Appendix II

Examples of checklists, forms, guidance for reviewers and editorial letters

This appendix gives examples of various documents that editorial offices need to use — checklists, forms, guidance notes and editorial letters. There are no global unique versions that will suit all journals. Journals have different requirements and so need to adapt and tailor documents to suit both the way they work and the characteristics and needs of the communities they serve. But it is often helpful to see what other journals are using and what they consider is necessary. Having good and appropriate documents makes manuscript handling easier, and can greatly increase the efficiency and quality of review. But don’t just forget about these documents once you’ve introduced or initially revised them when taking on a new journal or editorial role. They should be revisited periodically and updated to make sure they are still necessary and appropriate, and new ones need to be drafted to deal with changing editorial or policy requirements.

Some of the items — such as the checklists — are general basic composites I have put together. Other items, such as the conflict-of-interest forms and reviewing forms and guidance notes, are ‘real’ and the versions in use in August 2006 are reproduced with the kind permission of various journals and organizations. These items were selected because they are particularly good or helpful, or have something that isn’t used by the majority of journals but which some might want to consider. In the latter case, there is sometimes a range of examples (such as for the conflict-of-interest forms), suitable for different levels of need. Website addresses are given for the real documents so readers can view the latest versions.
(1) Checklists

(a) Checklist for new manuscript submissions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>New Manuscript Checklist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Manuscript ref. no:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Corresponding author:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Date rec’d</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Manuscript type:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Resubmission:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Supplementary material:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Colour:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Cover image:</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Related manuscript(s):</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pages numbered:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Section order OK:</strong></td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Abstract OK:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Keywords:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Author list checked:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Suggested reviewers:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Any competing interests:</strong></td>
</tr>
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<td><strong>Any policy restrictions:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Any problems:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Any special requests:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>English OK:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>All affiliations given:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-preferred reviewers:</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| **Handled by:**          | **Date to editor** | **Notes** |
| Date complete/ready for transfer: |             |           |
(b) Checklist for revised manuscripts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Revised Manuscript Checklist</th>
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<td>– colour fee waiver</td>
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<td>– payment form rec'd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cover image:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Response letter for:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Marked-up copy MS:</strong></td>
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<td>‘Clean’ copy MS:</td>
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<td><strong>All forms rec’d:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Any competing interests:</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td><strong>Any problems:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Any special requests:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Handled by:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Date complete/ready for assessment:</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(c) Checklist for sending accepted manuscripts on to production

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<th>Accepted Manuscript Checklist – for production</th>
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<td>Corresponding author:</td>
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<tr>
<td>CA’s email:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Any dates CA will be away/unavailable:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative contact:</td>
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<table>
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</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>- file sizes ..................................................</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- notes ........................................................成语</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colour:</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>→</td>
<td>- figures .....................................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colour payment form:</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>→</td>
<td>- notes .....................................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colour fee waiver:</td>
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<td>→</td>
<td>- notes .....................................................</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>→</td>
<td>- with MS ..........................................................</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- MS order ...................................................</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| No. tables: | .............................................................................................................. |
| No. figures: | .................................................................................................................... |
| Better figures req’d: | No | Yes | → | - which? ......................................................... |
| Level of copyedit req’d: | .............................................................................................................. |
| Any nomenclature issues: | No | Yes | → | - what? ............................................................... |
| Items still to be supplied by Au: | .............................................................................................................. |

Notes:
(d) CONSORT checklist and flowchart

The CONSORT statement (www.consort-statement.org) is described in Appendix III (see page 270). It comprises a checklist and a flowchart, and these are reproduced as Examples 1 and 2 with kind permission from the CONSORT Group. The current versions can be downloaded from www.consort-statement.org/Downloads/download.htm and further information on the use of CONSORT can be found in the article by D. Moher et al. which was published simultaneously in three journals in 2001 (‘The CONSORT statement: revised recommendations for improving the quality of reports of parallel-group randomized trials’; Annals of Internal Medicine, 134, 657–662; JAMA, 285, 1987–1991; and The Lancet, 357, 1191–1194). The statement is due to be revised in January 2007.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PAPER SECTION And topic</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TITLE &amp; ABSTRACT</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>How participants were allocated to interventions (e.g., &quot;random allocation&quot;, &quot;randomized&quot;, or &quot;randomly assigned&quot;).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION Background</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Scientific background and explanation of rationale.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>METHODS Participants</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Eligibility criteria for participants and the settings and locations where the data were collected.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interventions</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Precise details of the interventions intended for each group and how and when they were actually administered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objectives</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Specific objectives and hypotheses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcomes</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Clearly defined primary and secondary outcome measures and, when applicable, any methods used to enhance the quality of measurements (e.g., multiple observations, training of assessors).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample size</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>How sample size was determined and, when applicable, explanation of any interim analyses and stopping rules.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Randomization --</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Method used to generate the random allocation sequence, including details of any restrictions (e.g., blocking, stratification).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sequence generation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Randomization --</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Method used to implement the random allocation sequence (e.g., numbered containers or central telephone), clarifying whether the sequence was concealed until interventions were assigned.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allocation concealment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Randomization --</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Who generated the allocation sequence, who enrolled participants, and who assigned participants to their groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blinding (masking)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Whether or not participants, those administering the interventions, and those assessing the outcomes were blinded to group assignment. When relevant, how the success of blinding was evaluated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statistical methods</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Statistical methods used to compare groups for primary outcome(s): Methods for additional analyses, such as subgroup analyses and adjusted analyses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESULTS Participant flow</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Flow of participants through each stage (a diagram is strongly recommended). Specifically, for each group report the numbers of participants randomly assigned, receiving intended treatment, completing the study protocol, and analyzed for the primary outcome. Describe protocol deviations from study as planned, together with reasons.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Dates defining the periods of recruitment and follow-up.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baseline data</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Baseline demographic and clinical characteristics of each group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numbers analyzed</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Number of participants (denominator) in each group included in each analysis and whether the analysis was by &quot;intention-to-treat&quot;. State the results in absolute numbers when feasible (e.g., 10/20, not 50%).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcomes and estimation</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>For each primary and secondary outcome, a summary of results for each group, and the estimated effect size and its precision (e.g., 95% confidence interval).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ancillary analyses</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Address multiplicity by reporting any other analyses performed, including subgroup analyses and adjusted analyses, indicating those pre-specified and those exploratory.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adverse events</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>All important adverse events or side effects in each intervention group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DISCUSSION Interpretation</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Interpretation of the results, taking into account study hypotheses, sources of potential bias or imprecision and the dangers associated with multiplicity of analyses and outcomes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generalizability</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Generalizability (external validity) of the trial findings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall evidence</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>General interpretation of the results in the context of current evidence.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example 1  CONSORT checklist (reproduced with permission from the CONSORT Group).
Example 2 CONSORT flowchart (reproduced with permission from the CONSORT Group).
(2) Forms

(a) Change of authorship form

The ‘Change of authorship form’ reproduced as Example 3 is used with kind permission from the American Physiological Society (www.the-aps.org). It can be accessed from www.the-aps.org/publications/i4a/revision.htm and a PDF of the form can be found at www.the-aps.org/publications/journals/pub_author_form.PDF.

Example 3  Change of authorship form (used with permission from the American Physiological Society).
(b) Conflict-of-interest forms

A number of examples of forms requiring individuals to declare potential conflicting or competing interests are given below. They vary in the level of detail requested, from comprehensive and fairly prescriptive (as for journals (i)—(iii)), to ones where the onus is placed on the individuals to describe potential competing interests in their own statements (as for journal (iv)). Most conflict-of-interest forms are aimed at authors, but some journals also ask their reviewers to make declarations (for example, as does journal (iii)). Some journals have also decided that readers should know of any competing interests their editors may have, and so publish these for each of their associate editors (as does journal (v)).

(i) The journal *Nature* (www.nature.com) has a ‘Competing financial interests declaration form’ that authors are required to return before final acceptance of their contributions. Definitions of what are considered competing interests and guidance on use of the form can be found at www.nature.com/nature/authors/policy/competing.html. The actual form can be downloaded from www.nature.com/nature/authors/policy/form.html and is reproduced as Example 4 with kind permission from *Nature*. 
Competing financial interests declaration form

In the interests of transparency and to help readers to detect potential bias, we now require authors of primary and secondary research papers to declare any competing financial interests in relation to papers accepted for publication.

Please submit one statement on behalf of all authors.

Competing financial interests are defined as those that, through their potential influence on behaviour or content or from perception of such potential influences, could undermine the objectivity, integrity or perceived value of a publication. They may include any of the following:

**Funding:** Support for a research programme (including salaries, equipment, supplies, reimbursement for attending symposia, and other expenses) by organizations that may gain or lose financially through publication of this paper.

**Employment:** Recent (i.e. while engaged in this research project), present or anticipated employment by any organization that may gain or lose financially through publication of this paper.

**Personal financial interests:** Stocks or shares in companies that may gain or lose financially through publication; consultation fees or other forms of remuneration from organizations that may gain or lose financially; patents or patent applications whose value may be affected by publication.

It is difficult to specify a threshold at which a financial interest becomes significant, although we note that many US universities require faculty members to disclose interests exceeding $10,000 or 5% equity in a company (see for example Lo, B. et al., *New Eng. J. Med.* **343**, 1616). Any such figure is necessarily arbitrary, however, so we offer as one possible practical alternative guideline: "Any undeclared competing financial interests that could embarrass you were they to become publicly known after your work was published."

We do not consider diversified mutual funds or investment trusts to constitute a competing financial interest.

We do not require authors to state the monetary value of their financial interests.

Please print, complete and return the following form.

**Example 4** Form for declaration of competing financial interests by authors (reproduced with permission from *Nature*).
Declaration of competing financial interests

JOURNAL:

MANUSCRIPT TITLE:

MANUSCRIPT NUMBER:

Please check one of the following:

1. I declare that the authors have no competing interests such as those defined above or others that might be perceived to influence the results and discussion reported in this paper.

2. The authors have competing interests such as those defined above or others that might be perceived to influence the results and discussion reported in this paper.

3. I decline to respond to this request for information.

If you have checked 2, please specify the competing interests:

In reports of research, under a heading "Competing interests", we will publish "Authors declare competing financial interests: see Web version for details", "Authors declare they have no competing financial interests" or "Authors decline to provide information about competing financial interests"

SIGNATURE:

NAME IN BLOCK CAPITALS:

DATE:

Example 4 (Cont'd)
(ii) The journal *Science* (www.sciencemag.org) has a 'Statement on real or perceived conflicts of interest for authors' and all authors must, when uploading their revised manuscripts after peer review, fill in details of financial and other interests that might pose a conflict of interest. The statement and form can be found at www.sciencemag.org/feature/contribinfo/prep/coi.pdf and are reproduced as Example 5 with kind permission from *Science*.

Example 5  Form for statement of real or perceived conflicts of interest by authors (reproduced with permission from *Science*).
Third, through the execution of a statement disclosing to the Editors all financial holdings, professional affiliations, advisory positions, board memberships, patent holdings and the like that might bear a relationship to the subject matter of the contribution. The Editors will determine whether the material disclosed to them should be published as part of the article. Please check the appropriate box below:

The following are declarable relationships:

**Financial**: Significant financial interest (equity holdings or stock options) in any corporate entity dealing with the material or the subject matter of this contribution. Please disclose the entity and the nature and amount of the holding.
- None
- One or more authors has a financial relationship, as described below.

**Management/Advisory affiliations**: Within the last 3 years, status as an officer, a member of the Board, or a member of an Advisory Committee of any entity engaged in activity related to the subject matter of this contribution. Please disclose the nature of these relationships and the financial arrangements.
- None
- One or more authors has a management/advisory relationship, as described below

**Paid Consulting**: Within the last 3 years, receipt of consulting fees, honoraria, speaking fees, or expert testimony fees from entities that have a financial interest in the results and materials of this study. Please enumerate.
- None
- One or more authors has a paid consulting relationship, as described below

**Patents**: A planned, pending, or awarded patent on this work by any of the authors or their institutions. Please explain.
- None
- One or more authors or the authors’ institutions has a patent related to this work, as described below

- All authors declare that we have read Science’s full Conflict of Interest Policy and have disclosed all declarable relationships as defined therein, if any.

**Manuscript Number**

________________________

**Title**: ________________________________

________________________

**First Author**: ________________________________

**Signature**: ____________________________ **Date**: ____________________________

**Example 5** *(Cont’d)*
(iii) The *BMJ* (British Medical Journal; http://bmj.bmjjournals.com) asks both authors and reviewers to declare all competing financial interests and suggests that individuals might also want to disclose any other potential competing interests. The 'Declaration of competing interest' forms, and guidance on filling them in, can be found at http://bmj.bmjjournals.com/cgi/content/full/317/7154/291/DC1, and are reproduced as Example 6 with kind permission from the *BMJ*.

Example 6  Forms for declaration of competing interests by authors and reviewers (reproduced with permission from the *BMJ*).
2. Have you in the past five years been employed by an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the results of your study or the conclusions of your review, editorial, or letter?

3. Do you hold any stocks or shares in an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the results of your study or the conclusions of your review, editorial, or letter?

4. Have you acted as an expert witness on the subject of your study, review, editorial, or letter?

5. Do you have any other competing financial interests? If so, please specify.

If you have answered "yes" to any of the above 5 questions, we consider that you may have a competing interest, which, in the spirit of openness, should be declared. Please draft a statement to publish with the article. It might, for example, read:

Competing interests: RS has been reimbursed by Shangri La Products, the manufacturer of elysium, for attending several conferences; TD has been paid by Shangri La Products for running educational programmes and has her research registrar paid for by the company; JS has shares in the company.

If you did not answer "yes" to any of the four questions above, we will publish "Competing interests: None declared." (But see next paragraph)

We are restricting ourselves to asking directly about competing financial interests, but you might want to disclose another sort of competing interest that would embarrass you if it became generally known after publication. The following list gives some examples.

(a) A close relationship with, or a strong antipathy to, a person whose interests may be affected by publication of your paper.

(b) An academic link or rivalry with somebody whose interests may be affected by publication of your paper.

(c) Membership of a political party or special interest group whose interests may be affected by publication of your paper.

(d) A deep personal or religious conviction that may have affected what you wrote and that readers should be aware of when reading your paper.

If you want to declare such a competing interest then please add it to your statement.

To learn more about the thinking that has led to this policy please read the editorial by Richard Smith BMJ 1998;317:291-2.

Example 6 (Cont’d)
Please complete option 1 or 2 as appropriate and sign below. If you answered "yes" to any of the 5 questions relating to financial competing interests (or you wish to disclose a non-financial competing interest), you should write a statement below.

It is important that you return this form as early as possible in the publication process. We will not publish your article without completion and return of the form.

☐ 1. Please insert "None declared" under competing interests

or

☐ 2. Please insert the following statement under competing interests:

Title of paper:
Date:

Signature (all authors to sign):  (Print name too please)

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Example 6 (Cont’d)
Guidance for referees

A competing interest exists when professional judgment concerning a primary interest (such as patients' welfare or the validity of research) may be influenced by a secondary interest (such as financial gain or personal rivalry). It may arise for the referees of a BMJ article when they have a financial interest that may influence—probably without their knowing—their interpretation of an article.

We, the editors of the BMJ, believe that to make the best decision on how to deal with a paper we should know about any such competing interests that referees may have. We are not aiming at eradicating competing interests—they are almost inevitable. We will not reject opinions simply because you have a competing interest, but we would like to know about it.

We used to ask authors and referees about any competing interests, but we have decided to restrict our request to financial interests. This is largely a tactical move. We hope that it will increase the number of people who disclose competing interests. Our experience, supported by some research data, was that people often did not disclose them.

Please answer the following questions

1. Have you in the past five years accepted the following from an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this paper:
   - [ ] Reimbursement for attending a symposium?
   - [ ] A fee for speaking?
   - [ ] A fee for organising education?
   - [ ] Funds for research?
   - [ ] Funds for a member of staff?
   - [ ] Fees for consulting?

2. Have you in the past five years been employed by an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this paper?

3. Do you hold any stocks or shares in an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this paper?

4. Have you acted as an expert witness on the subject of your study, review, editorial, or letter?

5. Do you have any other competing financial interests? If so, please specify.

We are restricting ourselves to asking directly about competing financial interests, but you might want to disclose another sort of competing interest that would embarrass you if it became generally known after publication. The following list gives some examples.

(a) A close relationship with, or a strong antipathy to, a person whose interests may be affected by publication of your paper.
(b) An academic link or rivalry with somebody whose interests may be affected by publication of your paper.
(c) Membership of a political party or special interest group whose interests may be affected by publication of your paper.
(d) A deep personal or religious conviction that may have affected what you wrote and that readers should be aware of when reading your paper.

If you want to declare such a competing interest then please add it to your statement.

To learn more about the thinking that has led to this policy please read the editorial by Richard Smith BMJ 1998;317:291-2.

Please complete option 1 or 2 as appropriate and sign below

☐ 1. Please insert "None declared" under competing interests

☐ 2. Please insert the following statement under competing interests:

Title of paper:
Signature:
Print name too please:
Date
(iv) The *International Journal of Epidemiology* (http://ije.oxfordjournals.org/) has a relatively simple 'Conflict of interest form' compared with the ones given above, and leaves it up to the authors to compose appropriate statements concerning any potential conflicts. It can be found at www.oxfordjournals.org/ije/for_authors/ije_conflict%20of%20interest%20form.pdf, and is reproduced as Example 7 with kind permission of Oxford University Press, which uses this basic form for several of its journals.

Example 7 Conflict-of-interest form for authors (as used by the *International Journal of Epidemiology* and reproduced with permission from Oxford University Press).
(v) The *American Journal of Gastroenterology* (www.amjgastro.com) asks its associate editors to disclose any relevant financial relationships and publishes the completed forms. The editors' completed ‘Disclosure of relevant financial relationships’ forms can be found at www.blackwellpublishing.com/pdf/AJC_combined.pdf and a blank form is reproduced as Example 8 with kind permission from the *American Journal of Gastroenterology*.

**Example 8** Form for disclosure of associate editors’ relevant financial relationships (reproduced with permission from the *American Journal of Gastroenterology*).
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Example 9  Non-open-access exclusive licence form (reproduced with permission from Blackwell Publishing Ltd).
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Signature (on behalf of all co-authors if any))

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July 06

Example 9 (Cont'd)
(ii) Open-access version

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5. You warrant that any formula or dosage given is accurate and will not if properly followed injure any person;
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- You agree to Blackwell Publishing using any images from the Article on the cover of the Journal, and in any marketing material;
- You authorize Blackwell Publishing to act on your behalf to defend the copyright in the Article if anyone should infringe it, although there is no obligation on Blackwell Publishing to act in this way.

As the Author, copyright in the Article remains in your name (or your employer's name if your employer owns copyright in your work).

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Date: .................................................................

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☐ (conventional mailing) ☐ (via e-mail)

Please return the signed form to: Journal address

20 December 2005

Example 10 (Cont'd)
Example 10 (Cont’d)
(d) Reviewing forms

Details are given below of reviewing forms from four journals and one society. They will give readers an idea of the types of forms that can be used and the sorts of questions that can be asked to help reviewers provide good and constructive reviews.

(i) The journal *The Holocene* (www.sagepub.co.uk/journalsProdDesc.nav?prodId=Journal201812) has a relatively simple form but contains questions to prompt responses on various aspects. The form is reproduced as Example 11 with kind permission from Sage Publications Ltd.

**THE HOLOCENE: Peer review form**

THIS FORM MAY BE SENT TO AUTHORS: Keep confidential statements separate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paper title:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Author(s):</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Checklist (place a cross in the box for any of the listed characteristics that need attention)

- Title: Is it suitable? Does it reflect the content?
- Can it be improved?
- Abstract: Is it informative? Are the main results and conclusions mentioned?
- Key words: Are keywords provided?
- Introduction: Are the aims clear?
- Methods: Are they adequately explained?
- Results: Are they described?
- Discussion: Is any amplification or pruning necessary?
- Conclusions: Do they follow from the evidence presented?
- Relevance: Are these important missing references?
- Originality: Does it contain sufficiently new results, ideas or techniques?
- Scope: Is it interdisciplinary in scope and of more than local interest?
- Relevance: Is the broader context clear?
- Language: Is it written in fluent English?
- Organization: Is it well organized?
- Length: Is it within the word limit (1000 for full Papers, 2000 for Reports)?
- Tables/figures: Are there too many tables/figures (normal max. 4 for Papers, 8 for Reports)?

**Figures:**
- Are they necessary and well designed?
- Will they be legible on reduction?
- Is there a list of figure captions (on a separate sheet)?

**Tables:**
- Are they necessary?
- Are they in the standard layout (see a recent issue of the journal)?

Overall evaluation (tick the most appropriate for your decision)

- Excellent: Presents an important new approach, new ideas or new information
- Good: Improves significantly on previous work of its type or contains new interesting information
- Average: Good work, but contains little novelty and may be of limited interest to most readers
- Routine: No errors, but likely to be of interest to local readers, not of international interest
- Flawed: Contains serious flaws in, e.g., project design, data analysis or presentation

Recommendation (tick whichever is applicable)

- Accept subject to minor revision, not requiring reconsideration by referees
- Possibly acceptable: minor moderate revision, possibly requiring reconsideration by referees
- Not accepted: major revision required, possibly with the opportunity of resubmission
- More suitable for publication in a different journal
- Not acceptable for publication in *The Holocene*

Print your name, if you wish it to be revealed to author(s) .................................................................

On a separate sheet, please comment at length on any deficiencies of this paper, suggesting where improvements should be made.

Any confidential statements for the editor should be made in a separate letter

Example 11 Reviewing form used by *The Holocene* (reproduced with permission from Sage Publications Ltd).
(ii) The review scales reproduced as Example 12 with kind permission from Sage Publications Ltd are used by a number of journals at Sage Publications. Reviewers are asked to rate a number of criteria on a scale of 0 to 10, and are given guidance on what the high and low scores should denote.

### Review of paper number:

This sheet is aimed to help you, the reviewer, to undertake a fair, complete and yet efficient review and is to help me, the editor, to decide on the fate of the paper. It is not intended to replace a free-text commentary which is always welcome, but it is intended to ensure some consistency. Any suggestions on it are most welcome.

Please rate the paper on each topic on the scale given.

| Overall advice: | 10 | 9 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
|-----------------|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Accept (minor or no modification) | Reject (no merit whatsoever) |

| Readability and understandability | 10 | 9 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
|---------------------------------|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Good, minor editing only | Appalling, major rewrite needed |

| Abstract | 10 | 9 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
|-----------|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A full and fair summary | Inaccurate &/or incomplete |

| Introduction | 10 | 9 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
|--------------|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A fair review, justifies study | Biased, incomplete, does not set the scene |

| Methods: description | 10 | 9 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
|----------------------|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Good description, easily understood and complete | Incomplete &/or badly described |

| Methods: measures used | 10 | 9 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
|------------------------|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Appropriate, good measures used | Inappropriate or no measures used |

| Methods: the design of the study | 10 | 9 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
|---------------------------------|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The design is good | The design is poor |

| Methods: analytical approach and statistical methods | 10 | 9 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
|-----------------------------------------------------|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Correct, and simplest possible for study | Incorrect or unnecessarily complex |

| Results: presentation in text | 10 | 9 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
|------------------------------|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Well presented and complete | Muddled or incomplete presentation |

| Results: presentation in tables & figures | 10 | 9 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
|------------------------------------------|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Helpful, easily understood, complete | Muddled, incomplete, wasteful |

| Discussion: covers weaknesses of study | 10 | 9 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
|---------------------------------------|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Fair discussion, placing in context | Fails to mention any weaknesses |

| Discussion: extrapolation and speculation | 10 | 9 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
|--------------------------------------------|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Reasonable conclusions, justified from data | Conclusions not justified at all |

Example 12  Review scales (reproduced with permission from Sage Publications Ltd).
(iii) The *Hydrological Sciences Journal* (www.cig.ensmp.fr/~iahs/hsj/hsjindex.htm) has a comprehensive form that includes specific questions to prompt responses on a number of criteria. The form is reproduced as Example 13 with kind permission from the journal.

Example 13  Reviewing form used by the *Hydrological Sciences Journal* (reproduced with permission from the journal).
Referee's report HSJ (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Possibly</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is the quality of the language satisfactory?</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the title of this paper clearly and sufficiently reflect its contents?</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are the references adequate, up-to-date, and relevant?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Are the approach, results and conclusions intelligible from the abstract alone?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are the key words informative, appropriate and complete?</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are the illustrations of adequate quality, legible and understandable?</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Could the paper be shortened without detriment to the material presented in it (e.g. by removal of poor, irrelevant, excessive, or redundant material)? Please indicate such material in the manuscript. Are all illustrations and/or tables necessary? If not, could some of them be removed? Alternatively, could the information in the paper be more clearly or concisely conveyed by the use of tables or figures?

Please add any other specific comments you may have—if necessary, continuing on a separate sheet (sheets). Since the authors are requested to indicate on their revised papers where the reviewers' comments have been taken into account, it would help if you number any comments you may have.

Overall evaluation – The paper should be:

- Accepted as it stands, apart from editorial changes.
- Accepted after minor revision.
- Subject to major revision. If revised paper is re-submitted, it needs to be reconsidered and re-reviewed.
- Rejected outright.

The paper should be sent to another referee before terminating the review process (e.g. in the case of potentially contentious elements). If possible, please suggest the name (and e-mail) of a reviewer.

If you have recommended major revision and re-submission, would you be willing to review the revised manuscript?

Would you be willing to edit the language, should this paper be accepted?

It is not necessary to return the paper itself unless you have inserted comments on it which have not been included in your reply. Referee reports sent as e-mail attachments are welcome—please save as “HSXXXX review (your name)” in MS Word or Rich Text Format and send to francis@iahn.demon.co.uk.

Thank you in anticipation.

- 10/10/2006

Example 13 (Cont'd)
(iv) The *International Journal of Psychoanalysis* (www.ijpa.org) has a special form that it sends to its reviewers when they are assessing revised manuscripts. The form is reproduced as Example 14 by kind permission of the editors of the *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*.

**INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF PSYCHOANALYSIS**

Revised Manuscript:

This is a REVISION of a manuscript that you have previously reviewed. Please answer each of these questions.

**Please let us know if you are unable to review this manuscript.**

A. Has the author responded to your suggestions?  
   ____ Not at all  ____ Some  ____ Almost all  ____ Totally

B. Please tell us the current status of the following:

<table>
<thead>
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<th>(i)</th>
<th>(ii)</th>
<th>(iii)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
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<td>Improved</td>
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C. Please indicate for which section(s) this paper is suitable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Psychoanalytic Theory and Technique</th>
<th>Research</th>
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<tr>
<td>The History of Psychoanalysis</td>
<td>Educational and Professional Issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical Communications</td>
<td>Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>Interdisciplinary Studies</td>
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</table>

D. What is your current rating of the overall publishability?

Unacceptable 1........2........3........4........5 Superior

**Recommendation**

___ Reject  ___ Needs a lot more work  ___ Needs a fair amount of work  ___ Needs a little work  ___ Accept

---

Example 14 Reviewing form for revised manuscripts used by the *International Journal of Psychoanalysis* (reproduced with permission from the editors of the journal).
(v) Many journals do not provide general access to the reviewing forms they ask their reviewers to fill in for the manuscripts they review for them. The forms used by the journals of the Royal Society of Chemistry (www.rsc.org) are, however, freely available on its website and can be found at www.rsc.org/Publishing/ReSourCe/rfreport/index.asp. The forms cover not just the different journals, but also the different article types considered.

(e) Reviewer questionnaire

The Royal Society of Chemistry (www.rsc.org) asks potential reviewers to fill in a 'Referees' questionnaire'. A very detailed checklist of subject categories broken down into specific keyword entries is provided to help reviewers submit a comprehensive summary of their research activities, expertise and interests. The full questionnaire can be found at www.rsc.org/Publishing/ReSourCe/RefereeGuidelines/RefereesQuestionnaire/index.asp. The first few pages are reproduced as Example 15 by kind permission of the Royal Society of Chemistry. The keyword entries go on for another six pages.
Dear Colleague

Please complete the following questionnaire if you are willing to act as a referee for the Society’s primary publications.

Please provide a brief summary on page 2 of your current or recent research activities and areas of expertise, and tick the keyword entries on pages 4–11 that cover your main interests. Both the textual and the keyword information are used in our search procedures, and the efficient operation of our system depends on both parts of the form being completed. If none of the categories cover your interests, please give a brief description on page 2.

Your help in identifying colleagues who would be willing and able to act as referees for The Society would also be appreciated.

Please return the completed questionnaire using the pre-paid reply label provided.

Thank you for your help and co-operation.

Robert J Parker
General Manager, Journals & Reviews

Name: (Prof/Dr/Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms) ..............................................................................................................................................

Address: ........................................................................................................................................................................

.............................................................................................................................................................................. Postcode/Zip Code: .................................................................

Telephone: ................................................................................................ Fax: ...............................................................................................

E-mail: ........................................................................................................ Web address: .................................................................

If you DO NOT wish to receive manuscripts for review electronically, please tick this box 

The details provided in this questionnaire form will be input into our computerised administration system. There will be no disclosure of these details to anyone outside the RSC.

For non-members of the Royal Society of Chemistry:
The RSC will store the information you supply on its electronic records in order that information about its activities, products and services may be sent to you. If you DO NOT want to receive this information, please tick this box.

Example 15 Questionnaire used by the Royal Society of Chemistry to obtain information from its reviewers on their research activities, expertise and interests (reproduced with permission from the Society).
Please summarise your current research activities (bullet points are clearest) in which you feel you would be able to act as a referee. Please use a separate sheet if necessary. Our refereeing system includes a facility for searching the text in this section and therefore the information provided here is an essential part of our searching procedures. It is particularly important that keywords covering your interests which do not appear elsewhere on the questionnaire are included here.

Other possible referees within your field of interest (see preamble; names and addresses please).

Any other information.

Example 15 (Cont'd)
This form is broken down into the following subject categories:

- Periodic Table: 4
- Generic areas of chemistry/related topics: 4
- Reactions: 4
- Organic chemistry: 4
- Supramolecular chemistry: 5
- Stereochemistry: 5
- Inorganic chemistry: 5
- Theoretical chemistry: 5
- Kinetics: 5
- Photochemistry/optical properties: 6
- Thermodynamics: 6
- Surface/interface/film: 6
- Solid-liquid, solid-gas, liquid-liquid, etc., systems: 7
- Catalysis: 7
- Materials chemistry: 7
- Crystalline state/diffraction/microscopy: 8
- Electric/dielectric/magnetic: 8
- Electrochemistry: 8
- Polymers: 8
- Spectroscopy: 8
- Analytical science: 9
- Radiochemistry: 10
- Environmental chemistry: 10
- Green chemistry: 11
- Miniaturisation: 11
- Chemical biology: 11

Example 15 (Cont'd)
### Periodic Table

Please encircle elements or groups of major/particular interest

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### Chemistry

- Analytical science
- Biochemistry
- Bioinorganic chemistry
- Bioorganic chemistry
- Biophysical chemistry
- Biotechnology
- Chemical biology
- Chemical physics
- Crystallography
- Environmental chemistry
- Food chemistry
- Geology
- Geochemistry
- Green chemistry
- Industrial chemistry
- Inorganic chemistry
- Materials chemistry
- Mathematics
- Medicinal chemistry
- Miniaturisation
- Organic chemistry
- Organometallic chemistry
- Pharmaceutical science
- Physical chemistry
- Physical organic chemistry
- Physics
- Theoretical chemistry

### Reaction types

- Aldol
- Addition
- Cyclodeaddition
- Elimination
- Homolysis
- Oxidation
- Rearrangement
- Redox reactions
- Reduction
- Ring expansion/contraction
- Substitution

### Organic chemistry

- Alicyclic
- Aliphatic (general)
- N-containing aliphatic
- S-containing aliphatic
- Alkaloids
- Alkenes
- Alkanes
- Amino acids
- Aromatic
- Biomimetic
- Biosynthetic
- Carbohydrates
- Monosaccharides
- Polysaccharides
- Enzymes (general)
- Artificial enzymes
- Enzyme models
- Enzymes in synthesis
- Fullerenes
- Heterocyclic (general)
- Heterocyclic nitrogen
- Heterocyclic oxygen
- Heterocyclic sulfur
- Heterocyclic other element (please specify)
- Single ring heterocyclic
- Multi ring heterocyclic
- Single heteroatom type
- Multi heteroatom type
- Lipids
- Phospholipids
- Mechanistic studies
- Metabolites
- Animal metabolites
- Fungal metabolites
- Insect metabolites
- Marine metabolites
- Plant metabolites
- Natural products (general)
- Natural products synthesis
- Natural products structure elucidation
- Nucleic acids
- Nucleosides/nucleotides
- Peptides
- Polycyclic
- Polyketides
- Proteins
- Metalloproteins
- Quinones/phenolic compounds
- Reactive intermediates
- Carbons
- Nitrenes
- Reactivity parameters (e.g. Hammet)
- Rings; 3/4-membered
- Rings; 7/8/9-membered
- Steroids
- Terpenes
- Vitamins
- Ylides

### Organic: functional groups

- Acids and derivatives
- Alcohols/phenols
- Amines/imines and analogues

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Example 15 (Cont’d)
Example 15 (Cont’d)
(f) Suggested and non-preferred reviewer form

Some journals allow authors on submission to suggest individuals as potential reviewers for their manuscripts and also to name any that they would prefer were not approached to act as reviewers. A basic form for this is shown in Example 16.

Suggested reviewers

Authors are permitted to suggest up to six potential reviewers for their manuscripts. Suggested reviewers should not have been advisors, advisees or collaborators within the past 3 years.

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Non-preferred reviewers

You have the option of suggesting up to two potential reviewers whom you would prefer were not chosen to review your manuscript. IF YOU TAKE UP THIS OPTION, YOU MUST STATE YOUR REASONS IN YOUR SUBMISSION LETTER. IF REASONS ARE NOT PROVIDED, YOUR REQUEST WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED.

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Example 16 Form for authors to fill in on manuscript submission indicating any suggested and/or non-preferred reviewers.
(3) Guidance for reviewers

(a) The Royal Society of Chemistry (www.rsc.org) publishes a number of journals. It manages to provide comprehensive guidance to all its reviewers in a single document — ‘Refereeing procedure and policy’ — whilst giving information on the scope and specific requirements of the individual journals. The document can be found at www.rsc.org/Publishing/ReSourCe/RefereeGuidelines/RefereeingProcedureAndPolicy/index.asp and is reproduced as Example 17 by kind permission of the Royal Society of Chemistry.
Refereeing Procedure and Policy

Refereeing Procedure and Policy for Journals Published by the Royal Society of Chemistry†

Also see: www.rsc.org/authorguides

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7.3 Opinions in New Journal of Chemistry

7.4 Comments in PCCP and JAAS

8.0 Polylemmal Papers

† For more detailed information on this topic, as well as links to useful websites and software resources, see: http://www.rsc.org/resource.

Example 17 Guidance to reviewers provided by the Royal Society of Chemistry (reproduced with permission from the Society).
2.3 CryEngComm
An electronic-only journal covering all areas of crystal engineering, including theoretical crystal engineering, techniques in crystal engineering, target crystals and properties (see also Section 10.0, Electronic-only Journals).

2.4 Dalton Transactions
Covering all aspects of the chemistry of inorganic and organometallic compounds, including biological inorganic and solid-state inorganic chemistry, the applications of physicochemical techniques to the study of their structures, properties and reactions, including kinetics and mechanism; new or improved experimental techniques and syntheses. For a research work to be accepted for publication it must report high quality new chemistry and make a significant contribution to its field.

2.5 Green Chemistry
Chemical aspects of clean technology, reduction of the environmental impact of chemicals (and fuels) whether from improved production methods, formulation and delivery systems, the use of sustainable/renewable resources and product substitution. Methodologies and tools for evaluating the environmental impact of the above, such as life cycle analysis, environmental risk analysis and legislative issues surrounding green chemistry. In no circumstances should papers just report the ‘green angle’ of previously published work or work submitted elsewhere, all submissions must be original.

2.6 Journal of Analytical Atomic Spectrometry
The journal covers the development of fundamental theory, practice and analytical applications of spectrometric techniques to elemental research. It publishes only six out of every ten manuscripts it receives and referees should not hesitate to reject work which they feel is not of the required standard.

2.7 Journal of Environmental Monitoring
Physical, chemical and biological research relating to the measurement, impact and management of contaminants in all natural and anthropogenic environments. The journal places special emphasis on atmospheric science and human health issues and on the interface of analytical science with disciplines concerned with natural and human environments.

2.8 Journal of Materials Chemistry
The chemistry of materials, particularly those associated with advanced technology; modelling of materials; synthesis and structural characterisation; physicochemical aspects of fabrication, chemical, structural, electrical, magnetic and optical properties; applications; bio-related materials.

2.9 Lab on a Chip
Miniaturisation research and technology: its applications in chemistry, biology, physics, electronics, clinical chemistry, fabrication, engineering and materials science. Authors should clarify the advantages of carrying out the described processes/reactions at the micro- or nano-scale as opposed to the macro-scale and must interpret and explain all their observations rather than just reporting them.

2.10 Molecular BioSystems
An interdisciplinary journal publishing novel and significant research that is emerging at the interface between chemistry and biology. The journal is intended as a forum for accounts of the research and development at the interface between chemistry and the -omic sciences and systems biology, in particular research concerned with cellular processes, metabolism, proteomics and genomics, systems biology, drug discovery, biomaterials, and all techniques relevant to these subject areas. All manuscripts should be written in a manner that is accessible to those working in the traditional fields of chemistry and biology as well as those working at the interface of the two subjects. In particular, abbreviations or acronyms should be clearly defined where they first appear in the text.

2.11 New Journal of Chemistry
A forum for the publication of original and significant work, in any area of chemistry that is likely to prove of wide general appeal or exceptional specialist interest. Only a fraction of research work warrant publication in the journal, which has a rejection rate of 60% for Articles and over 70% for Letters, and strict refereeing standards should be applied. Acceptance should only be recommended if the content of the paper will be advantageous to the progress of chemical research.

2.12 Organic & Biomolecular Chemistry
The journal brings together molecular design, synthesis, structure, function and reactivity in one journal. It publishes fundamental work on synthetic, physical and biomolecular organic chemistry as well as all organic aspects of: chemical biology, medicinal chemistry, natural product chemistry; supramolecular chemistry; macrocyclic chemistry; theoretical chemistry; and catalysis.

2.13 Photochemical & Photobiological Sciences
Any aspect of the interaction of light with molecules, supramolecular systems and biological matter, for example, elemental photochemical and photophysical processes, the interaction of light with living systems, how light affects health, the use of light as a reagent in synthesis, the use of light as a diagnostic tool and for curative purposes, and areas in which light is a cost-effective catalyst or alternative source of energy.

2.14 Physical Chemistry Chemical Physics
All aspects of physical chemistry, chemical physics and biophysical chemistry including: catalysis; clusters; colloids and interface science; computational chemistry and molecular dynamics; electrochemistry; energy transfer; gas-phase reactions; kinetics and dynamics; laser-induced chemistry; materials science; photochemistry and photophysics; macromolecules and polymers; nanosciences; quantum chemistry and molecular structure; radiation chemistry; reactions in condensed phases; solid-state chemistry; spectroscopy of molecules; statistical mechanics; surface science; thermodynamics; zeolites.

2.15 Soft Matter
For high quality interdisciplinary research into soft materials and complex fluids, with a particular focus on the interface between chemistry and physics. Papers that describe applications and properties of soft matter set in context to the relevant science are also welcomed, but emphasis should be on the science rather than on the applications and properties themselves. The scope includes original research on important synthetic and characterisation techniques, and on simulation and modelling of soft matter. All manuscripts should be written in a manner that is accessible to those working in the traditional fields of chemistry and physics as well as those working at the interface of the two subjects. In particular, abbreviations or acronyms should be clearly defined where they first appear in the text.

3.0 Procedure
The referees' reports constitute recommendations to the appropriate Editor, who is empowered to take final action on manuscripts submitted. The Editor is responsible for all administrative and executive actions, and is empowered to accept or reject papers. It is the Editor's duty to see that, as far as possible, agreement is reached between authors and referees; although the referees may need to be consulted again concerning an author's reply to comments, further refereeing will be avoided as far as possible.

3.1 Adjudication of disagreements
If there is a notable discrepancy between the reports of the two referees, or if the difference between authors and referees cannot be resolved readily, a third referee may be appointed as adjudicator. In extreme cases, differences may be reported to the appropriate Editorial Board for resolution.

When a paper is recommended for rejection, the Editor will inform the authors. Authors have the right to appeal to the Editor if they regard a decision to reject as unfair. The Editor may refer to the Editorial Board any papers which have been recommended for acceptance by the referees, but about which the Editor is doubtful.

3.2 Anonymity
The anonymity of referees is strictly preserved from the authors, and reports should be couched in terms which do not disclose the identity of the writer. A referee should never communicate directly with an author, unless and until such action has been sanctioned by the Society, through the Editor.
3.3 Confidentiality
A referee should treat a paper received for assessment as confidential material. If a referee needs to consult colleagues to help with the review, the referee should inform them that the manuscript is confidential, and inform the Editor. Information acquired by a referee from such a paper is not available for disclosure or citation until the paper is published.

4.0 Policy
The primary criterion for acceptance of a contribution for publication is that it must report high-quality new chemical science and make a significant contribution to its field. Papers that do not contain new experimental results may be considered for publication only if they either reinterpret or summarize known facts or results in a manner presenting an advance in chemical knowledge. Papers in interdisciplinary areas are acceptable if the chemical content is considered satisfactory.

Papers reporting results regarded as routine or trivial are not acceptable in the absence of other, desirable attributes. Although the referees do not have to accept the Society strongly discourages the fragmentation of a substantial body of work into a number of short publications; such fragmentation is likely to be grounds for rejection.

The length of an article should be commensurate with its scientific content; however, authors are allowed latitude (consistent with reasonable brevity) in the form in which their work is presented. Figures and tables are omitted for space as well as clarifying complicated arguments. Certain length restrictions apply to some Communications (see Section 7.0, Communications).

If a paper as a whole is judged suitable for the Journal, minor criticisms should not be unduly emphasized. It is the responsibility of the Editor to ensure the use of reasonably brief and lucid language, and to assist the author to present the work in the most appropriate format. However, referees should not hesitate to recommend rejection of papers which appear incurably badly composed.

It should be clearly understood that referees’ reports are made in confidence to the Editor, at whose discretion comments will be transmitted to the author. To assist the Editor, referees are requested to indicate which comments are designed only for consideration, as distinct from those which, in the referee’s view, require specific action or an adequate answer before the paper is accepted.

Referees may ask for sight of supporting data not submitted for publication, or for sight of a previous paper which has been submitted but not yet published. Such requests must be made to the Editor, not directly to the author.

See also the RSC’s ‘Ethical Guidelines for Publication in Journals and Reviews’.†

4.1 Authentication of New Compounds
Referees are asked to assess, as a whole, the evidence in support of the homogeneity and structure of all new compounds. No hard and fast rules can be laid down to cover all types of compounds, but the Society’s policy is that evidence for the unequivocal identification of new compounds should wherever possible include good elemental analytical data; for example, an accurate mass measurement of a molecular ion does not provide evidence of purity of a compound and must be accompanied by independent evidence of molecular weight. Low-resolution mass spectra must be treated with even more reserve in the absence of firm evidence to distinguish between alternative molecular formulae. Where elemental analytical data cannot be obtained, appropriate evidence which is convincing to an expert in the field may be acceptable.

Spectroscopic information necessary to the assignment of structure should normally be given. Just how complete this information should be must depend on the circumstances; the structure of a compound obtained from unusual reaction or isolated from a natural source needs much stronger supporting evidence than one derived by a standard reaction from a precursor of undisputed structure.

Referees are reminded of the need to be exacting in their standards but at the same time flexible in their admission of evidence. It remains the Society’s policy to accept work only of high quality and to permit no lowering of standards.

4.2 Electronic Supplementary Information (ESI)
Referees are encouraged to suggest that appropriate material is placed with the RSC’s Electronic Supplementary Information (ESI) Service rather than the printed journal. Any supporting material for the ESI service supplied upon submission should be referred to the same standard as the article.†

4.3 Use of Colour
The use of colour and/or half-tones is permitted in cases where genuine clarification results; referees may also be asked to advise on this (Electronic-only journals have different guidelines concerning the use of colour (see Section 10.0, Electronic-only journals)).

4.4 Titles and Summaries
Referees should comment on titles and summaries with the following points in mind:

Titles of papers are used out of context by several organizations for current awareness purposes. To enable such systems to serve chemical scientists adequately, titles must be written around a sufficient number of scientific words carefully chosen to cover the important aspects of the paper.

Summaries should preferably be self-contained, so that they can be understood without reference to the main text.

5.0 Speed of Refereeing
The RSC is anxious to maintain and to reduce further if possible the publication times now being achieved. In this connection, referees should submit their reports with the minimum of delay and within the specified time, to inform the Editor immediately if this is not feasible. If possible, referees should supply their reports in electronic form via the RSC’s website.† In these cases, there is no need for referees to send a printed version of their report or to return the manuscript unless they are requested to do so by the Editor.

6.0 Suggestions of Alternative Referees
The Editor welcomes suggestions of alternative referees competent to deal with particular subject areas. Such suggestions are particularly helpful in cases where referees consider themselves ill-equipped (in terms of specialist knowledge) to deal with a specific paper, or in highly specialized or new areas of research where only a limited number of experts may be available. If, in such a case, the alternative and the original referee work in the same institution, the manuscript may be passed on directly after informing the Editor.

7.0 Letters, Comments and Opinions

7.1 Letters in Dalton Transactions
These are a medium for the expression of scientific opinions and views normally concerning material published in that journal; it is intended that contributions in this format should be published rapidly. The Letters section is for scientific discussion and is not intended to compete with media for the publication of more general matters such as Chemistry World, or for revision/adjudging of authors’ own work. Only rarely should a Letter exceed one printed column in length (about 1/2 pages of typescript). Where a Letter is polemical in nature, and if it is accepted, a Reply will be solicited from other parties implicated, for consideration for publication alongside the original Letter.

7.2 Letters in New Journal of Chemistry
These are concise articles that report results of immediate interest to the chemistry community: they may be complete publications, though a subsequent full paper may be justified, and should contain a brief experimental section.

7.3 Opinions in New Journal of Chemistry
Opinions should normally be limited to topics closely related to chemical science. This can include topics that are highly focused as well as those of broader interest to the chemical community. An
Opinion is not intended to be a description of a conventional point of view on a given topic but could raise the need for a counter opinion. It is a short, refereed, citable article on a topic related to chemistry that normally reports no new data but presents an opinion, hypothesis or conjecture on a topic judged by the referees and editor to be of interest to the readership.

The format is intended to allow more leeway for conjecture than the traditional format. It should not be used to report a proposal that could be readily tested by currently available methods and published as a standard article. Opinions also could cover more general subjects related to educational, ethical, philosophical or sociological concerns of the chemical community. It should contain nothing that the referees judge offensive.

Ideally, an Opinion should not be longer than one printed page although no strict constraint on the length will be implemented. It will have a one-semester abstract as well as a limited list of references. An Opinion may lead to the submission of a counter-Oppinion, although noncontroversial issues could also be of interest to the chemical community.

7.4 Comments In PCCP and JAAS

Communications are a medium for the discussion and exchange of scientific opinions normally concerning material published in PCCP or JAAS. Submitted Comments will normally be forwarded to the authors of the work being discussed, and these authors will be given the opportunity to submit a Reply for publication together with the Comment. For publication of a Comment or Reply, they must be judged to be scientifically significant and of interest to either the PCCP or JAAS readership. Comments will not normally exceed a length of one printed journal page. Publication will take place only when all parties have had an opportunity to respond appropriately.

8.0 Polemical Papers

If the Editor considers a manuscript to be polemical in nature then the author of the paper being criticized will, whenever possible, be sent a copy of the manuscript.

9.0 Communications

9.1 Relationship between Full Papers and Preliminary Reports (e.g. Communications)

In cases where a preliminary report of the work described in a submitted paper has been published (for example in Chemical Communications), referees should alert the editor to any excessive and unnecessary repetition of material; this can arise in connection with Communications journals in which the restrictions on length and the reporting of experimental data are less severe than those of Chemical Communications. Furthermore, the acceptability of the full paper must be judged on the basis of the significance of the additional information provided, as well as on the criteria outlined in the preceding sections.

9.2 Contributions to Chemical Communications

In most cases the preliminary reports published in Chemical Communications should be followed up by full papers in other journals, providing detailed accounts of the work. Referees are requested to comment on the RSC journal in which such full papers should be published. It is Society policy that only a fraction of research work warrants publication in Chemical Communications, and strict refereeing standards should be applied. The benefit to the reader from a rapid publication of a particular piece of work before it appears as a full paper must be balanced against the desirability of avoiding duplicate publication. The need for the reader, not the author, must be considered, and priority in publication should not be allowed to determine acceptability. Acceptance should be recommended only if, in the opinion of the referee, the content of the paper is of such urgency or impact that rapid publication will be advantageous to the progress of chemical research.

Communications should be brief and should not exceed three pages in the printed form including Tables and illustrations. Communications should not include lengthy introductions and discussion, extensive data, and excessive experimental details and conjecture. Figures and tables will only be published if they are essential to understanding the paper. Authors must supply experimental evidence to support the conclusions drawn in the paper as Electronic Supplementary Information. The referees should comment on this supporting information in their reports, with particular emphasis on whether the information does support the conclusions drawn in the paper and whether any additional information should be requested from the authors.

The refereeing procedure for Communications is the same as that for full papers, except that rapidity of reporting is crucial in order to maintain rapid publication.


Criteria for acceptance of Communications submitted to OBC, Dalton Transactions, PCCP, Journal of Materials Chemistry, JAAS, The Analyst or Journal of Environmental Monitoring are similar to those for contributions to Chemical Communications, except that the work will be of more specialist interest. For OBC and Dalton Communications inclusion of key experimental data is expected.

10.0 Electronic-only Journals

For the Society's electronic-only journals there are no restrictions concerning page length, the use of colour or the number of tables and figures; however, the overall article length should be commensurate with the novel scientific content presented.

The refereeing procedure is the same as that for papers in printed journals, with the exception that referees will not be sent a printed copy of the article to be refereed. Instead, the article will only be made available for refereeing electronically.

11.0 X-Ray Crystallographic Work

All papers containing X-ray crystallographic work will be refereed for their chemical interest, and all crystallographic determinations will be assessed. If the Editor considers it advisable, the paper may be sent to a specialist crystallographer for comment. Assessors of crystallographic determinations will not normally be expected to check values of structural parameters for publication (e.g. bond lengths and angles against atomic coordinates; this will be done after publication by the appropriate crystallographic data centre), but should still pay attention to the quality of the experimental crystallographic work.

Papers will often contain the information in their titles that an X-ray structure determination has been carried out. However, this is not obligatory, especially if the X-ray determination forms only a minor part. Summaries should normally contain this information.

A structure referred to in a Communication will normally be fully refined. The Communication can then be considered to fulfill the archival function, and the structure determination may not require further detailed assessment when presented as part of a full paper. In the full paper, the author's purpose will then be served by a simple reference back to the original communication. However, if the crystallography is discussed again at any length in the full paper, the data should be re-presented to the referees in full, and re-published if considered necessary.

There may be other cases when an author wishes to publish a full paper in which the result of a crystal structure determination is discussed, but in which details or extensive discussion are considered unnecessary. The crystallographer may even be omitted as a co-author (for example when the determination is carried out by a commercial company). If the author is able to show that this procedure is appropriate, it will be allowed provided that it does not lead to unnecessary fragmentation. However, the author must provide, as supplementary information, sufficient data relating to the crystal structure determination to allow a crystallographer to be sure that the point made is correct. The brief published description of the determination should be supplemented by appropriate reference to 'unpublished work'.

Example 17 (Cont'd)
(b) The journal *Clinical Rehabilitation* (www.sagepub.co.uk/journalsProdDesc.nav?prodId=Journal201806) provides good general guidance to its reviewers, along with prompts to promote the return of good reviews. The 'Guidelines for reviewers' can be found under 'Guidance given to reviewers' at www.sagepub.co.uk/journalsProdAnnounce.nav?prodId=Journal201806 and are reproduced as Example 18 by kind permission of Sage Publications Ltd.
Clinical Rehabilitation: guidelines for reviewers (8th October 2006)

Clinical Rehabilitation aims to publish articles of relevance to the day-to-day practice of rehabilitation. It is a peer-reviewed journal, and thus depends crucially upon the quality of the reviews of submitted articles made by a large number of independent reviewers. Your work given freely(!) is crucial to this process. You have been approached to give an unbiased opinion. This document gives some guidance.

The three aims of peer review are:

- to help select articles for publication in the journal, selection being based on:
  - the scientific merit and validity of the article and its methodology;
  - the relevance of the article to the clinical practice of rehabilitation;
  - the interest of the topic to the clinical reader; and
  - the understandability of the article itself.

- to improve the articles wherever possible.
  - which data and analyses should be presented, including suggesting further analyses
  - structure and presentation of the article (detailed comments are not necessary)

- To check against malfeasance within the scientific and clinical community
  - writing: plagiarism, duplicate publication etc
  - data: fabrication or alteration
  - ethical and legal: not respecting participants (undue risk or inducement)

You have three responsibilities: to the author, to the reader, and to the journal.

The author

The author will have worked hard to carry out and write up the research. A referee should:

- give a reasonably quick reply (preferably within four weeks). If this is not possible please inform the editor as soon as possible. Authors are naturally impatient.
- give adequate, clear reasons for any comments, suggestions or recommendations. References are not necessary but may occasionally help.
- avoid personal bias, reading the paper for its own content.
- be constructive, not destructive, suggesting ways of overcoming any criticisms made, or of otherwise improving the paper
- read the paper as if blind to its origin if you (think) you know who wrote it

The reader of the journal

The readers of the journal will (or should) expect articles to have been scrutinised for major errors. Clinical Rehabilitation is read by a very wide range of professions from a wide range of cultures and countries, with varying levels of expertise. Readers depend upon informed experts reviewing the paper. Therefore the referee should check that:

- the work is original (if it claims to be);
- the background information given is correct, reasonably complete and covers most relevant issues without undue (hidden) bias;
- the design of the study, and the logic of the arguments made are coherent;
- the authors discuss any weaknesses openly and adequately;
- the results are credible and internally consistent;
- the conclusions can reasonably be drawn from the results, and are credible;
- the references are appropriate and accurate (as far as you know or can judge).

Example 18 Guidelines provided for reviewers by Clinical Rehabilitation (reproduced with permission from Sage Publications Ltd).
The journal
The journal publishes articles ‘free’, and so the authors must be encouraged to be as succinct as possible. Please comment if:
- you think that the article can be shortened,
- you think that tables or figures are unnecessary,
- you have any other suggestions to shorten or improve the article.

Secondly, the journal wants to retain its reputation. It should avoid publishing articles that
- are scientifically invalid,
- are duplicate publications,
- seem to include or condone illegal or unethical behaviour,
- are disrespectful of others in any way
- are misleading or simply without content.

An approach to reviewing a paper
Each reviewer develops their own approach to the task, and this editor does not wish to constrain his reviewers to any fixed format. Some suggestions are given here especially for those new to the job.

Your comments are anonymous, in that only the editor knows your identity. This allows you to be honest, but requires you to be polite and unbiased. Unless you request otherwise your comments will usually be sent to the authors with a covering letter. You and your co-reviewer will receive copies of my letter to the author and of each other’s review (anonymously).

When reading the paper please consider two perspectives:
- as a representative reader, considering whether you would read it and understand it.
- as a scientist, considering the validity of statements, and of the conclusions.

Both the author and the editor appreciate free-text comments because they draw attention to matters that concern you. It is helpful to start your free-text comments with a short summary (1-4 sentences; 2-5 lines) of the main message of the paper. This means that the editor can get a quick overview of the content of the paper, and it can also reassure the author that you have understood the article.

After that you may choose the approach that you find best both for yourself and given the paper and its content. When making comments please draw attention to any major ambiguities or errors in writing, but you do not need to make detailed editorial comments on grammar, spelling etc.

In order to help you, a series of specific questions are given below. These may help you in thinking about the paper. They offer you a structure that probably applies to most papers, though certainly not to all papers. They also offer you the opportunity to score the paper on different aspects (and our web system offers an easy method for recording scores). However you are not obliged to use either these headings or the scoring system. It is for guidance only.

### Scoring (optional)
If giving a score, note that:
- For each question the default is ‘99’ which means that you think the question does not apply, or you do not want to give a score for that question.
- Otherwise please choose a number between 0 and 10, where 0 is the worst and 10 the best.

Example 18 (Cont’d)
Some questions to consider

1. What is your overall advice?
   I would appreciate your view on the value of the paper assuming that your suggestions are carried out. In other words, what is the potential outcome for the paper.
   - 0 = reject totally; the paper has no merit and might even be misleading
   - 10 = must accept; an outstanding study

2. How easy was the paper to read and understand?
   This refers to your opinion as a reader of the journal. Any difficulties you experienced were not your fault; they indicate a need for better writing or presentation. It does not specifically apply to the actual use of words if the author is clearly not a native speaker of English. However if particular sentences or paragraphs are unclear or ambiguous, please draw attention to them.
   - 0 = appalling presentation; the paper needs almost completely rewriting, structure poor
   - 10 = well constructed, logical flow of ideas, easy to read and understand

3. Is the abstract a reasonable summary?
   The abstract should give all the vital information, including some actual results (data, in studies reporting data). If unstructured, we will ask for a structured abstract.
   - 0 = inaccurate, misleading, seriously incomplete
   - 10 = full, clear, accurate

4. Is the introduction satisfactory?
   The introduction should explain why the study is needed, and set it in the context of existing work largely through references. Introductions should be succinct. They will usually end by posing the question(s) or hypotheses being explored.
   - 0 = incomplete, illogical, biased or otherwise unsatisfactory introduction
   - 10 = justifies study well, and refers adequately but not excessively to existing work

5. Are the methods described clearly?
   The methods section should in principle allow full replication of the study. Could you follow it?
   - 0 = poorly structured, unclear, missing information
   - 10 = well structured, complete yet concise, no significant omissions, not excessive

6. Are the methods used appropriate?
   This refers to the design, measures and analytic procedures actually used. Was the design appropriate? Were the measures used or data collected appropriate? Have the data been analysed in the most efficient way possible, not too complex but utilising the data to their full extent.
   Comments on statistical analyses are helpful, but not essential (if you have specific concerns mention them; we can obtain specialist advice).
   - 0 = inadequate or faulty method used, not allowing any conclusion to be drawn
   - 10 = best possible methods used

7. Are the results presented clearly?
   This primarily refers to the structure of the results section (its ordering and flow), and the appropriate mix of text, tables and figures. It also refers to the data presented in the text.
   - 0 = incomplete data, poorly ordered, not well presented, obvious errors
   - 10 = well set out, logical ordering, easy to understand, results relate to questions posed

Example 18 (Cont’d)
8. Are the **tables and figures** appropriate and accurate?
   This refers to the data presented in tables or figures. Are they easily understood? Should more or less data be put in tables? Are the figures helpful?
   
   - 0 = tables and figures add nothing or are misleading or inaccurate
   - 10 = best use of tables and figures, no major changes needed

9. **Is the discussion well structured?**
   A discussion should have a reasonably logical flow. Could you follow it? Did it cover all main point concerning you? Were conclusions reasonable, and not too ambitious given the study?
   
   - 0 = poorly written discussion, difficult to follow and making unwarranted claims
   - 10 = well written discussion, balanced and drawing reasonable conclusions

10. **Does the discussion cover the main limitations and weaknesses of the study?**
    This is vital. The authors should be more aware than most of the flaws in their study. No study is perfect!
    
    - 0 = does not mention or acknowledge any weaknesses or limitations
    - 10 = covers all the main limitations, and gives reasonable weight to them

11. Is the **extrapolation and speculation** reasonable, balanced and relevant to rehabilitation?
    The readers are interested primarily in the clinical practice of rehabilitation. Any discussion should at least mention how the study might influence clinical practice.
    
    - 0 = unreasonable, illogical, unjustified or irrelevant speculation
    - 10 = clinically relevant and well justified conclusions

12. Are the **clinical messages** appropriate?
    The clinical messages are, in essence, the bottom line conclusions. Are those given justified? Have any been missed? Has the author drawn conclusions logically, and emphasised the most important ones?
    
    - 0 = messages not at all justified or consistent with study and data
    - 10 = fully appropriate

13. **Do you have any concerns on malfeasance** (ethical, scientific, authorial)?
    If you have any significant concerns, please let the editor know. You may wish to do this in a confidential letter. The editor will always keep you informed of his responses and actions, and will consult you before disclosing your concerns, and will not disclose your name (unless you request that).

I hope this guidance is helpful. Please send comments and helpful suggestions to the editor.

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Anyone interested in the peer review process for Clinical Rehabilitation should read an editorial:

   Clinical Rehabilitation 2004;18:117-124

Example 18 (Cont’d)
The journal *Polar Research* (www.blackwellpublishing.com/journal.asp?ref=0800-0395&site=1), the journal of the Norwegian Polar Institute, provides concise but helpful guidance to its reviewers in its 'Referee guidelines'. These are reproduced as Example 19 with kind permission from *Polar Research*.

**Example 19** Guidelines provided for reviewers by *Polar Research* (reproduced with permission from the journal).
(4) Editorial letters

This section includes examples of letters that editorial offices need to use at various stages of the peer-review process. Only the body of the letters is given, with [...] denoting places where journal- and manuscript-specific information needs to be added. Letters should also include, at the minimum, manuscript reference number, title and authors, the name and contact details of the person being addressed, and the name, role and contact details of the person writing the letter. The journal name should always be given.

Letter 1: Acknowledgement of manuscript receipt to corresponding author

Dear
Thank you for submitting your manuscript to [journal name]. Please use the manuscript reference number given above in all future correspondence. As corresponding author, you will receive all future communications about this manuscript.

If there are any errors in the manuscript details above or in your contact details, please let the journal know via [email address].

During the review stage, all questions about the status of your manuscript should be directed to [name], via [email address].

(Note: see Chapter 3, Box 3.1 for examples of sentences that can be used to ask authors for missing or inadequate items.)

Letter 2: Acknowledgement of manuscript receipt to all the co-authors

Dear
The above manuscript, for which you are listed as a contributing author, has been received by [journal name]. Future communications regarding this manuscript will be sent to the corresponding author only.

If you need to contact us about your manuscript for any reason, please be sure to quote the manuscript reference number.

Letter 3: Assignment to handling editor

Dear
This new manuscript has been submitted to [journal name] and the authors have selected you as the handling editor.
The abstract and authors' submission letter are attached, and the usual instructions follow below.

Special note from EO: there are some language problems with this manuscript but standard is OK for review.

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1. Please log on to [online site URL] and go to your Handling Editor Centre, where you will find this manuscript listed in your new manuscript queue. If you cannot act as handling editor, please let the editorial office know as soon as possible.

2. If you wish to have this manuscript reviewed, please send the names of 5–6 possible reviewers, and any other relevant information, to [name]. Please use the direct email hot-link button for your message.

3. If you want to reject this manuscript without review, please select 'Make Recommendation'. Complete the Recommendation Form that appears, follow the instructions on the screen, and then click on ‘Send letter’ when you have finished your message.

4. Please let us know as soon as possible if you would like us to ask other editors their opinions on whether or not this manuscript should be accepted for review.

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Letter 4: Invitation to review

Dear

The above manuscript has been submitted to [journal name] and the handling editor, [editor's name], would very much like it to be reviewed by you. Would you be able to do this for us please? The manuscript details and abstract are attached to this message.

In our effort to make our reviewing process as quick and efficient as possible, we would ask you to return your report to us as quickly as possible, ideally within 14 days, but please let me know if you could review but would need longer than this.

If you agree to review this manuscript, you will be notified shortly by email about how to access the manuscript via the journal's online review site and be provided with all the information you will need to review the manuscript.

If you are not able to review this manuscript, we would welcome suggestions for alternative reviewers. Please do not, however, approach other potential reviewers direct, as the submission of this manuscript should be kept confidential.

I would be grateful if you could let me have your reply as soon as possible.

Our expert reviewers are crucial in helping maintain our high standards and I would like to thank you in advance for any help you can provide.
Letter 5: Invitation to review a resubmission

Dear

You recently kindly reviewed manuscript [manuscript number] for this journal. The manuscript was not accepted for publication but the authors were invited to submit a new manuscript after significant revision. We have now received this and as you reviewed the original submission we would very much value your opinion on the resubmission. Would you be able to do this for us please? The manuscript’s details and abstract can be found attached to this message.

In our effort to make our reviewing process as quick and efficient as possible, we would ask you to return your report to us as quickly as possible, ideally within 14 days, but please let me know if you could review but would need longer than this.

If you agree to review this manuscript, you will be notified shortly by email about how to access the manuscript via the journal’s online review site and be provided with all the information you will need to review the manuscript.

If you are not able to review this manuscript, we would welcome suggestions for alternative reviewers. Please do not, however, approach other potential reviewers direct, as the submission of this manuscript should be kept confidential.

I would be grateful if you could let me have your reply as soon as possible.

Our expert reviewers are crucial in helping maintain our high standards and I would like to thank you in advance for any help you can provide.

Letter 6: Assigning manuscript to reviewer

Dear

Thank you very much for agreeing to review this manuscript for [journal name]. To ensure that we can process manuscripts as quickly as possible, it would be very helpful if you could return your comments to us within 14 days. If by any chance you find you need more time than this, please could you let me know. Details of how to access the manuscript and submit your review online are given below. Please also don’t hesitate to contact us if you need any assistance or further information.

We would ask you to treat the submission of this manuscript and the contents and information contained in it as confidential. If you wish to seek further advice from anyone outside your immediate research team could you please contact me before you do so.

Please would you not include any recommendation on publication in your report for the authors. If you would like to make any comments regarding this, please include them in the confidential report for the Editor.

Please be aware that, as a general principle, if you access any websites your IP address, and so you, can be identified. If there are any websites within this
manuscript that you need to access to obtain information/materials to enable you to carry out an accurate and thorough review but that might compromise your anonymity, please let the editorial office know. We will endeavour to provide you with the information you require by another means. Alternatively, you can access websites anonymously using an anonymizer service, for example http://www.anonymization.net/. However, we cannot endorse or recommend any particular service.

Thank you again for your help with the review of this manuscript. I look forward to receiving your comments in the next 2 weeks.

*******************************************************************************************************
TO ACCESS THE MANUSCRIPT AND SUBMIT YOUR REVIEW ONLINE
[Full details of how to do this]
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Letter 7: Late agreement to review from reviewer

Dear

Thank you very much for your positive response to my request for you to review the above manuscript. It had already been sent to two reviewers when we received your reply, so we won’t now need to send it to you. I would, however, like to keep your name on file as an ‘On Hold’ reviewer for this manuscript, in case we run into problems with its review at a later stage. If this is not acceptable to you, please let me know.

Letter 8: Checking reviewer has accessed manuscript

(Note: this is effectively the first ‘reminder’ about a review; see Chapter 4, Box 4.2, for an example of a series of messages of increasing urgency for reviewers who do not return reviews despite receiving reminders.)

Dear

Thank you very much for agreeing to review the above manuscript for [journal name]. We sent you details of how to gain access to the manuscript on [date]. This email is just to check that you received this information, that there are no problems, and that you have been able to view the manuscript and associated material on the journal’s online submission and review site: [URL].

If you have any queries or need any assistance, please don’t hesitate to contact me. I look forward to receiving your review shortly.
Letter 9: Acceptance for publication

Dear
You will be pleased to know that your manuscript has been accepted for publication. [Authors need to be given information on the following sorts of things:

1. Whether any items are missing or of inadequate quality and need to be provided before the production process can start. These may be components of the manuscript itself or accompanying forms or policy-related assurances.

2. Details of the production process, including contact details for enquiries during that time, and whether production tracking is available for authors.

3. When authors can expect to receive proofs and how these will be sent or accessed (for example, as a PDF file or by downloading from a website after notification).

4. Approximate publication time and whether advanced online publication ahead of issue compilation is available.

5. If an open-access option is available, details of what authors who want to take this up should do.]

Letter 10: Provisional acceptance with revision

Dear
Thank you for submitting your manuscript to [journal name]. It has now been assessed by expert reviewers and their comments are attached. They can also be viewed, along with the editorial correspondence, in your Author Centre on our online site [URL].

You will be pleased to know that your manuscript has been provisionally accepted for publication pending satisfactory revision. [Details of what revisions authors need to do, which they do not need to do, and any other conditions that need to be taken into account.]

Please note that revised manuscripts must be received within 2 months of authors being notified of conditional acceptance. Full instructions for submitting your revised manuscript are given below.

Thank you for submitting this work to [journal name]. I’m glad we’re able to bring you good news and I look forward to receiving the revised manuscript.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMISSION OF YOUR REVISED MANUSCRIPT
[Authors need to be given information on the following sorts of things:

1. Time limit if not given in actual letter.

2. Where and how to submit the revised manuscript.

3. Items that need to be included — see Chapter 5, Box 5.1, for a list.]
Letter 11: Rejection without external review

(a) Language problems – encourage resubmission

Dear

Thank you for submitting your manuscript to [journal name]. All new manuscripts are given a preliminary review by the Editors to assess whether the subject matter and general content are appropriate for this journal.

You will be pleased to know that your manuscript has passed this initial screen. However, we feel that the standard of [language] in your manuscript is below that needed for this journal and it will need to be improved before we can send your manuscript out for full review. As it stands, reviewers would find it difficult to make an accurate assessment of the science and this would not be fair to your work, or indeed to our reviewers. We are therefore returning the manuscript to you in your best interests, to give it the best chance of a full and fair review.

Thank you for considering [journal name] for publication. We hope you find our action helpful and we look forward to sending your manuscript out for full review if you do decide to submit an improved version in the near future.

(b) Language problems – no encouragement to resubmit

Dear

Thank you for submitting your manuscript to [journal name]. All new manuscripts are given a preliminary review by the Editors to assess whether the subject matter and general content are appropriate for this journal.

Unfortunately, the Editors felt that the study you report would not really be of enough general interest to our broad readership and it is better suited for a more specialized journal, for example [journal name] or [journal name]. In the spirit of helpfulness, we would advise that, before you submit to another journal, you go over the whole manuscript very carefully and improve the language or that you seek help with this. As the manuscript stands, reviewers would find it difficult to make an accurate assessment of the science, and this would not be fair to your work.

Thank you for considering this journal for publication. We are sorry to disappoint you on this occasion and wish you success in getting your work published in another journal.

(c) Inappropriate topic

Dear

Thank you for submitting your manuscript to [journal name]. All new manuscripts are given a preliminary review by the Editors to assess whether the subject matter and general content are appropriate for this journal.
Unfortunately, the Editors felt that the topic covered in your manuscript is outside the scope of this journal and is better suited for one that publishes papers in this area, for example [journal name] or [journal name].

Thank you for considering this journal for publication. We are sorry to disappoint you on this occasion and wish you success in getting your work published in a more suitable journal.

**Letter 12: Rejection after external review with resubmission encouraged**

(Note: appropriate level of enthusiasm for a resubmission needs to be conveyed at *)

Dear

Thank you for submitting your manuscript to [journal name]. It has now been assessed by expert reviewers and their comments are attached. They can also be viewed, along with the editorial correspondence, in your Author Centre on our online site [URL].

Unfortunately, on the basis of the reviewers’ comments and my own reading of your manuscript, we are not at this stage able to accept it for publication. However, if you are able to address the reviewers’ comments and make the necessary revisions and improvements we would be happy to receive a new submission from you in the future. This would need to [full details of all the conditions that need to be fulfilled for a resubmitted manuscript to be considered, including any time constraints].

I’m sorry we’re not able to bring you a positive outcome at this stage, but I hope our reviewers’ comments will be helpful to you* and that you will resubmit the manuscript to us in the near future.* in deciding the way forward for your manuscript.* in preparing your manuscript for submission to another journal if you are not able to make the revisions required for the manuscript to be reconsidered.

**Letter 13: Rejection after external review with no resubmission encouraged**

Dear

Thank you for submitting your manuscript to [journal name]. It has now been assessed by expert reviewers and their comments are attached. They can also be viewed, along with the editorial correspondence, in your Author Centre on our online site [URL].

I’m afraid that, based on the reviewers’ comments and my own reading of your manuscript, we are not able to accept it for publication. Unfortunately, it seems very
unlikely that any revisions could be made that would render the manuscript acceptable for publication in this journal because [reasons why]. We therefore recommend that you submit your manuscript to another journal and we hope that our comments are helpful to you in this.

Thank you for considering this journal for publication. We are sorry to disappoint you on this occasion and wish you success in getting your work published in another journal.

Letter 14: Thanks and notification of outcome to reviewers

Dear

Recently you kindly reviewed the above manuscript for [journal name]. I thought you would be interested to know the outcome of the review process and to see the reviewers’ reports. The decision was [decision] and the reviewers’ reports are attached.

Thank you very much for reviewing for us — we greatly appreciate your help and input.