

Peer Review Policy and Guidelines

Your peer review guidelines should instruct referees on your peer review policy, noting aspects such as openness, anonymity, and collaboration with other scholars. Your review guidelines are an opportunity to encourage reviewers to approach review with an attitude of collegiality, to craft reviews with detailed and constructive criticism, and to consider the mission and goals of the publication. Think of your guidelines working in partnership with your peer review form, which will direct reviewers who accept invitations to consider certain aspects of the article and answer questions about the suitability and strength of the work. When writing your reviewer guidelines, which are publicly-available text on your website, consider the following:

- Overly long and formally worded guidelines containing specific instructions are less likely to be read and adhered to
- Encourage reviewers to approach the review as an opportunity to enhance the quality of the article rather than to tear down and reject the text.
- Language and tone are important and should be consistent with the ethos and style of all your journal's public, written materials
- Your policy and guidelines should work together - use your review form to go into detail and ask questions specific to the kind of material being reviewed

Peer Review Form

Your peer review form is an extension and elaboration on your guidelines for your referees. While peer review guidelines set the tone for your review, the form provides specific criteria to guide reviewer commentary and to provide tangible feedback you can convey to authors. You should consider writing specific forms for different kinds of articles (the criteria for full-length research articles may be different from literature reviews, case notes, etc.) When crafting your peer review form consider:

- Asking substantive "how" questions when possible/in addition to yes/no "checkbox" questions
- Encouraging reviewers to comment if a yes or no is provided
- Thinking about your own journal's criteria for publishing and use that checklist as a guide
- Encouraging reviewers not to reject writing that needs improvement or contributions from authors for whom English is not their first written language

Sample Peer Review Form Questions:

Is the title clear and appropriate? (Yes/No)

Comment:

Does the abstract provide a strong summary of the article? Can it be understood without reading the paper?

What is the main question addressed by the research, and is the article focused on this question? Where are there areas in the text where the author strays from the main argument or discussion?

How original is the topic? What does it add to the subject area compared with other published material?

Is the methodology clear? How could it be better articulated? Are the author's methods appropriate and sound?

Are the conclusions consistent with the evidence and arguments presented? How do they address the main question posed?

Do tables or figures add to the paper? Do they aid understanding or are they superfluous?

Does the article contain appropriate citations and are they correctly formatted? Are quotations properly marked and attributed?

Is the paper well written? Is the text clear and easy to read? If the language is poor but you understand the core message, see if you can suggest improvements to fix the problem:

- Are there certain aspects that could be communicated better, such as parts of the discussion?
- Would you consider looking at the paper again once these issues are dealt with?

Does the article match the journal's style and preferred formatting? Is it an appropriate length?

Recommendation

- Accept**
- Accept with minor revisions**
- Request major revisions**
- Reject**