



MZUZU UNIVERSITY
HOTCRP CONFERENCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

USER GUIDE

Conference Authors and Submitters Guide

Self-service guide for preparing, submitting, updating and finalising papers

Audience: Authors, co-authors, presenters, postgraduate students and researchers

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Institution	Mzuzu University
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Use	Author submission, response and final-version workflow

SERVICE | PERFECTION | SELF RELIANCE



Document Control

Item	Detail
Document owner	Conference Secretariat / ICT Support
Prepared by	Enock Tung'ande Mbewe (PhD)
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Status	Draft operational manual - customise before live deployment
Recommended review cycle	Before every conference cycle and after every major HotCRP upgrade
Primary audience	Authors, co-authors, presenters, postgraduate students and researchers

Customisation note

Replace placeholders such as [Conference Name], [Conference URL], [Support Email], [Submission Deadline] and [Review Deadline] with approved conference information before distribution.

This guide is intentionally written as a practical manual. Follow the click path first, then complete the numbered steps and verification checks before moving to the next task.

Purpose and scope

This guide explains the HotCRP actions needed by for authors submitting papers and final versions. It is written as a self-contained operating manual: each action gives a click path, numbered steps, verification checks and the evidence to keep.

Author navigation convention

Author paths are written like Dashboard > Paper > Edit > Upload submission. Only author-visible actions are included. Where a menu is not visible, contact the conference support address instead of trying unavailable menus.

What this guide includes

- Exact click paths for common actions.
- Step-by-step instructions for completing each action.
- Verification checks before leaving the page.
- Common mistakes to avoid.
- Records, screenshots or exports to keep for audit and continuity.

What this guide does not replace

- The approved call for papers and conference policy.



- The official conflict-of-interest policy.
- Publisher-specific final paper or copyright instructions.
- Local ICT security, backup and data-protection procedures.

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Action-by-action procedures

How to create a HotCRP account

Click path	Conference HotCRP URL > Create account
Purpose	Create the account you will use to submit and manage your paper.
Record/evidence to keep	Account confirmation email or successful sign-in screenshot.

Step-by-step

1. Open the official HotCRP URL for the conference.
2. Click Create account or New to the site? Create an account.
3. Enter your email address, name and affiliation.
4. Follow the email verification link if HotCRP sends one.
5. Set a strong password if asked.
6. Sign in and confirm your name and email are correct.
7. Keep the same email address for all submissions to this conference.

Verify

- You can sign in successfully.
- Your name and affiliation are correct.



How to sign in after receiving an invitation or notification

Click path	Conference HotCRP URL > Sign in
Purpose	Access your author dashboard, submission page or decision letter.
Record/evidence to keep	None unless support is needed.

Step-by-step

1. Open the official conference HotCRP URL.
2. Enter the email address that received the invitation or notification.
3. Enter your password or use the password reset link if necessary.
4. Click Sign in.
5. If you do not see your paper, check whether you used a different email address.
6. Contact conference support if the paper is linked to the wrong email address.

Verify

- Your paper appears on your home/dashboard page.

How to start a new submission

Click path	Home / Submissions > Start new submission
Purpose	Register a paper before the submission deadline.
Record/evidence to keep	Paper number and confirmation message.

Step-by-step

1. Sign in to the conference HotCRP site.
2. Click Start new submission, New submission or Submit paper.
3. Select the correct track if the conference has tracks.
4. Enter the paper title exactly as it should appear.
5. Paste the abstract if required.
6. Add authors and affiliations.
7. Select topics that best describe the paper.
8. Declare conflicts if the form asks for conflicted PC members or collaborators.
9. Complete any custom fields required by the conference.
10. Click Save draft or Register submission.
11. Write down the assigned paper number.

Verify

- A green or successful confirmation message appears.
- The paper has a submission number.
- The paper is still draft unless you have uploaded the final required file and marked it ready.



How to add or edit authors

Click path	Paper page > Edit > Authors
Purpose	Keep the author list, order, affiliations and contact information accurate.
Record/evidence to keep	Updated paper page screenshot.

Step-by-step

1. Open your paper from the dashboard.
2. Click Edit.
3. Go to the Authors section.
4. Add each author with full name, email and affiliation where required.
5. Use the ordering controls to put authors in the correct order.
6. Mark the contact author if the form provides this option.
7. Check spelling, accents and institutional names.
8. Save.
9. Reopen the paper page and verify the author list.

Verify

- All authors are listed in the correct order.
- Contact email is monitored.

How to select topics

Click path	Paper page > Edit > Topics
Purpose	Help the conference match your paper to suitable reviewers.
Record/evidence to keep	Saved paper metadata.

Step-by-step

1. Open the paper page.
2. Click Edit.
3. Find Topics.
4. Select all topics that strongly match the paper.
5. Do not select unrelated topics just to broaden visibility.
6. Save.
7. Confirm selected topics appear on the paper page.

Verify

- Topics accurately describe the paper.

How to declare conflicts of interest

Click path	Paper page > Edit > Conflicts / Collaborators
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Purpose	Tell the conference which committee members or collaborators should not review your paper.
Record/evidence to keep	Conflict declaration on the submission page.

Step-by-step

1. Open the paper page.
2. Click Edit.
3. Find the Conflicts, PC conflicts or Collaborators section.
4. Tick conflicted PC members if checkboxes are provided.
5. Enter other collaborators or institutional conflicts if a text box is provided.
6. Follow the conference conflict policy when deciding what to declare.
7. Save.
8. Check the paper page to confirm the conflict information is recorded where visible to authors.

Verify

- All known conflicts have been declared.
- You did not declare conflicts simply to avoid particular reviewers.

How to upload the submission PDF

Click path	Paper page > Edit > Upload submission
Purpose	Attach the document that reviewers will evaluate.
Record/evidence to keep	Uploaded file confirmation.

Step-by-step

1. Prepare the PDF using the conference template and anonymity rules.
2. Open the paper page.
3. Click Edit.
4. Go to Upload submission, Submission file or PDF field.
5. Choose the correct PDF from your computer.
6. Upload and wait for the confirmation message.
7. If the page has a Check format link, run it.
8. Open/download the uploaded file from HotCRP to confirm it is the correct version.
9. Save the submission.

Verify

- The uploaded file opens correctly.
- The file is not a wrong draft, blank file or source file.
- The PDF follows anonymity rules if double-blind review is used.

How to run the format check

Click path	Paper page > Edit > Check format
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Purpose	Identify page-limit or formatting problems before the deadline.
Record/evidence to keep	Format check result.

Step-by-step

1. Open the paper page.
2. Click Edit.
3. Find Check format near the uploaded PDF if enabled.
4. Run the checker.
5. Read the result carefully.
6. If errors are reported, fix the source document and generate a new PDF.
7. Upload the corrected PDF.
8. Run the checker again.
9. Save the final upload.

Verify

- No serious format problems remain, or you have documented why a warning is harmless.

How to mark the submission ready for review

Click path	Paper page > Edit > Submission is ready / Submit
Purpose	Tell HotCRP that the paper should enter the review process.
Record/evidence to keep	Ready/submitted status screenshot.

Step-by-step

1. Open the paper page.
2. Click Edit.
3. Confirm title, abstract, authors, conflicts, topics and file upload are complete.
4. Find the checkbox or button labelled The submission is ready for review, Submit, or similar.
5. Tick the box or click the button.
6. Save.
7. Return to the paper page and confirm its status is ready/submitted.

Verify

- Status shows ready or submitted.
- No required field remains missing.

Avoid this mistake

Saving a draft is not always the same as submitting. Always check the final status.

How to update a submission before the deadline

Click path	Paper page > Edit
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Purpose	Replace the PDF or metadata while updates are still allowed.
Record/evidence to keep	Updated timestamp or confirmation.

Step-by-step

1. Open the paper page.
2. Click Edit.
3. Change the necessary metadata or upload a revised PDF.
4. Run Check format if available.
5. Confirm the ready/submitted checkbox remains selected if required.
6. Save.
7. Open the paper page and confirm the timestamp/version updated.
8. Download the uploaded PDF and check it is the new version.

Verify

- The new version is visible in HotCRP.
- The submission remains ready/submitted.

How to withdraw a submission

Click path	Paper page > Withdraw / Edit > Withdraw
Purpose	Remove your paper from consideration when you no longer want it reviewed.
Record/evidence to keep	Withdrawal confirmation.

Step-by-step

1. Open the paper page.
2. Look for Withdraw, or click Edit and find the withdrawal option.
3. Read the confirmation message.
4. Enter a reason if requested.
5. Confirm withdrawal.
6. Check that the paper status shows withdrawn.
7. Inform co-authors outside HotCRP if they need to know.

Verify

- Paper status is withdrawn.

How to read reviews and decision

Click path	Paper page > Reviews / Decision
Purpose	Understand the outcome and reviewer feedback after notification.
Record/evidence to keep	Saved decision email or review page.



Step-by-step

1. Sign in using the email associated with the paper.
2. Open the paper page.
3. Read the decision at the top or in the decision section if visible.
4. Read all author-visible reviews and comments.
5. Download or save a copy for your records if permitted.
6. Do not contact reviewers directly unless the conference instructions explicitly allow it.
7. Use the support contact for clarification about process, not to argue outside the official route.

Verify

- You can see the decision and any released reviews.

How to submit an author response or rebuttal

Click path	Paper page > Author response / Response > Edit response
Purpose	Respond to reviews within the official response window.
Record/evidence to keep	Submitted response screenshot.

Step-by-step

1. Read all reviews carefully before writing.
2. Open the paper page during the response window.
3. Click Edit response, Author response or Rebuttal.
4. Write concise responses to factual errors and major misunderstandings.
5. Use respectful language.
6. Stay within word/page limits.
7. Save draft if allowed.
8. Submit or save final response before the deadline.
9. Reopen the response to confirm it is visible and saved.

Verify

- Response is submitted before the deadline.
- Tone is professional and evidence-based.

How to upload final camera-ready files

Click path	Paper page > Final version / Edit final version
Purpose	Submit the files required after acceptance.
Record/evidence to keep	Final version confirmation.

Step-by-step

1. Read the acceptance email and final-submission instructions.
2. Prepare the final PDF and any source files, copyright form, supplement or metadata required.



3. Open the accepted paper page.
4. Find Final version, Camera-ready, or Edit final version.
5. Upload the required files one by one.
6. Update title, author names and affiliations if instructed.
7. Run format check if available.
8. Save.
9. Download/open the final uploaded PDF and confirm it is correct.
10. Watch for confirmation email if the system sends one.

Verify

- Final version area shows uploaded files.
- Title and author metadata match the final paper.

Useful author status checks

Author status/check	Use
Draft / incomplete submission	The paper still needs required information, upload or final confirmation before the deadline.
Ready / submitted	The paper has been marked for review and should remain visible from your author dashboard.
Withdrawn	The paper is no longer being considered; confirm this was intentional before the deadline.
Decision visible	Read the decision and author-visible reviews from the paper page after notification.
Response / rebuttal open	Submit the author response only during the official response window.
Final version open	Upload camera-ready files only after acceptance and according to the final-submission instructions.

Author submission checklist

Done	Action / control	Responsible	Evidence
<input type="checkbox"/>	Correct conference HotCRP URL opened	Author	URL from call/email
<input type="checkbox"/>	Account created with correct email	Author	Successful sign-in
<input type="checkbox"/>	Title and abstract entered	Author	Paper page
<input type="checkbox"/>	All authors and affiliations correct	Author	Paper page
<input type="checkbox"/>	Topics and conflicts completed	Author	Edit page
<input type="checkbox"/>	Correct PDF uploaded and checked	Author	Upload/format result



<input type="checkbox"/>	Submission marked ready/submitted	Author	Ready status
<input type="checkbox"/>	Final version uploaded if accepted	Author	Final confirmation

Relevant reference material

These references are included because they relate directly to the users and actions covered in this guide. They are not a substitute for the approved conference policy.

- HotCRP sign in: <https://help.hotcrp.com/signin> - User sign-in and account access.
- Example HotCRP submission instructions: <https://kr.org/KR2026/submission.html> - Example of author-facing HotCRP submission steps; conference instructions vary.
- Example final upload instruction: <https://www.usenix.org/conference/usenixsecurity25/instructions-presenters-and-authors> - Example of accepted-author final upload using a HotCRP paper page.

Local customisation page

Item	Local value to insert
Conference name	3rd Annual Research Dissemination Conference (MZUNI2026)
HotCRP URL	https://conferences.mzuni.ac.mw
Support email	researchconferences@mzuni.ac.mw
Submission deadline and timezone	<p>Registration deadline: Tuesday Jun 30, 2026, 12 AM UTC (2 AM your time) You can register new submissions until this deadline.</p> <p>Submission deadline: Monday Aug 31, 2026, 12 AM UTC (2 AM your time) Submissions must be ready by this deadline to be reviewed.</p> <p>Presentation Slides Deadline submission deadline: Friday Sep 11, 2026, 12 AM UTC (2 AM your time) Presentation Slides Deadline submissions must be ready by this deadline to be reviewed.</p>