

# Guidelines for Reviewers

## Contribution to editorial decisions

Peer reviews assist the editor in making editorial decisions and through the editorial communications with the author may also assist the author in improving the paper.

## Promptness

Any selected reviewer who feels unqualified to review the research reported in a manuscript or knows that its prompt review will be impossible should notify the editor and excuse himself from the review process.

## Confidentiality

Any manuscripts received for review must be treated as confidential documents. They must not be shown to or discussed with others unless authorized by the editor. Under double-blind review the identity of the reviewers and the authors are hidden from each other. This level of anonymity is designed to encourage fairness, with papers being considered on their individual merits.

## Standards of objectivity

Reviews should be conducted objectively. Personal criticism of the author is inappropriate. Reviewers should express their views clearly with supporting arguments.

Acknowledgement of sources

Reviewers should identify relevant published work that has not been cited by the authors. Any statement that an observation, derivation, or argument had been previously reported should be accompanied by the relevant citation. A reviewer should also call to the editor's attention any substantial similarity or overlap between the manuscript under consideration and any other published paper of which they have personal knowledge.

## Disclosure and conflict of interest

Privileged information or ideas obtained through peer review must be kept confidential and not used for personal advantage. Reviewers should not consider manuscripts in which they have conflicts of interest resulting from competitive, collaborative, or other relationships or connections with any of the authors, companies, or institutions connected with the papers.

## Why review?

When your time is stretched it is tempting to say no to the requests for a review, but there are a number of very valid reasons why review should be accepted:

- Help the author to improve the paper – in the light of your own professional expertise.
- Make the author aware of any additional literature that may provide useful comparison, or clarification of an approach.
- Assist in a rigorous process to ensure only the best research is published.
- Maintain your awareness of current research emerging within the discipline.

## Investigate the Journal's content

You've agreed to referee a paper, so what should you do next? Start by visiting the Journal homepage to get a sense of the Journal's usual contents and house style to help decide whether the paper being reviewed is

suitable. Refer to the Instructions for Authors to see if the paper meets the submission criteria of the Journal (e.g. length, scope, and presentation).

## **Make an assessment**

Fill in the review questions or score sheet to indicate the relative strengths or weaknesses of the paper. Remember that authors will welcome positive feedback as well as constructive criticism from you. Key questions to ask: Is the paper original? Is the relative contribution made to the existing literature good enough? Will the paper be interesting to the readership of the Journal?

## **Make a recommendation**

Once you have read the paper and assessed its quality, you need to make a recommendation to the editor regarding publication. Should it be accepted? Revised and resubmitted? Rejected pending revision? Supply some comments suitable for transmission to the author as an opportunity to seek clarification on any unclear points and for further elaboration. If you have time, make suggestions as to how the author can improve clarity, succinctness, and the overall quality of the presentation. Confirm whether you feel the subject of the paper is sufficiently interesting to justify its length. If you recommend shortening of the paper it is useful to the author(s) if you can indicate specific areas where you think that shortening is required.

## **Unable to review?**

It will prove impossible for you to accept every invitation to review. In this situation it is very helpful if you are able to recommend an alternative expert or someone whose opinion you trust. If you are unable to complete your report on a paper then inform the editorial office as soon as possible so that the reviewing process is not delayed. Make the editors aware of any potential conflict of interest that may affect the paper under review. We are always very grateful for the contribution made to our Journal by our reviewers and would be pleased to hear any comments or suggestions on our current peer review procedures.

## **Review process**



At the request of the Editor-in-Chief the reviewers are invited to make online review using the Paper Submission Tool (PST) – the section for reviewers.