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| **Guidelines for Reviewers** |  |

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|  | The unpublished manuscript is a **privileged document**. Please protect it from any form of exploitation. Reviewers are expected not to cite a manuscript or refer to the work it describes before it has been published, and to refrain from using the information it contains for the advancement of their own research.1. A reviewer should consciously adopt a positive, impartial attitude towards the manuscript under review. Your position should be that of the author’s ally, with the **aim of promoting effective and accurate scientific communication**.
2. If you believe that you cannot judge a given article impartially, please return the manuscript immediately to the editor with such an explanation.
3. Reviews should be completed expeditiously (**within 2-3 weeks**.) If you know that you cannot finish the review within the time specified, please inform the editor.
4. A reviewer **should not discuss**a paper with its author/s. If you want to consult a colleague or junior, please discuss this with us first.
5. Please do not make any specific statement about acceptability of a paper in your comments for transmission to the author but advise the editor on the sheet provided.
6. In your review, please consider the following aspects on the manuscript **as far as they are applicable**:
* Importance (clinical or otherwise) of the question or subject studied
* Scientific reliability
* Originality (truly original or known to you through foreign or specialist publications or through the grapevine)
* Adequacy of abstract and key words.
* Appropriateness of approach or experimental design, adequacy of experimental techniques (including statistics where appropriate and need for statistical assessment).
* Are the methods used adequately described? Are they appropriate? Are the patients studied adequately described and their condition defined?
* Results relevant to problem posed. Credible? Well presented?
* Soundness of conclusions and interpretation. Interpretation and conclusions warranted by the data? Reasonable speculation? Is the message clear?
* Relevance of discussion
* References up to date and relevant? Any glaring omissions?
* Relevance of the figures and table, clarity of legends and titles.
* Suitability for the journal and overall recommendations. Appropriate for general readership or more appropriate for specialist journal?
* If not acceptable can the paper be made so?
* Ethical aspects
* Overall presentation (including writing style, clarity of writing)
1. In comments intended for the authors, criticism should be presented dispassionately, and abrasive remarks avoided.
2. Suggested revisions should be couched as such, and not expressed as conditions of acceptance. Please **distinguish**between revisions considered essential and those judged as merely desirable.
3. Even if we do not accept a paper, we would like to pass on **constructive comments**that might **help the author**to improve it. For this reason, please give detailed comments (with references, if appropriate) that will help both the editors to decide on the paper and the authors to improve it.
4. Your criticism, arguments, and suggestions concerning that paper will be most useful to the editor if they are **carefully documented**.
5. You are not requested to correct mistakes in grammar, but any help in this regard **will be appreciated**.
6. The editor gratefully receives a reviewer’s recommendations, but since the editorial decisions are usually based on evaluations derived from several sources, a reviewer should not expect the editor to honour his or her every recommendation.

**These guidelines are based on the recommendations of the Council of Science Editors.** |