



Peer Review Process

derived from the World Association of Medical Editors

Each paper will be sent to two independent reviewers. The peer reviewers for the journal are largely, but not exclusively, from the intensive care community, selected because of their known interest in the field. They will be asked by the editors to provide an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of written articles and will be cognizant of the quality required by the journal. In particular peer reviewers should have no competing interest in the subject of the article.

The reviewer should identify and comment on the major strengths and weaknesses of study design and methodology.

The reviewer:

- should comment constructively upon the interpretation of the data, including acknowledgment of its limitations.
- should comment on the document in terms of written communication, independent of the design, methodology, results, and interpretation of the study.
- should comment on any ethical concerns raised by the study, or any possible evidence of low standards of scientific conduct.
- should provide the author with useful suggestions for improvement of the manuscript.
- should provide comments to the author which are constructive and professional
- should provide the editor with adequate information to guide the decision on acceptance (and/or revision) of the manuscript.

The editors will routinely assess all reviews for quality; they may also edit reviews before sending them to authors, or simply not send them if they feel they are not constructive or appropriate. Ratings of review quality and other performance characteristics of reviewers should be periodically assessed to ensure optimal journal performance, and must contribute to decisions on reappointment or ongoing review requests (for journals that do not formally

appoint reviewers). Individual performance data must be kept confidential. Performance measures such as review completion times should be used to assess changes in process that might improve journal performance.

The submitted manuscript is a privileged communication; reviewers must treat it as confidential. It should not be retained or copied. Also, reviewers must not share the manuscript with any colleagues without the explicit permission of the editor. Reviewers and editors must not make any personal or professional use of the data, arguments, or interpretations (other than those directly involved in its peer review) prior to publication, unless they have the authors' specific permission or are writing an editorial or commentary to accompany the article.

If reviewers suspect misconduct, they should notify the editor in confidence, and should not share their concerns with other parties unless officially notified by the journal that they may do so.

A statistician will be available to review any statistical issues in the original research.

Review materials and original submitted manuscripts may sometimes be used for internal quality audit in which case written permissions will be sought.

The reviewer may be asked to write an accompanying commentary. This will allow the reader to read two approaches to the same issue contemporaneously.