

When answering the second screening question, concerning manuscript quality, I turn to the journal's review criteria (shown in Fig. 18.2) to help me decide whether to send the manuscript out for review. If the manuscript has obvious flaws that even a major revision could not remedy, I provide the author with a brief review and submit a "reject without review" decision.

18.4.3 Reviews and Decisions

I allocate each screened manuscripts to one of ESM's editorial team, comprising myself as Editor-in-Chief and seven Associate Editors. This handling editor then acts autonomously in managing the review process and making editorial decisions. Each manuscript is sent to three reviewers, usually two from the Editorial Board and one external reviewer, who have relevant expertise in the field of research addressed by the study. Research journals are finding it increasingly difficult to secure reviewers because of the escalating volume of manuscript submissions from around the world, and the huge rate of growth in scientific publishing—estimated to result in the doubling of scientific output every nine years (Van Noorden 2014). *ESM* editors will therefore select up to six 'reserve' reviewers in case invitations to review are declined by their first choice candidates. Once reviewers accept an invitation they are given four weeks to submit their review.

As well as responding to the questions displayed in Fig. 18.2, reviewers write a comprehensive scholarly critique of manuscripts assigned to them, and make a recommendation to the handling editor regarding the suitability of the manuscript for publication in *ESM*. Once all the reviews of a manuscript have been submitted, the handling editor must weigh up the comments and recommendations against his or her own assessment of the manuscript, and select a decision from amongst the following options, to indicate that the manuscript is:

1. Is this article clearly an educational study in mathematics?
2. Does it make an original contribution to mathematics education?
3. Are the aims of the article made clear, and are they formulated sufficiently early in the article?
4. Are the aims of the article fulfilled?
5. If applicable, are the aims, hypotheses and methodology of the research, reported in the article, clear and reasonable?
6. Does the article provide a well founded and cogently argued analysis?
7. Do the conclusions follow from the data and/or the argument?
8. Does the article take appropriate account of previous work?
9. Is it accessible and interesting to an international readership?

Fig. 18.2 ESM review criteria

(a) acceptable for publication in its present form;
(b) acceptable for publication with minor revisions;
(c) worthy of reconsideration after major revision;
(d) not acceptable for publication but a different article based on the same research can be resubmitted;
(e) not acceptable for publication.

It is rare for a manuscript to be accepted after the first round of reviews (option a). After the initial review only 7% of manuscripts are judged to be acceptable for publication pending *minor revisions* (option b), with roughly one-third receiving a *major revision* decision (option c) and the same proportion a *revise/resubmit* decision (option d). Just under one-quarter of manuscripts sent out for review are rejected as being *unacceptable for publication* at this stage (option e). If you receive a *minor revision* decision then your revised manuscript will be assessed and further shepherded by the handling editor without further external review. A *major revision* decision indicates that your revised manuscript will undergo another round of external review. A *revise/resubmit* decision is rendered if, in the handling editor's opinion, the authors need to do some more substantial work involving either a new literature review, collection of new data, or a different analysis of the existing data. Manuscripts re-written after receiving this decision are treated as fresh submissions, with a new manuscript number, and are usually assigned to a different handling editor from the one who managed the original version.

When dealing with a manuscript that has undergone major revisions, the handling editor would normally choose the same reviewers who assessed the original manuscript—but this is not always the case. For example, if there was an unforeseen mismatch between the reviewer's and author's theoretical stances then it is not likely to be productive to send the revised manuscript to this same reviewer. Even if the handling editor does want to invite the same reviewers, this is not always possible if one or more reviewers is unavailable or too busy to accept the invitation. A decision then needs to be made as to whether to work with fewer than three of the original reviewers or to invite a fresh reviewer to assess the revised manuscript. Both alternatives have their disadvantages. An outcome to be avoided, if possible, is initiating multiple rounds of reviewing that bring a succession of new reviewers into the process, since this approach often produces conflicting advice to the author that makes it difficult for him or her to maintain the coherence of the revised manuscript. Multiple rounds of major revision, even involving the same reviewers, can also signal that the manuscript is not yet ready for publication if there is little improvement between each version. In this case it is often more productive to reject the manuscript and encourage the author to take the time to develop the work further before seeking to have it published.

18.4.4 Interpreting Editors' Decisions and Responding to Reviews

As well as indicating the review outcome (from the options listed above), the handling editor writes a letter to the author explaining the reasons for the decision. If the decision involves revision (options b, c, or d above) then the handling editor will identify the essential improvements that must be made to the manuscript and where possible refer to points made by the individual reviewers, whose full reviews are also made available to the author. A sample decision letter requesting major revisions, and edited to preserve the author's anonymity, is shown in Fig. 18.3.

When submitting your revised manuscript you will be asked to include a letter explaining how you have responded to the reviews and the editor's advice. Here it is important to explain in step-by-step fashion the changes you have made to the manuscript or the reasons why you may have decided not to take into account some recommendations. This can be done either by making a table that summarises the

Perhaps the most important point for revision is the need to articulate a clear research aim, which might also be elaborated via explicit research questions. Both reviewers found it difficult to identify your research goals—you mention aims or purposes in several places but these are introduced too late, and referred to in an inconsistent manner throughout the manuscript. Also, a research aim should involve more than describing or discussing something. The research aim should then link logically to your literature review, theoretical framework, and research design—in particular, it's important for readers to see that your data collection and analysis methods are capable of producing evidence to address your research questions. In the current version of the manuscript, these connections are not clear at all.

Unfolding from this advice are several other points that need attention, and are identified by the reviewers. For example, the methodology section is very brief and gives too little information on what data were collected, why, and how, and no information at all as to how the data were analysed. Both reviewers found it difficult to interpret Table 2 (as did I)—What does "xxxx" mean, and how were these numbers arrived at?

The findings do give glimpses of some very interesting outcomes of your work, but at present the study is framed mainly as a pedagogical project rather than a research project. A revised version of the manuscript will need to offer a deeper and better organized theoretical discussion of the affordances of XXXX, which then informs the analysis of your data. This is a substantial undertaking, but I hope you will rise to the challenge.

Fig. 18.3 Sample *ESM* editor's decision letter requesting major revisions

editor's and each reviewer's comments and shows your specific responses, or by copying the text of the reviews and inserting your responses to the point they make. The handling editor will find it helpful if you indicate the page and line numbers where you have made changes to the manuscript. The most unhelpful kind of response is simply to write that you have addressed all the reviewers' comments—be specific about how and where you have done so.

18.4.5 Why Manuscripts are Rejected

The most common reasons for rejecting manuscripts after one or more rounds of review are displayed in Fig. 18.4. It should be clear that they align closely with the review criteria shown in Fig. 18.2.

The most important criterion for acceptance is the requirement that the manuscript make an original and significant contribution to advancing knowledge in mathematicw education. It is surprising how often authors fail to make this contribution explicit. There are three places in the manuscript where you should consider identifying your contribution to knowledge. The first is in the Introduction section where you state the problem you are investigating and argue for its significance. The second place is in the Literature Review section, where you identify key works, their contribution to the field, and then the *gap* and *need* that your study addresses. (Just because there is a gap in the literature does not mean that it needs to be filled.) The third place to reinforce your contribution to knowledge is in the Discussion section, where you connect your findings to the literature you reviewed earlier in the manuscript.

18.4.6 Writing in English

A manuscript is never rejected solely because the English language and expression is insufficiently fluent and clear, although reviewers and editors do take these

Does not make an original andn significant contribution to advancing knowledge in mathematics education.
Not accessible to an international readership.
Lack of explicit theoretical framework.
Literature review does not take sufficient account of previous research.
Inadequate rationale for and/or description of methodology.
Analysis is inappropriate or unconvincing.
Insufficient evidence to support claims.

Fig. 18.4 Most common reasons for rejecting ESM manuscripts after review

features into account. There is no formal provision or special procedure for handling manuscripts submitted to *ESM* by authors who do not have English as their first language. However, if a manuscript presents innovative ideas and results and there is potential for making an original contribution to knowledge, but the language is not yet of the quality necessary for publication, there are several steps that can be taken, described below.

(1) When assigning manuscripts to one of *ESM*'s Associate Editors I try, where possible, to align their language expertise with the dominant language of the corresponding author. If I am the handling editor of such a manuscript I do the same when selecting reviewers.
(2) I am more willing to support several rounds of major revisions to help the author produce a publishable article, whereas only one or at most two major revisions would be the norm for other manuscripts.
(3) Along with the Associate Editors, I spend many hours on language editing of the penultimate version of each manuscript that I handle from an author who does not have English as their first or dominant language. My aim is not only to achieve an acceptable standard of academic English but also to preserve some of the distinctive linguistic features of the author's first language (lexical choices, syntactic structures, etc.). I want *ESM* readers to 'hear' the traces of the author's first language, in keeping with the journal's commitment to being genuinely international.

Around 40% of articles *published* in *ESM* come from countries where English is not the dominant language, but the proportion of *submitted* manuscripts with authors from a non-English language background is substantially higher. Some caution is needed in looking for causes of manuscript rejection in these cases—language is certainly not the only reason, nor even the main reason. Many authors struggle to frame and communicate their research so that it is relevant and accessible to an international audience, and this can be a consequence of differences in the significance of research questions across cultural contexts. Thus language diversity is part of a bigger global challenge in understanding culturally inflected ways of framing and communicating research (Bartolini Bussi and Martignone 2013; Geiger and Straesser 2015; Meaney 2013).

18.5 Special Issues

In addition to the regular publication schedule described in Sect. 18.3.3, *ESM* has published special issues almost since its inception. For example, Frendenthal dedicated several special issues to presentations given at major conferences, including the first meeting of the International Group for the Psychology of Mathematics Education. Throughout his tenure as Editor, Bishop published several special issues devoted to a single topic, with a guest editor who introduced the issue

with an editorial. Dörfler formalised this feature in the editorial introducing Volume 25 as a special issue dedicated to the life and scientific work of Freudenthal, the journal's founder. According to Hanna and Sidoli (2002), "the goal of the special issues was not to offer a comprehensive overview or a systematic exposition of the state of the art, but rather to present examples of current research methods and various critical and theoretical approaches" (p. 147). Today, as in the past, guest editors seek out innovative and challenging work, including research that might not yet be well known to the international mathematics education community. The titles, guest editors, and publication dates of *ESM* special issues published since 2014 are shown in Table 18.1.

There is now a formal procedure for prospective guest editors to propose a special issue of *ESM*. Proposals for special issues may be emailed to the Editor-in-Chief at any time, but no more than one special issue will be published in each Volume of the journal. Special issues will normally have two or three guest editors, with an editorial that introduces the topic and the papers, and a concluding commentary on the papers written by an expert on the chosen topic. The length of a special issue should be about the same as a regular issue of *ESM*—between 120 and 140 pages, comprising six to eight papers.

Special issue proposals should include the following:

1. A title for the special issue that clearly and succinctly conveys its focus.
2. The names, affiliations, and email addresses of the guest editors.
3. Evidence of the guest editors' previous editorial experience and familiarity with the scope and standards of *ESM* (e.g., journal editing, membership of editorial boards, relevant publications).
4. A convincing rationale for the special issue.

Table 18.1 *ESM* special issues published since 2014

Volume and date	Title	Guest editors
Volume 85(3) March 2014	Representing mathematics with digital media: Working across theoretical and contextual boundaries	Jean-Baptiste Lagrange and Chronis Kynigos
Volume 86(2) June 2014	Characterising and developing vocational mathematical knowledge	Arthur Bakker and Gail FitzSimons
Volume 87(2) October 2014	Social theory and research in mathematics education	Candia Morgan and Clive Kanes
Volume 88(3) March 2015	Statistical reasoning: Learning to reason from samples	Dani Ben-Zvi, Arthur Bakker, and Katie Makar
Volume 91(3) March 2016	Communicational perspectives on learning and teaching mathematics	Michal Tabach and Talli Nachlieli
Volume 92(3) July 2016	Mathematics education and contemporary theory	Tony Brown, Yvette Solomon, and Julian Williams
Volume 96(2) October 2017	Research-based interventions in the area of proof	Gabriel Stylianides and Andreas Stylianides

5. A description of, and justification for, the approach to be taken for soliciting manuscripts. This may take the form of a list of abstracts and authors for invited contributions, an open call for extended abstracts from which prospective contributions would be selected, or some other approach that would arguably deliver a high quality set of manuscripts. Whatever approach is taken, the guest editors should make it clear that submission of a manuscript does not guarantee its publication in the special issue.
6. A timeline for publication that includes:

   - a date for submission of extended abstracts, if an open call is made;
   - a date for acceptance or rejection of extended abstracts, if an open call is made;
   - a date for submission of first drafts of manuscripts to the guest editors;
   - a date for completion of an internal review process (about 2 months later);
   - a date for revisions to be submitted for the *ESM* reviewing process (about 6 weeks later);
   - a date for completion of reviewing and acceptance or rejection decisions (about 6 months later);
   - a possible publication date.

Special issue proposals are reviewed by the *ESM* Advisory Editors, comprising all the past Editors-in-Chief, with comments also invited from the Associate Editors. Guest editors may be asked to revise proposals based on this feedback. When a special issue proposal is accepted, one of the *ESM* editors is assigned as a shadow editor to advise the guest editors on journal editorial procedures and standards.

18.6 A Final Word

A journal is much more than a collection of articles. It reflects the development of new ideas, interests, and theories in the field it serves, and provides a vehicle for dissemination and debate within a research community over time. When you submit a manuscript to *ESM*, you are seeking to join this international community and contribute to its debates, history, and knowledge building activities. For an early career researcher in mathematics education, this is surely an exciting prospect!

References

Bartolini Bussi, M., & Martignone, F. (2013). Cultural issues in the communication of research on mathematics education. *For the Learning of Mathematics, 33*(1), 2–7.

Darragh, L. (2016). Identity research in mathematics education. *Educational Studies in Mathematics, 93,* 19–33.

Geiger, V., & Straesser, R. (2015). The challenge of publication for English non-dominant-language authors in mathematics education. *For the Learning of Mathematics, 35*(3), 35–41.

Hanna, G., & Sidoli, N. (2002). The story of ESM. *Educational Studies in Mathematics, 50,* 123–156.

Meaney, T. (2013). The privileging of English in mathematics education research, just a necessary evil? In M. Berger, K. Brodie, V. Frith, & K. le Roux (Eds.), *Proceedings of the Seventh International Mathematics Education and Society Conference* (Vol. 1, pp. 65–84). Cape Town: MES.

Nivens, R., & Otten, S. (2017). Assessing journal quality in mathematics education. *Journal for Research in Mathematics Education, 48,* 348–368.

Simon, M. (2017). Explicating mathematical concept and mathematical conception as theoretical constructs for mathematics education research. *Educational Studies in Mathematics, 94,* 117–137.

Van Noorden, R. (2014). Global scientific output doubles every nine years. Retrieved September 6, 2018, from http://blogs.nature.com/news/2014/05/global-scientific-output-doubles-every-nine-years.html.

Williams, S., & Leatham, K. (2017). Journal quality in mathematics education. *Journal for Research in Mathematics Education, 48,* 369–396.