

Guidelines for reviewers

The purpose of reviewing

- To assist the editor in making decisions about acceptance or rejection.
- To assist or advise authors on areas in which their paper may be improved through amendment.
- The provision of constructive feedback is an important part of a reviewer's skills.

Quality

- We would like you to advise on the originality, relevance and educational importance, and reliability of the paper.
 1. Originality: does the work add to what is already in the published literature? If so, what does it add?
 2. Relevance and educational importance: is the work likely to be of interest to the daily practice of the general international readership of *Medical Education*? Will it make a difference?
 3. Reliability: this covers matters such as clear research question, appropriate and adequate methodology; presentation of results and conclusions. Check boxes are provided to help you look at reliability issues in detail.

Confidentiality

- All papers submitted to the journal are confidential. Please do not discuss your report or the paper you have been asked to review with anyone else. If you want to seek the views of a colleague, please contact the Editorial Office first.

Conflict of interest

- You should declare to the Editorial Office any conflict of interest that might bias your opinion of a paper. A conflict of interest exists when professional judgement concerning a primary interest (such as patients' welfare or the validity of research) may be influenced by secondary interests (personal matters such as financial gain, personal relationships or professional rivalry).

The Score Sheet: check boxes

- The check boxes on this part of the review form ask you to give yes/no/not applicable responses to a variety of questions concerning study design and reporting of results. If you have any detailed comments on any aspect raised by the checklist, please make them in the free text comments box below.

The Score Sheet: the report

- This report will be read by authors, editors and other reviewers. We will pass on your report to the author and the other reviewers will read it when a final decision is made, so please do not make any comments that you do not wish them to see.
- You may like to use the following structure for your report:
 1. Overall evaluation and general comments
 2. Detailed evaluation of specific features
 3. Minor points e.g. grammar or terminology. You are not expected to provide detailed copy editing for typographical, spelling or grammatical errors. These are the authors' responsibility.
 4. What changes (major and minor) might be made to improve the paper
 5. Comments on the overview box: is it accurate and relevant?
- Please be objective and constructive in writing your report – it may be helpful to write as if you were giving feedback face to face with the author(s).
- Please do not indicate your opinion about acceptance/rejection in this report.
- In the interests of more accountable review, you are encouraged to put your name at the foot of your comments to the authors - in which case they will be informed of your identity. If you prefer to remain anonymous, do not include your name.

Other matters

- Please return your review within two weeks if possible. Automated reminders will be sent.
- If a delay is likely please inform the office by email (medicaleducation@pms.ac.uk). The paper can then be allocated to another reviewer.
- When a final decision on publication has been made, we will email you to let you know the outcome and enclose copies of the other reviewers' reports, where these are available.
- The names of all reviewers for the year are published in the December issue of *Medical Education*.
- Manuscripts and reviews submitted to *Medical Education* may be used for teaching and research purposes with potential authors and reviewers. Authors and reviewers may be asked from time to time to take part in surveys. Every effort will be made to protect confidentiality.
- Concerns about ethical or serious scientific misconduct should be communicated, in confidence, to the Editor in Chief.