The Human Question

PUBLICATION STYLE GUIDE

HOUSE STYLE AND PRODUCTION SPECIFICATION

The Human Question

A Journal of Humanistic Inquiry

Version 1.0 · 8 November 2026

PURPOSE

Approved by Albert Tan Sin Hon, President and Editor-in-Chief, on 8 November 2026, this guide establishes the journal's publication production standard. Its visual structure follows the reference supplied by the founder: an offset opening title and abstract, a single text column, compact serif prose, strong sans-serif headings and page footnotes. The full journal logo replaces the large "Open Access" masthead. Deep green replaces the orange headings and rules; rust is reserved for restrained secondary accents. The accompanying PDF specimen illustrates the finished layout. Authors may submit a clearly formatted manuscript before acceptance; the editorial team applies the publication layout during production.

CONTACT: editor@thehumanquestionjournal.com

President and Editor-in-Chief: Albert Tan Sin Hon

1. A RECOGNISABLE JOURNAL PAGE

Use the complete approved logo, including the monogram and journal name. Keep its proportions and colours intact. On the first page, place it at the upper left, with the journal subtitle and document or article type at the upper right. A fine dark rule separates the masthead from the page. Subsequent pages carry a deep green top rule and a short running title with the page number below.

Set the article title and subtitle in black. Use deep green for numbered section headings, subheadings and the abstract heading. Use rust sparingly for small labels and the existing question-mark accent. Body text and footnotes remain near black on white. Meaning must remain clear in greyscale.

1.1 WHAT AUTHORS NEED TO PREPARE

Supply an anonymised manuscript and a separate title page for review. After acceptance, supply the editable text, complete citations, declarations, permissions and original figures. The PDF specimen is a production reference; formatting alone does not determine acceptance. The journal charges no submission, review or publication fees.

This is the journal's own style. Oxford University Press guidance informs its editorial conventions; no affiliation or endorsement is implied. The visual reference does not establish the truth or citation accuracy of any manuscript.

2. PAGE GEOMETRY AND WORD STYLES

Use A4 portrait (210 × 297 mm), one column. The measurements below preserve the reference's text geometry. The first-title spacing is adjusted to accommodate the complete logo. Enter measurements in points where Word's rounding of millimetres changes the layout.

Element	Setting
Margins	Top 40 pt (14.11 mm); bottom 44 pt (15.52 mm); left 59.15 pt (20.87 mm); right 49.35 pt (17.41 mm).
Header and footer	Header 9 pt from edge; footer 18 pt. Different first-page header and footer enabled.
First-page logo	Full approved PNG, 148 pt wide, original proportions. Do not replace it with the monogram alone.
Title	Liberation Sans, 20 pt, bold, capitals, black; 24 pt exact line spacing; 126 pt left indent; 64 pt before and 6 pt after.
Subtitle	Liberation Sans, 16 pt, bold, capitals; 19 pt exact; 126 pt left indent; 15 pt after.
Author	Liberation Sans, 10.5 pt bold; 12 pt exact; 126 pt left indent; 6 pt after.
Affiliation / date	Liberation Serif, 9 pt italic / 8.5 pt roman; 126 pt left indent; 11.5 / 10.5 pt exact.
Abstract heading	Liberation Sans, 11 pt bold capitals, deep green; 13 pt exact; 126 pt left indent.
Abstract / keywords	Liberation Serif, 9 pt; abstract justified at 11.4 pt exact; keywords left aligned at 10.5 pt; 126 pt left indent.
Normal body	Liberation Serif, 9.5 pt, justified; 10.95 pt exact; 4 pt after; first-line indent 27.35 pt.
First Paragraph	Same as body, with no first-line indent. Use after a heading, table or block quotation.
Heading 1	Liberation Sans, 12 pt bold capitals, deep green; 14 pt exact; 13 pt before, 6 pt after; keep with next.
Heading 2	Liberation Sans, 10 pt bold italic capitals, deep green; 12 pt exact; 10 pt before, 5 pt after; keep with next.
Block Text	Liberation Serif, 9.5 pt; left and right indents 14 pt; no first-line indent; 11.4 pt exact.
Footnote Text	Liberation Serif, 9 pt; 10.35 pt exact; 11 pt left and hanging indent; 2 pt after. Superscript reference markers.
Bibliography	Liberation Serif, 10 pt; left aligned; 21.6 pt hanging indent; 11.55 pt exact; 3 pt after.
Running footer	Short article title, 8 pt grey; page number right aligned. Never type page numbers manually.
Colours	Deep green #183E35; rust #BC4B31; near black #141414; secondary grey #696969. White page background.

Use the named Word styles. Do not create alignment with repeated spaces or empty paragraphs. Enable widow/orphan control. Keep headings with the following paragraph. In passages with complex mathematics or scripts, increase line spacing locally if glyphs would be clipped, and inspect the exported PDF.

3. LANGUAGE, STRUCTURE AND CITATION

3.1 TITLES, ABSTRACTS AND PROSE

Use an informative title and an optional explanatory subtitle. An abstract of 150–250 words should state the question, approach, central finding or argument and significance. Avoid abbreviations, citations and footnotes in the abstract. Supply four to six keywords. In final proofs, list author names, affiliations, corresponding email and ORCID identifiers where available. Record only confirmed publication dates and assigned identifiers.

Write in British English. Use a consistent British spelling system throughout; the journal's default is -ise, -isation and -yse. This is a journal choice within British usage. Prefer clear verbs, precise claims and varied sentences. Explain specialist terms. Avoid em dashes; use commas, brackets, a colon or a full stop as the sense requires. Use a serial comma where it prevents ambiguity. Preserve original spelling in quotations and proper names.

Number principal sections 1, 2 and 3; number subsections 1.1 and 1.2. Avoid more than two numbered levels. Use descriptive headings. The template displays them in capitals through the style, so authors should type ordinary title or sentence case. Use italics for book and journal titles and occasional emphasis; avoid underlining and decorative bold in prose.

3.2 QUOTATIONS, NUMBERS AND DATES

Use single quotation marks, with double marks for a quotation inside a quotation. Set quotations of 40 words or more as indented blocks without quotation marks. Reproduce the source accurately, show omissions and editorial insertions, and give a pinpoint citation. Place punctuation according to its grammatical relationship to the quotation. Do not silently modernise or correct a source.

Write dates as 8 November 2026. Use numerals for measurements, percentages, tables and precise comparisons; normally spell out one to nine in ordinary prose. Use an en dash for inclusive ranges, such as 12–18. Distinguish the number zero from the letter O and a hyphen from a minus sign. Define units, denominators and statistical measures.

3.3 FOOTNOTES AND REFERENCES

The default final style is footnotes with a bibliography. Use Word's Insert Footnote function with consecutive Arabic numbering throughout the article. Place the superscript marker after punctuation unless the note relates specifically to a word or phrase. Give full bibliographical details at first mention, then an unambiguous short form. Avoid op. cit.; use ibid only when the preceding note identifies a single source unambiguously. Every quotation and contested factual proposition needs a precise source.

For legal scholarship, follow OSCOLA, fifth edition, with adaptations required by the jurisdiction and this guide's typography. Preserve official case names, neutral citations, statutory titles and treaty identifiers. Give sections, articles, rules, paragraphs or pages as appropriate. Do not force a non-UK authority into a misleading UK citation. For non-legal humanities work, use the patterns below consistently. An established author-date system may be retained with the handling editor's agreement where it is necessary for the discipline; one article must not mix systems accidentally.

Source	Footnote pattern (placeholders, not actual references)
Book	Author Full Name, Book Title (edition, Publisher year) pinpoint.
Journal article	Author Full Name, 'Article Title' (year) volume Journal Title first page, pinpoint. DOI where available.
Book chapter	Author Full Name, 'Chapter Title' in Editor Name (ed), Book Title (Publisher year) pinpoint.
Online source	Author or organisation, 'Page Title' (publication or update date) stable URL; add an access date when undated or liable to change.
Bibliography	Invert the first author's name; arrange alphabetically. Omit the specific cited pinpoint. Retain article/chapter page ranges.

4. PRODUCTION, ACCESSIBILITY AND RELEASE

Number tables and figures separately, cite each in the text, and provide a concise title, explanatory notes, source and permissions statement where required. Use editable tables rather than images of tables. Supply charts and line drawings in vector form where practical; otherwise use an image resolution appropriate to its final size. Keep labels legible at publication scale. Provide useful alternative text describing what a reader needs to learn from each visual. Colour alone must not carry meaning.

Place acknowledgements, funding, competing interests, author contributions where applicable, research ethics or consent, data availability and substantive artificial-intelligence assistance declarations before the bibliography. State when a category does not apply. These declarations must describe the work actually done. Human authors remain responsible for all analysis, quotations, citations, translations and visual material.

4.1 COPYRIGHT AND THE PUBLICATION RECORD

The standard article notice is: "© [year] [author name(s)]. Published by The Human Question: A Journal of Humanistic Inquiry. Licensed under Creative Commons Attribution–NonCommercial–NoDerivatives 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0)." Add the licence link below. Replace all brackets with verified details before release. Identify any excluded third-party material separately. A licence notice must reflect the signed author agreement and actual rights held.

https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/

Display an ISSN, DOI, volume, issue and page range only when assigned and correct. Before the first issue is published, specimen documents must remain clearly labelled as templates. Never invent a publication history, review date, indexing status or institutional endorsement. Policy documents carry a version and effective date; substantive policy changes require a new dated version.

4.2 RELEASE CHECKLIST

- Verify the author-approved text, author order, affiliations, abstract, keywords and all declarations against the final acceptance record.
- Check every reference against its source; verify quotation wording, pinpoint locations, DOI destinations and working URLs. Automated link checks do not establish that a source supports a claim.
- Update fields and footnote numbering. Remove comments, tracked changes, hidden draft text and personal document metadata that should not be public.
- Inspect every PDF page at normal reading size: logo, heading breaks, footnotes, tables, images, special characters, page numbers and blank pages.
- Export selectable text, embedded fonts, document language, meaningful headings, bookmarks and working links where supported. Check reading order and visual alternatives. Do not label a PDF PDF/UA-compliant without validation.
- Obtain final proof approval; confirm the licence, independent editorial decision and any permissions. Create an article landing page and consistent citation metadata.
- Save the release file and its checksum; retain the prior version when a correction is issued. Publish corrections with an explanation and links to the original record.

5. REFERENCE BASIS

Oxford University Press, manuscript preparation guidance
https://academic.oup.com/pages/for-authors/journals/preparing-and-submitting-your-manuscript

Oxford University Press, style and references guidance
https://academic.oup.com/pages/for-authors/books/the-book-publishing-process/writing-and-content-preparation/style-and-references

University of Oxford, OSCOLA, fifth edition and supporting resources
https://www.law.ox.ac.uk/oscola

Creative Commons, CC BY-NC-ND 4.0
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/