Adopting OGA Validation Tools in Journal Policies

A practical guide for publishers and journal editors implementing the Delphi consensus recommendations on antibody reporting and validation.

The recommendations

An international Delphi panel of 32 experts reached consensus on four publisher-facing recommendations, all rated as both effective and feasible for implementation by 2030:

- **R1:** Authors include the Research Resource Identifier (RRID) for each antibody used.
- **R2:** Authors provide sufficient metadata for unambiguous identification (clone ID, catalogue number, lot number, vendor).
- **R3:** Authors report the dilution ratio and, where possible, the protein concentration.
- **A1:** Journals establish clear standards for antibody validation and reporting.

Tools already available

The OGA community has developed a suite of tools that directly implement these recommendations. Rather than building new infrastructure, journals can adopt existing tools:

The OGA Validation Record

An interactive web tool and matching offline Word template that captures every field required by R1, R2, and R3 in a single structured form: RRID, vendor, catalogue number, clone name, lot number, host/clonality, concentration or dilution, application, sample type, experimental question, controls used, and observations. Authors complete one entry per antibody, then download a PDF record or copy to clipboard.

- **Web tool:** onlygoodantibodies.co.uk/tools/validation-recorder
- **Offline template:** downloadable from the tool page (Word format)

The OGA Validation Planning Framework

A proportionate framework for assessing antibody validation, distinguishing between target-specific antibodies (where validation is critical to the scientific question), community markers (where established clones have consensus support), and technical controls (where validation expectations are lower). This helps authors calibrate their validation effort and gives editors a principled basis for understanding what constitutes proportionate validation in different experimental contexts.

Suggested implementation

The following template language can be adapted for author guidelines, reviewer instructions, and editorial policies.

Author guidelines

Suggested wording for submission requirements:

> *For each antibody used, authors must provide: the Research Resource Identifier (RRID) where available, vendor and catalogue number, clone name (monoclonal) or lot number (polyclonal), host species, and the concentration or dilution used. Authors are encouraged to complete an OGA Antibody Validation Record (onlygoodantibodies.co.uk/tools/validation-recorder) for each antibody and include the resulting PDF as supplementary material.*

For journals requiring validation evidence:

> *For antibodies central to the study's conclusions (target-specific antibodies), authors should describe the validation performed, including positive and negative controls. Where independent characterisation data exists (e.g. from YCharOS or equivalent), authors should cite it. The OGA Validation Planning Framework provides guidance on proportionate validation expectations.*

Reviewer instructions

Suggested addition to reviewer guidance:

> *When evaluating antibody-dependent data, reviewers should check that reporting is complete: (1) Can each antibody be uniquely identified? Look for RRID, catalogue number, clone or lot number, and vendor. (2) Is the concentration or dilution reported? (3) For antibodies central to the paper's conclusions, is validation evidence presented or cited? These are completeness checks rather than specialist assessment. The structured output from the OGA Validation Record is designed to support both manual review and automated compliance screening.*

Automated screening

Tools such as SciScore can flag missing RRIDs and incomplete antibody reporting at submission. The OGA Validation Record produces structured output that is compatible with automated compliance checking. For journals interested in more comprehensive antibody assessment, the OGA antibody transparency reporter provides AI-assisted screening of manuscript antibody use against characterisation data (pilot stage; contact OGA for details).

Compatibility with existing standards

These tools are designed to work alongside, not replace, existing frameworks. The Validation Record captures all fields required by the MDAR checklist. The Planning Framework references the IWGAV five pillars of validation. Journals already using MDAR, STAR Methods, or similar frameworks can layer OGA tools on top with minimal disruption.