

Soft Matter

Guidelines for Authors†

Also see: www.rsc.org/authorguidelines

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1.0 General policy

Soft Matter is a monthly journal publishing reviews and important original research in the form of communications and articles covering all soft materials and complex fluids. We aim to provide a forum for the communication of generic science underpinning the properties and applications of soft matter. Papers that describe applications and properties of soft matter set in context to the relevant science are also welcomed, but emphasis should be on the science rather than on the applications and properties themselves. The scope of *Soft Matter* includes original research on important synthetic and characterisation techniques, and on simulation and modelling of soft matter. Interactions of soft materials at interfaces and in biological systems are of particular interest.

Papers that mainly emphasise the synthesis and chemical/structural analysis of soft materials may be more suitable for publication in *Dalton Transactions* (inorganic chemistry) or *Organic and Biomolecular Chemistry* (organic chemistry). Papers concentrating on the physical chemistry of soft matter should be submitted to *Physical Chemistry Chemical Physics*.

† For more detailed information on this topic, including guidelines for article layout, preparation of illustrations, presentation of experimental data, and supplementary information deposition, as well as links to useful websites, templates and other software resources, and authoring tools, see: <http://www.rsc.org/authorguidelines>.

Main research areas include:

- **(Bulk) soft-matter assemblies** including polymers, colloids, gels, vesicles, emulsions, films, liquid crystals, dispersions, and supra-molecular chemistry.
- **Soft nanotechnology and self-assembly** including nano-structured polymeric materials, nanocomposites, molecular self-organisation, molecular imprinting, molecular recognition, and self-assembled films and monolayers.
- **Biological aspects of soft matter** including bio-macromolecules and biopolymers, membranes, biocomposites, bio-mimetic materials, and drug release and delivery methods (formulation).
- **Surfaces, interfaces, and interactions** including thin films, Langmuir–Blodgett monolayers, wetting/dewetting, soft interfaces and their interfacial properties, dynamics, rheology, hydro-dynamics, and interactions of molecules and colloids.
- **Building blocks/synthetic methodology** including new molecular architectures and new synthetic methodologies, and synthesis of the above compound classes.
- **Theory, modelling, and simulation** including computational and thermodynamic studies of the above compound classes.

Techniques for the characterisation and study of these materials are included in the scope but are not a focus in themselves, nor are applications. Rather, the emphasis is on the underlying generic science underpinning the properties and applications.

2.0 Article types

2.1 Communications

Communications in *Soft Matter* contain novel scientific work of such importance and interest that rapid publication is required. Communications are concise and should not exceed four journal pages (*ca.* 2000 words) in length; they may be accompanied by Electronic Supplementary Information. Communications start with a brief unreferenced abstract and do not contain any section headings. The number of references should be limited to *ca.* 15. A short justification statement must be included with the submission outlining why the work merits rapid publication.

2.2 Full Papers

Full Papers in *Soft Matter* present original high quality primary

research that has not been previously published. However, work that has appeared in print in a short form such as a Communication is normally acceptable. Please note that the Society strongly discourages the fragmentation of a substantial body of work into a number of short publications. Articles start with a brief unreferenced abstract and contain an introduction, results and discussion, experimental, and notes and references sections.

2.3 Reviews, Highlights, and Emerging Areas

Reviews in *Soft Matter* are critical reviews of a topical and significant area of research. They are typically up to 6000 words in length (although they may be shorter) and include a short biography of the author(s).

Highlights single out important new developments (a single paper or group of papers) and explain the significance of the work to the broad, interdisciplinary *Soft Matter* audience. They may point out further urgent follow-up work and challenges that are still faced, and may be speculative in nature. No new work should be presented; these papers are intended to put existing work into perspective. Highlights are typically no longer than 2000 words.

Reviews and Highlights are normally published by invitation of the *Soft Matter* Editorial Board. However, suggestions from authors are welcome and enquiries regarding the submission of these articles should be directed to the Commissioning Editor.

Emerging Areas in *Soft Matter* are short, personal accounts of a potentially important and growing new field of research. They are typically up to 3000 words in length and include a short biography of the author(s). These articles are normally written at the suggestion of Members of the Editorial Board or Advisory Board.

2.4 Opinions

Opinions in *Soft Matter* are typically 2000 words in length and provide a personal, often speculative, viewpoint or hypothesis on a topic of current interest to the scientific community. They may concern a recent publication in *Soft Matter* (in which case the author(s) concerned will be given the opportunity to respond) or discuss any current hot topic from the author's point of view; provided that they are not defamatory to the work of others they can be controversial and stimulate counter-opinion. They can include a short biography of the author(s).

Opinions on set topics may be invited by the Editorial Office but unsolicited pieces in response to papers already published are encouraged to promote scientific discussion.

3.0 Submission

3.1 Initial submission

Articles should be submitted using the RSC file upload service, ReSource.‡

On submitting their manuscripts, authors are encouraged to supply the names and addresses of 2–3 potential referees. Owing to the non-availability of many referees and editorial staff in July–August each year, authors are advised to limit their submissions during this period in order to minimize delays.

Rapid publication is aided by careful preparation of text and illustrations. Particular attention is drawn to the use of (i) SI units and associated conventions, (ii) IUPAC nomenclature for compounds and (iii) standard methods of literature citation.

The RSC ReSource service allows any number of files to be uploaded. All files relating to a single manuscript should be uploaded simultaneously during one transaction. Files uploaded separately will result in more than one manuscript number being assigned and may subsequently be lost.

All authors submitting work for publication are required to agree a Licence to Publish. Authors submitting online will be asked to

agree a Licence to Publish as part of the process. Alternatively, a downloadable PDF version is available,‡ which can be completed and forwarded to the Editorial Office.

After submission your file will be acknowledged by the Editorial Office as soon possible. Authors should contact the Editorial Office if they have not received an acknowledgement within 4 working days. Authors should not forward more than one version of their manuscript or submit the manuscript by post or e-mail to avoid errors in manuscript handling by the Editorial Office.

3.2 Submission of revised articles and material for proof preparation

Revised manuscripts should be sent to the Editorial Office by file upload *via* ReSource.‡

Please check the manuscript carefully for consistency, particularly in the representation of chemical formulae, compound names and words with alternative spellings.

Successful use of your electronic files should speed up the production process and avoid errors being introduced. Authors should ensure that files submitted at this stage contain the final version of their manuscript. Proof corrections should only correct errors from the Production process and should not be used to make general changes to the text.

We will try to use the supplied data in our production process, but mathematical equations and tables in particular may be re-keyed by the typesetter. It is imperative that authors check their proofs (including any tabulated data and figures) very carefully. Papers are published as advance Articles on the web as soon as possible after the return of proof corrections. Late corrections cannot be incorporated after publication of the Advance Article.

4.0 Administration

Receipt of a paper will be acknowledged, and the paper will be given a reference number which authors are asked to quote on all their subsequent correspondence. If no such acknowledgement has been received after a reasonable period of time, authors should check with the Editorial Office as to whether the paper or the acknowledgement has gone astray.

4.1 Editorial policy

All manuscripts will be processed in an efficient, fair and timely manner. Papers that are accepted must not be published elsewhere except by permission of the Royal Society of Chemistry. Submission of a manuscript will be regarded as an undertaking that the same material is not being considered for publication by another journal. Conditions governing acceptance are available *via* ReSource.‡

4.2 Licence to Publish

The whole of the literary matter (including tables, figures, diagrams and photographs) in *Soft Matter* is subject to a Licence to Publish and may not be reproduced without permission from The Royal Society of Chemistry and such other owner of the copyright as may be indicated. However, the owner may reproduce/republish portions of the Work without seeking permission, provided any reproduction is accompanied by an acknowledgement in the form:

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4.3 Reprints

A PDF reprint of each paper will be supplied free of charge.

‡ See <http://www.rsc.org/resource>.