

ETHICAL GUIDELINES FOR REVIEWERS

Reviewing the manuscript is an important phase in the publishing process since it helps the editor make editorial decisions. Also, it enables for editorial feedback on the paper. Scholars who agree to assess a research article have an ethical obligation to do it professionally. Peer review contributes to a journal's quality, authenticity, and reputation. A reviewer must meet the certain ethical requirements.

Subject expertise

Reviewers must be expertise in the subject of the article to be reviewed. Reviewers should notify the Editor if they lack the essential topic competence to complete the review, this should be done as soon as the reviewer get a request.

Promptness in response

Reviewers must immediately notify the Editor of any potential delays and propose a new submission date for a review report, if necessary. To avoid needless delays in the review process, reviewers should not either delay submitting their evaluation or ask for unneeded extra data/information from the Editor or author (s).

Objectivity

1. All judgements should be scrupulously made and preserved to ensure that the editors and author fully comprehend the reviewer's remarks (s).
2. A reviewer may legitimately critique a work, but it is unacceptable to disparage the author(s) personally.
3. The reviewers should guarantee that their decision is based only on the research paper's quality and not on personal, financial, or other competing motives or intellectual prejudice.
4. Both reviewers and authors should avoid making unsubstantiated assumptions in their rebuttals.

Conflict of Interest

1. A reviewer must state any potentially conflicting interests e.g., personal, financial, intellectual, professional, political, or religious.
2. A reviewer should disclose conflicts of interest if the research article under evaluation is the same as their own.
3. If the reviewer cannot remove his/her prejudice, he/she should return the paper to the Editor and explain the issue.

Confidentiality

1. A reviewer should not utilize unpublished material from a submitted work for their own study without the Editor's permission.

2. Reviewers should treat the research paper as a confidential document and should refrain from discussing its content on any platform except when seeking professional advice with the Editor's permission.
3. Reviewers are professional and ethically obligated not to disclose the details of any research paper before its publication without the Editor's prior approval.

Ethical audit

1. If a reviewer believes the research article is virtually identical to another author's work, they must alert the Editor and offer a reference.
2. A reviewer will inform the Editor if they believe the research paper's findings are unreliable/false.
3. Any evidence of a violation of ethical principles in the treatment of humans (e.g., children, women, the impoverished, crippled, old, etc.) should be reported to the Editor.
4. The Editor should be informed if the research paper is based on any prior research study or is a copy of an earlier work, or if the work is plagiarized, for example, if the author has not acknowledged/referenced others' work adequately.