

IEA COMPASS: BRIEFS IN EDUCATION

Author Guidelines



IEA COMPASS: BRIEFS IN EDUCATION

The *IEA Compass: Briefs in Education* (also known as *Compass Briefs*) aim to engage a broader audience while upholding the rigorous academic standards for which IEA is renowned. This initiative caters to the diverse stakeholders within the educational sector, including staff of elected officials, bureaucrats at various levels, elected officials and other educational stakeholders interested in international educational topics. Our objective is to render the *Briefs* both technically robust and accessible, facilitating their relevance and applicability in shaping educational policy and practice. The *Briefs* are not meant to be shortened academic papers but documents that explain a complex topic or analysis and provide policy-relevant implications that resonate with education systems across the globe and recommendations or examples of what works well in a region/country. The core approach is to distill complex research findings into concise, clear, and actionable insights.

Each *Brief* is designed to be less formal than traditional academic papers, prioritizing clarity and applicability. We strive to present key messages in accessible language, minimizing jargon to ensure that the content is easily understandable for non-specialists. This format includes a succinct summary (or abstract) that outlines the core aim, findings, and policy-relevant message of the research, accompanied by clear, actionable recommendations.

For authors, the *IEA Compass: Briefs in Education* series, evolving from the former *IEA Policy Briefs*, continues to focus on connecting IEA study results with ongoing and emergent

educational questions on both the international and national stages. Authors should aim for a concise format, with the body of the text being approximately 1,800-2,000 words, excluding the summary, implications and references. All statements must be data-backed or supported by secondary analysis, maintaining a balance between scholarly rigor and practical accessibility for a readership that, while knowledgeable in educational debates, may not possess specialized methodological expertise. Also, we do welcome nationally focused briefs—which can showcase the [impact IEA studies have in a country](#), however, they should be written to have resonance outside one country.

The introduction of each *Compass Brief* should elucidate the research's background, objectives, and significance, clearly identifying the target audience to ensure the content's relevance and impact. While the *Compass Briefs* should primarily draw from IEA data, incorporating complementary data to enrich the analysis is encouraged. Detailed methodological information should be relegated to an online appendix, allowing the main body to remain succinct and focused.

In summary, the *IEA Compass: Briefs in Education* series seeks to contribute effectively to the educational dialogue and policymaking processes by making research findings more accessible, engaging, and relevant. The series, while flexible in approach, maintains a structured review process overseen by the *IEA's Publications and Editorial Committee (PEC)*, ensuring each publication's integrity and impact.

IEA COMPASS: BRIEFS IN EDUCATION – SECTION GUIDELINES

► Title

Objective: Select a title that not only reflects the content but also intrigues the reader. Think about what would catch the attention of someone scanning through a list of documents; the title should be compelling enough to make them want to read on. The use of a sub-line is permitted but please keep the entire title to 10 words or less.

► Summary

Length: 150 words

Content: Offer a digestible overview of the *Compass Brief's* purpose, main findings, and policy relevance. This section should capture the essence of the brief in a way that immediately conveys its value to the reader.

Style: Write in straightforward prose, ensuring that the summary is engaging and easily understood by individuals without specialized knowledge.

► Implications (Recommendations)

Length: 200 words

Content: Clearly state three-to-four actionable steps or recommendations, drawing directly from the key findings. Details: Each implication should be accompanied by a brief explanation that highlights its relevance and feasibility, making the implications tangible and compelling for the reader.

► Introduction

Length: 500-800 words

Content: Set the context and explain why the brief matters, aiming to resonate with the reader's interests and concerns.

Audience Identification: Tailor the introduction to speak directly to the primary audience, who are people interested in education but may not be academics. Please be sure to make clear why they should care about the findings. Please note that this is not a literature review and citations should be kept to a bare minimum. Referring to a couple of large studies or reports by government or other organizations may be relevant.

► Data and Analysis

Length: 100-300 words (main text); unlimited (appendix)

Content: In the main body, provide a snapshot of the data and analysis approach. The detailed methodology in the appendix should be thorough yet accessible, ensuring technical rigor without sacrificing readability. The reviewers will focus on the appendix to ensure that the results and discussion are correct. As such, when applicable the authors should be clear about the models, weights, and variables used including how plausible values were employed.

The IEA Communications Team will create the *Compass Brief* typeset as IEA has an in-house design team.

► Results and Discussion

Length: 800-1000 words

Content: Present the findings in a way that highlights their significance and impact. Use clear, straightforward language and include visual elements like tables or figures to aid understanding and engagement. Please be sure to steer away from causal claims or saying more than the data and analysis can support.

Visual Summary: A well-chosen image or infographic can distill the brief's essence, offering an immediate visual understanding of the topic and drawing the reader into the text. Design support is offered by IEA's in-house design team. Authors should do what they can to try to keep tables and figures to a maximum of two. The appendix has a 15 page limit. The text can refer to the appendix at any time. Please provide tables, figures and appendices in an Excel spreadsheet for IEA's design team.

Appendix: You may also employ an appendix for this section. The appendix may contain detailed results for those interested in a deeper dive, presenting complex data and analyses in a structured and reader-friendly manner. This can include but is not limited to larger tables. The online version will have hyperlinks and printed versions will include a link so that the reader can easily access the brief.

► Conclusion and Implications for Policy and Research

Length: 300-400 words

Content: Summarize the key takeaways and their broader implications, reinforcing the relevance of the research. Aim to leave the reader with a clear understanding of what needs to be done or considered next.

Additional Resources: Provide links to further information, extending the brief's value and encouraging ongoing engagement with the topic.

► References

Limit references to those crucial for supporting the *Compass Brief*'s main points, ensuring they augment rather than overwhelm the narrative. You may include an additional readings section in an appendix that can be referenced to in the brief.

► Note on Appendix (Online)

Length: 15 pages maximum.

Content: As referenced in the above directions, the appendix should be a resource for in-depth understanding, formatted in an easy-to-navigate manner with clear headings and subheadings.

Format: Organize content to facilitate targeted exploration, making complex information approachable and engaging.

► Formatting and Submission

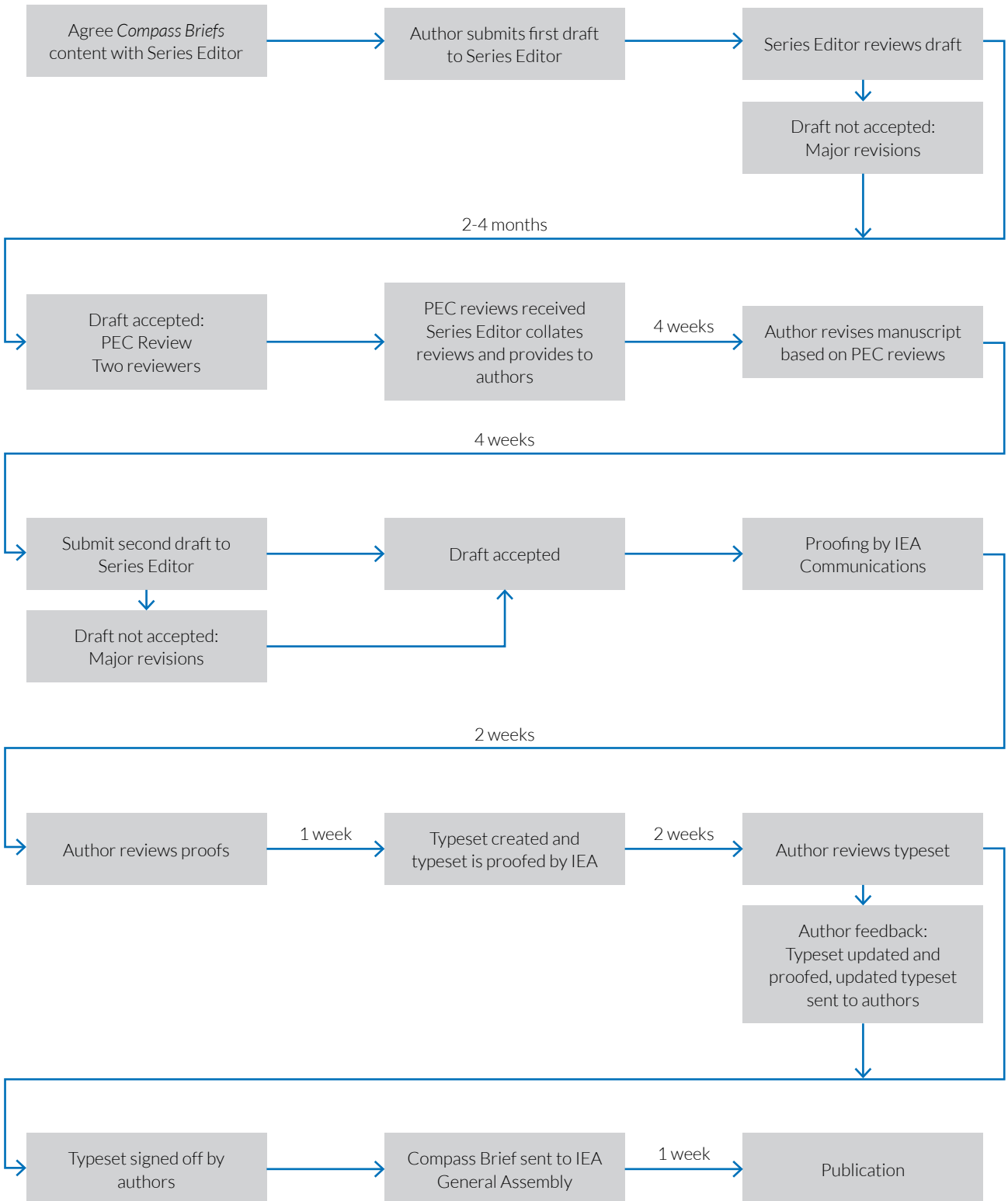
Consistency in formatting helps maintain focus on content, while clear, professional presentation aids in reader engagement. Follow these standard guidelines to ensure the brief is not only informative but also visually appealing and easy to read. Appendices should be clear and separated into sections (e.g., data and analysis, results, etc.). IEA will provide final formatting for the *Compass Brief*.

By following these guidelines, authors can create *Compass Briefs* that not only disseminate important findings and insights but also actively engage and resonate with a diverse audience, thereby maximizing the impact of their work.

► Publication and outreach

After publication, *IEA Compass: Briefs in Education* are also available to translate. IEA offers the opportunity to translate to its members a week before publication. As an author, you are also welcome to translate the brief if you wish. Translations serve as a way to make the briefs more accessible within the national context.

IEA COMPASS: BRIEFS IN EDUCATION PROCESS



IEA COMPASS: BRIEFS IN EDUCATION

About IEA

IEA is an independent, international cooperative of national research institutions and governmental agencies. IEA conducts large-scale comparative studies of educational achievement to; gain an in-depth understanding of the effects of policies and practices within and across education systems; to provide policymakers with insights into student performance; and to research, understand, and improve education worldwide.

Follow us:

 [@iea_education](#)

 [IEAResearchInEducation](#)

 [IEA](#)



Researching education, improving learning