

African Journal of Emergency Medicine Governance Document

Code of Conduct: Reviewers

The primary function of a reviewer is to critique and evaluate a submission for both style and the relative contribution it makes to the scientific literature. The reviewer must also place the manuscript in the larger context unique to the typical journal consumer. For example, a clinically-focused journal with an audience of community MD's might not be the best place to publish a basic science paper even if the methodology is pristine. The reviewer has to act as an "everyman" surrogate in the case that this decision did not occur earlier in the process. Once the article is determined to meet the above criteria, the reviewer can then point out areas of weakness in substance, methodology, and/or references. The emphasis is on helping authors revise and resubmit with the goal of creating quality, publishable work.

Reviewers are expected to:

- Perform up to four reviews per calendar year.
- Maintain their updated contact information and availability to review with the editor.
- Complete the peer reviewer-training module located at the following link:
<http://www3.us.elsevierhealth.com/extractor/graphics/em-acep/>

The journal will provide all reviewers with:

- Copies of decision letters to authors on reviewed manuscripts
- An annual update detailing the number of reviews performed over the preceding calendar year and an official letter of thanks on an African Journal of Emergency Medicine letterhead for academic record and promotion (December to February)
- An editor-assigned performance score out of 100 (<25: poor*, 25-50: needs improvement, 50-75: meets expectation, >75: exceeds expectations) after each review. Average performance score will be made available annually. The editor will assign an L to a score for any review submitted after the 21 day review deadline.
*A performance score of <25 will be followed up by the editor-in-chief to discuss the review, strategies for improvement and any problems.
- Yearly acknowledgement of the best reviewers in print.

Reappointment

The appointment term for the position of a reviewer is two years, after which reappointment for another two years is automatically awarded, provided none of the following has occurred:

- The reviewer has failed to respond to at least two invitations to review and thus been released from two or more review requests per year.
- The reviewer's average editor assigned performance score was <50 over the appointment term.
- The reviewer submitted two or more reviews after the 21 day deadline in the last year.

Progression:

After two consecutive terms, outstanding reviewers (consistent performance score >75, acceptance of >75% of reviews and late returns <25% of the time) may be invited to join the African Journal of Emergency Medicine team as a section editor.

Minimum requirements to be reviewer:

- To be a reviewer for the African Journal of Emergency Medicine reviewers require at least 2 peer-reviewed publications in addition to a minimum of one month clinical experience delivering acute care in sub-Saharan Africa.
- The African Journal of Emergency Medicine recognizes that emergency medicine is a nascent field in this region. In an attempt to balance research experience with vocational expertise applicants that do not meet the minimum 2-publication requirement will be requested to perform two mock reviews, assigned and marked by the EiC.
- The final decision on assigning a reviewer to the African Journal of Emergency Medicine rests with the Editor in Chief.

Guide for Reviewers

Performing reviews:

Reviews must be completed within 21 days from accepting the invitation.

- If reviewers do not reply within three days of initial invitation a repeat invitation will be sent on day seven.
- If reviewers do not respond to any of the requests to review, the reviewer will receive a written correspondence from the journal releasing him or her as a reviewer.
- If sufficient reviews have been submitted to allow the editor to make a decision, the reviewer will receive a written correspondence from the journal releasing him or her as a reviewer.

Reviews must be thorough and contain a basic amount of information in order for the section editor to generate a composite review (a helpful guide can be found at [this link](#)). Consider commenting on the following:

1. Originality and significance. Is the work original: Does this study answer a new question, or approach an old question in a new (and better) way. Does it confirm existing reports, provide incremental new data, or is it a considerable advance?
2. Is the paper relevant to an international audience?
3. Is the research question clearly stated?
4. Are the methods appropriate to the research question? Are they adequately described? (Refer to an appropriate reporting guideline.)
5. What are potential sources of bias and are they likely to have affected the overall direction or size of the results?
6. Statistics: If you feel comfortable doing so, comment on the appropriateness of the statistical analysis or whether you feel a statistician should review.
7. Are the results clear and answer the research question? Is the author's interpretation reasonable?
8. Is the paper well written, does it have a logical flow, and is it easy to read? Do the figures support the story and are easy to interpret? Is it grammatically correct, are there many typographical errors, will it need considerable copy editing or English-language editing?
9. Are all important limitations listed?
10. Any concerns about ethics approval, registration, or other issues such as plagiarism, multiple publications, guest or ghost authorship?

Submitting your review

The following link provides a number of [tutorials on submitting your review](#)