Contents

- Overview of the NZJP Review Process
- Review Process Details
- Review Recommendations
- Invited Submissions and Commentaries
- Book Reviews
- Notes for Action Editors and Guest Editors

Overview of the NZJP Review Process

The Journal relies heavily on practitioners and academics to review papers submitted for publication. The journal referee system is an important mechanism for maintaining the quality of the professional and scientific literature. The referee process does add to the lag time in publication, but if reviewers do a good job the ‘value’ added can be substantial.

Manuscripts are first read by the Editor. Some are rejected without further review—for example, papers outside the scope of the Journal, or those of only marginal interest to begin with. If a paper has an obvious deficiency (e.g., a sketchy methodology section in a research report), we may ask the author to revise it before sending it to reviewers. Most of the papers received, however, are sent to outside reviewers directly after editorial review. The Editor’s comments are kept on file and sent to the author with the reviewers’ critiques.

Usually two reviewers are asked to provide a review on each submission.

The Journal uses a ‘blind review’ process. The identification of authors and their work affiliations are removed from a paper before sending it to reviewers. Reviewers’ comments, along with any editorial comments, are sent anonymously to the corresponding author. We believe this reduces bias in the review process and encourages reviewers to give their honest appraisals. It is also our practice to send all review comments to both the reviewers.

The decision about publication is entirely the Editor’s responsibility. In most cases, the Editor will follow the guidance of the reviewers. If this is not the case the Editor can be expected to provide substantive reasons for not accepting the recommendations of the reviewers.

This process is followed for all submissions to the Journal (e.g., full manuscripts, brief reports, case studies), with the exception of invited papers, commentaries, and book reviews.
Review Process Details
The ideal reviewer is a careful reader and writer who is familiar with the standards and requirements of professional/scientific journals. She/he should be knowledgeable of the type of work reported in the submission. Reviewers of research reports should be well versed in the scientific method and statistics.

The basic responsibility of a reviewer is to provide advice on the merits for publication of the paper in question. If the work is acceptable, the reviewer should comment on its importance. If the paper is not acceptable, the reviewer should state why. If the paper can be improved, the reviewer should detail suggested changes. Here are some general suggestions for reviewers:

1. **Be prompt.** If you cannot prepare a critique within the agreed timeframe (usually within 6 weeks), inform the Editorial Assistant (at the NZPsS national office) immediately and, if possible, suggest another reviewer.
2. **Be objective.** Do not succumb to the temptation to be protective of your own work.
3. **Be specific.** General comments such as, "This paper reflects a poor understanding of the subject and would not add significantly to the literature," without supporting documentation, are of little utility. It can be time consuming to write a useful critique.
4. **Avoid acrimony.** Ask yourself, "Would I be willing to sign my name to this critique?"

When reviewers offer suggestions, it is common to ask for more supporting evidence and additional analysis. Please keep in mind that when the paper is at or near the length limit, currently 7000 words, asking for more material may put the author(s) in the position of having to remove other content to stay within the length limit. Please be considerate of the author when asking for additional material and offer suggestions where the manuscript can be trimmed to make room for the requested content.

Manuscripts are expected to conform to the current Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association. Although reviewers should comment on faulty writing and organization, they should leave it up to the authors and Editor to work out specific changes.

We encourage reviewers to submit their critiques on the Review Feedback Form provided rather than noting comments directly on the manuscript. Comments for the Editor only should be placed in the section at the end of the form, these comments are not forwarded to the Corresponding Author. Reviewers should treat papers in confidence and discuss them only with the Editor.

Reviewer Recommendations
Every review will include a recommendation to the Editor. This recommendation will be one of the following:
1) The paper is **accepted** in its present form.

   *This rarely used category should be reserved for manuscripts that are virtually flawless in their content.*

2) The paper is **acceptable with minor revisions** (which may or may not be sent back to the reviewer for checking)

   *This recommendation should be made when the manuscript is judged to be quite strong and in need of only minor additions, deletions, or corrections.*

3) The paper may be **acceptable with major revisions** (which will usually be sent back to the reviewer for checking)

   *This recommendation should be used for manuscripts that have a high degree of potential for eventual publication, in addition to significant deficiencies that must be corrected. This recommendation should be used when the reviewer believes that satisfactory resolution of his or her concerns is possible and that the achievement of successful resolution will result in an acceptable manuscript. Detailed comments to the authors are extremely important in support of this recommendation, so that the authors can answer all the concerns in a single revision.*

4) The paper is **rejected**. Further review of the manuscript by the reviewer is possible if the Editor decides against the reviewer’s rejection recommendation. A rejection can take two forms.

   a) **Reject in Current Form, But Allow Resubmission of a Substantially Different Version, According to Accompanying Comments.** Instead of simply rejecting a manuscript as completely unsalvageable, this recommendation includes thoughtful advice for producing a potentially publishable, but different manuscript. This is essentially a very risky revision (but the revision will be handled as a new submission).

   b) **Reject Unconditionally.** This recommendation is appropriate for papers that have major problems on multiple dimensions. Comments to the Corresponding Author should be especially polite in explaining the nature of the concerns.

**Invited Submissions and Commentaries**

The Editor may invite a submission on a particular topic or commentary on a piece already published or due for publication. These submissions are not subject to blind review because they are generally sought from experts in the field. However, they undergo review by the Editor and one member of the editorial board with feedback being given to the author with respect to formatting errors, clarity and conciseness.
**Book Reviews**
Book reviews are not subject to formal review by anyone other than the Journal’s Book Review Editor.

---

**Notes for Action Editors and Guest Editors**

**Action Editors**
Action Editors are invited to take over the editorial role from the editor with respect to single papers, or a small collection of papers. This can be prompted by various events such as the Editor taking an extended period of leave, high workload, or expertise. Under these circumstances the Action Editor takes full editorial control of the processing of the manuscripts in question from the point of initial reception and screening of the manuscript(s) to final acceptance/rejection.

Action Editors will be members of the current Editorial Board of the Journal.

Action Editors will make full use of the Journal’s Editorial Assistant in managing manuscripts. The processes used should be consistent with the established editorial systems. Action Editors have full editorial authority and responsibility for the manuscripts they are processing.

**Guest Editors**
Guest Editors are those individuals who have successfully proposed a Special Issue of the Journal, and who take responsibility for sourcing and processing the papers that will make up the Special Issue.

As a Guest Editor may have limited editorial experience either the Editor or a member of the Editorial Board is nominated to assist the Guest Editor as necessary. Guest Editors will make full use of the Journal’s Editorial Assistant in managing manuscripts. The processes used should be consistent with the established editorial systems, for example, the blind reviewing system must be adhered to.

Guest Editors must liaise closely with the Editor as the final decision about Journal content remains with the Editor.

*John Fitzgerald*
*19 August 2010*