

Political Studies and Political Studies Review **Annual report for 2012**

Compiled by Chris Pierson, Mark Wenman and Rene Bailey for the Publications Sub-Committee and the Executive Committee Meeting of the Political Studies Association, March 2013

THANKS

We are very grateful to all our colleagues in the UK and from around the world who have extended their support so generously to the journals. Without the time and expertise freely given by our international pool of reviewers the journals could not function. The care with which our reviewers read article submissions contributes greatly to the high standards of both *Political Studies* and *Political Studies Review*.

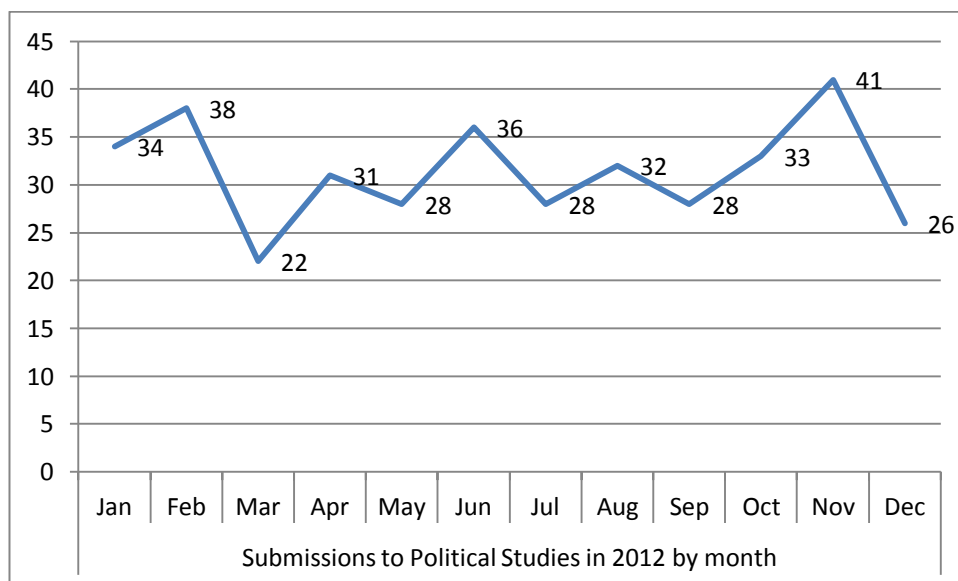
1 INPUTS

From 1 January to 31 December 2012 we received the following submissions:

Submissions for <i>Political Studies</i> (new)	377
Submissions for <i>Political Studies</i> (revised)	152
Submissions of review articles for <i>Political Studies Review</i>	52
Total submissions to both journals	581

1.1 Submissions to *Political Studies*

There was a slight increase in the number of submissions to *Political Studies* in 2012, rising from 364 in 2011 to 377 in 2012. The chart below shows the rate of submissions across the 12 months, with the largest number being submitted in February (38), June (36) and November (41).



In terms of input over the last six years it is clear that the annual number of submissions is maintaining a high level. For example the figure of 377 new submissions in 2012 is similar to the figure for 2011 (364), but significantly higher than in all previous years – see Table 1. The rate of submissions at the beginning of 2013 suggests that the figures for the last two years are not an anomaly related to 2014 Research Evaluation Framework but instead the new norm.

Table 1: New submissions to *Political Studies* 2007–2012 showing annual percentage change

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
No. of new papers submitted	252	234	281	273	364	377
Increase on previous year		-7.1%	20.0%	-2.8%	33.3	3.6

In term of location of the submitting author, there is a wide geographical spread of authors, with 30% of submissions originating in Europe, compared to only 20-25% in the preceding 4 years (see Table 2). Similarly, more than a third of all submissions originate beyond Europe and the UK, and while the share of North American authors is not as high as we might like, we are delighted to be receiving submissions from prestigious American institutions, such as the University of Chicago, Yale, Brown and Duke University.

Table 2: Origination of new papers to *Political Studies* 2008-2012

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
No. of new submissions	234	281	273	364	377
UK	36%	39%	39%	127 35%	125 33%
Europe	21%	19%	20%	91 25%	113 30%
North America	24%	22%	19%	77 21%	57 15%
Australasia	3%	7%	7%	19 5%	22 6%
Asia/Pacific	8%	7%	9%	24 7%	36 10%
Rest of World	8%	6%	6%	26 7%	24 6%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

1.2 Submissions to *Political Studies Review*

2012 saw a substantial increase in the number of submissions to PSR over the course of the year. In total there were 52 separate submissions, compared to 16 the previous year and 22 the year before that. Some of these submissions were solicited by the editors (2 on the London Olympics and 9 on the subject of impact in political science). Past figures for submissions to the journal have also included solicited articles, and therefore this cannot be considered a cause for the increase. Instead, it seems likely that PSR is establishing itself as a recognised forum for more discursive papers alongside review articles.

The symposium on the social impact and ‘relevance’ of political science, initiated by Matthew Flinders’ polemic on the subject, will be published in the May 2013 issue of PSR and this symposium also provides a platform for a roundtable on the topic to be held during the 2013 Annual Conference in Cardiff.

A further symposium has also been submitted, this time on the politics of austerity in Europe, and it is planned to publish this in the first issue of volume 12, namely January 2014. This symposium is the initiative of Stella Ladi and Dimitris Tsarouhas and contains contributions by several leading figures in the study of politics and economics from across Europe.

Table 3: Origination of new papers to *Political Studies Review* 2008-2012

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
No. of papers submitted	31	24	22	16	52
UK	55%	67%	64%	44%	31 59%
Europe	16%	8%	9%	25%	10 19%
North America	20%	13%	4.5%	19%	6 12%
Australasia	3%	12%	18%	6%	1 2%
Asia/Pacific	3%		4.5%	6%	1 2%
Rest of World	3%				3 6%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

2 *Political Studies* PROCESS

2.1 Manuscript status

From 1 January to 31 December 2012 we received 377 new submissions and 152 revised papers (often several iterations). Decisions on the new submissions were taken as follows (figures for the same period in 2011 in column 2):

Table 4: Comparison of status of new submissions to *Political Studies* in 2012 and 2011

	New submissions 2012		New submissions 2011	
Not processed (e.g. double submissions)	9	2%	23	6%
Decision - Reject	245	66%	184	51%
Decision - Revise & Resubmit	58	15%	70	19%
Decision - Minor Revision	5	1.5%	7	2%
Decision - Accept	2	0.5%	0	0%
In Progress (at year end)	58	15%	80	22%
Total	377	100%	364	100%

2.2 Response times in 2012

Of the 377 new and 152 revised submissions to *Political Studies* – a total of 529 papers, decisions were made on 445 or 84% over the course of the year. This is an improvement on previous years, where the corresponding figures were 78% in 2011, 81% in 2010 and 80% in 2009. Decisions took the form of ‘Reject’, ‘Revise and Resubmit’, ‘Minor Revision’ or ‘Accept’, and of these decisions, 310 were on new submissions and 135 on revised papers.

Of the 310 new submissions with decisions, 83% of decisions were reached in 3 months or less. This is below our target to reach all decisions within a maximum of 3 months but an inevitable consequence of the increased throughput of manuscripts and resulting impact on finding reviewers who will agree to referee the manuscripts and submit reports within the desired timeframe.

For the 135 revised manuscripts (including all iterations) in 2012, all but 9 decisions were reached within the projected timeframe.

Table 5: Time taken to decisions taken in 2012

Months	Number of NEW submissions where decisions were made	%	Number of REVISED submissions where decisions were made	
1	115	37	77	56
2	54	18	40	30
3	87	28	9	7
4	37	12	9	7
5	17	5		
TOTAL	310	100	135	100

2.3 Acceptance/rejection rates

Table 6 summarises the acceptance and rejection rates for Political Studies from 2007 to 2012. The figures indicate that the editors are already exercising a tougher line with regard to rejecting manuscripts which do not provide a sufficiently original contribution to the field, thus helping to keep down the size of the copybank and so publish accepted papers in as timely a fashion as possible.

Table 6: New submissions rejected or eventually accepted 2007 - 2012

Year	New submissions rejected (%)	Final acceptance post-revisions (%)
2012	66	16
2011	51	13
2010	61	13
2009	54	14
2008	66	14
2007	59	18

2.4 Acceptance to publication

Once accepted, articles are prepared for online publication in the first instance, which normally begins 6 months after the date of acceptance. All Early View articles can be accessed via the publisher's website at: [http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/\(ISSN\)1467-9248/earlyview](http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/(ISSN)1467-9248/earlyview)

Table 7 on the next page shows how long it took from acceptance to print publication for those articles that appeared in Volumes 57-60 of *Political Studies*. In addition, the column for 2012 shows how long it took from acceptance to online publication (EV) prior to publication in print.

Table 7: Speed at which articles were published in *Political Studies* 2009 – 2012

	2009	2010	2011	2012	
Volume	57	58	59	60	
	No. articles	No. articles	No. articles	No. articles	
Months	Print	Print	Print	EV	Print
1 - 3	1	2		2	
4 – 6		4	4	2	4
7 – 9	1	4	2	15	
10 – 12	3		2	28	
13 – 15	6	6	11	5	2
16 – 18	7	10	20		31
19 – 21	17	22	12		15
22 - 24	9	6	4		
Total	44	54	55	52	52

3 OUTPUTS

3.1 Published articles

In 2012 we published 52 articles in *Political Studies* and 20 review articles in *Political Studies Review*. This compares to 55 (17) in 2011; 54 (18) in 2010; 44 (21) in 2009; and 47 (19) in 2008. These figures indicate that while the number of articles published in PSR remains relatively consistent, the editors are working hard to reduce the size of the Political Studies copybank by ensuring that as many articles as possible are published in each volume.

Indeed, in line with a number of other outstanding journals in the profession, *Political Studies* finds itself in receipt of an ever-growing number of good quality submissions from all around the globe presenting a series of challenges. Firstly, it means that the editors have to call upon a veritable army of referees to help assess the manuscripts submitted – and we would like to repeat our recognition and gratitude for the help our reviewers provide.

Secondly, and even though the editors have made a real attempt to raise the quality bar, the journal is receiving more good submissions than it is possible to publish comfortably. This is indicated in the lead times shown above in Table 7, which are certainly longer than the editors would wish.

Hence in 2013 there will be a special themed issue which will appear exclusively online. It is themed around the topic of elections and parties and consists of twelve papers ranging from an evaluation of the SNP's electoral victory in 2011 and electoral behaviour in Northern Ireland to the character of the 'personality' party in Italy and long-term voting behaviour in Sweden.

The issue is being made available free to download until the end of 2013 and has enabled the editors to get these very timely papers into the public domain in double-quick time. It is planned to repeat this exercise in subsequent years so that more new research is made available to the relevant community of scholars and interested lay-persons as quickly as possible.

3.2 Published book reviews

Political Studies Review continues to provide an invaluable service to the political science community in terms of the great number of book reviews published in each issue and volume.

Anybody who would like to see which books are available for review at any time can find the list at: <http://www.politicalstudiesreview.org/booksavailable.asp>

Table 8: No. of book reviews published in *Political Studies Review* volumes 1 - 10

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Volume	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
# reviews	375	341	370	343	329	331	340	344	347	354

Since January 2012 it has also been possible to search for individual book reviews online, which is a significant improvement on the previous publication process, whereby book reviews could only be downloaded from within the relevant book review section of the journal.

It should be noted that the administration of the book review process places heavy demands on the Reviews Coordinator, who is responsible for logging all books received from the different publishers onto the database and listing them online, responding to enquiries from potential reviewers and despatching books as speedily as possible, logging all completed reviews, chasing up tardy reviewers, and coordinating with the publisher over the list of reviews to be published. This role is currently filled by Alexandra Windsor in the Nottingham office and the editors would like to record their thanks and appreciation for her hard work and dedication in ensuring that all these tasks are performed to the highest standard at all times.

4 OUTCOMES

4.1 Impact of *Political Studies*

Table 9 presents the trends in the Impact Factor for *Political Studies*, and while it is disappointing to see that the Impact Factor for the journal dropped from 1.106 in 2010 to 0.874 in 2011 (but stood at 0.855 in 2009), the five-year indicator the journal actually moved *up* in 2011, from 1.264 to 1.292.

The journal fell from a ranking of 35/141 in 2010 to 50/148 in 2011 (the comparable figure for 2009 was 40/112). The fall in citations was from 94 (cites)/85 (articles) in 2010 to 83/95 in 2011. The anniversary issue (which raised the number of issues for 2010 to five) had its own impact factor of about 0.5 but without this special issue, the journal's Impact Factor would have stayed above 1.0, raising the rank index for *Political Studies* by about ten places.

It should be remembered that the Impact Factor is a very lagged indicator. The indicators for 2011 are based on citations in 2009 and 2010, reflecting material which was probably accepted in 2008 and 2009. A paper submitted to *Political Studies* in 2013 will not have its influence on the journal's Impact Factor until around 2015. Secondly, the overall number of citations in the 2-year window is relatively low and therefore just a couple of citations more or less can have a significant influence on the overall Impact Factor for the period.

Table 9: Thomson Reuters ranking for *Political Studies* 2006 - 2011

	Impact Factor	No. of journals	Ranking	No. articles published	5-year Impact Factor	EigenFactor
2011	0.874	148	50	52	1.292	0.00358
2010	1.106	141	35	54	1.264	0.00307
2009	0.855	112	40	44	1.028	0.00262
2008	0.625	99	51	41		
2007	0.488	93	55	42		
2006	0.500	85	40	42		

It is heartening to see how well *Political Studies* performs in the most recent measure of *Google* citations. The *Google* metric is based on a five-year horizon and captures much more of the relevant activity than some other measures of a similar kind. In the latest iteration, *Political Studies* was thirteenth in the global table of political science journals and fifth amongst those published in Europe. This puts the journal in some very heavyweight company and is an excellent outcome in a list that is dominated by the big North American journals.

Since 2009 *Political Studies Review* has also been included in the Thomson Reuters citations index, giving it an Impact Factor for just two years to date, as shown in Table 10.

Table 10: Thomson Reuters ranking for *Political Studies Review* 2010 - 2011

	Impact Factor	No. of journals	Ranking	No. articles published	5-year Impact Factor	EigenFactor
2011	0.528	148	84	20	n/a	0.00047
2010	0.767	139	62	18	n/a	0.00062