

# GUIDELINES FOR REVIEWERS

## The review process

Manuscripts sent to the *Journal of Gastrointestinal and Liver Diseases (JGLD)* are assessed by an editor upon submission. To save authors and reviewers time, only manuscripts that meet our editorial criteria are sent out for formal review.

Manuscripts that are sent for formal review are assessed by at least two reviewers. Based on their advice, the editor will:

- accept the manuscript, with or without minor revision
- request that the authors revise the manuscript to address specific concerns before a final decision is reached
- reject the manuscript, typically due to lack of novelty, insufficient conceptual advance or major technical and/or interpretational problems

Reviewers may recommend a particular course of action in their confidential comments to the editor, but the editors may have to make a decision based on conflicting advice. Reviewers may, on occasion, be asked for further advice, particularly when they disagree with one another, or when the authors believe that they have been misunderstood on some points.

Reviewers are invited by the editors, and only on acceptance of the invitation will a reviewer have access to the full paper. In this document you will also find a field where you can insert your comments. Then send the document back to the editor.

## Upon receiving a manuscript to review

To avoid unnecessary delays in manuscript processing, please do the following immediately upon receipt of a manuscript for review:

- check the deadline to prevent misunderstandings regarding timing, and contact the editorial office immediately if you anticipate any difficulties in submitting the review on time
- determine any conflict of interest (consider the authors, their institution, their funding sources) and decide whether or not you can judge the article impartially
- evaluate the topic: does it fit the scope of the journal and is it likely to be of sufficient general interest for publication?

## Confidentiality

The review process is strictly confidential. Reviewers should keep the following guidelines in mind:

- manuscripts reviewed for *JGLD* should not be discussed with anyone who is not directly involved in the review process
- if colleagues are consulted, they should be identified to the editors
- reviewers should not disclose their identities to the authors or to other colleagues.

## Writing the report

The primary purpose of referee reports is to provide the editors with the information that they need to reach a decision, but they should also instruct the authors on how to strengthen their manuscript. Referees are asked to submit both confidential comments to the editor and those that can be directly transmitted to the authors.

## Comments for the authors

Reviewers are asked to maintain a positive and impartial, but critical, attitude in evaluating manuscripts. As thoroughly as possible, a negative report should explain to the authors the weaknesses of their manuscript.

The report should include:

- an initial paragraph that summarizes the major findings and the reviewer's overall impressions and highlights the major shortcomings of the manuscript
- specifically numbered comments that may be broken down into major and minor criticisms if necessary (numbering facilitates the editor's evaluation of the manuscript and the author's reply to the report)

The report should answer the following questions:

- what are the major claims and how significant are they?
- are the claims novel and convincing?
- are the claims appropriately discussed in the context of the literature?
- who will be interested and why?
- does the paper stand out in some way from the others in its field?
- are there other experiments that would strengthen the paper?

For manuscripts that may merit further consideration, it is helpful when reviewers provide advice on the following points where appropriate:

- how the clarity of the writing might be improved (without specific details of spelling and grammar)
- how the manuscript might be condensed
- how to do the study justice without exaggerating the claims
- how to represent earlier literature more completely
- how to improve the presentation of methodological detail so that the experiments can be reproduced
- the submission of supplementary data on [www.jgld.ro](http://www.jgld.ro) to enhance the presentation

## **Timing**

*JGLD* is committed to rapid editorial decisions and publication. Efficiency in this process is a valuable service to our authors and to the scientific community as a whole. We ask that reviewers respond promptly or inform us if they anticipate a significant delay in the completion of their review, which allows us to keep the authors informed, and, when necessary, find alternative reviewers.

## **Conflicts of interest**

Because it is not possible for the editors to be aware of all possible biases, we ask reviewers to draw our attention to anything that might affect their report, including commercial interests, and to decline review invitations when they cannot be objective. We do not find it necessary to exclude reviewers who have reviewed a paper for another journal; the fact that two journals have independently identified a particular person as well qualified to review a paper does not decrease the validity of her/his opinion in our view.

## **Publication policy**

Despite our efforts to identify breaches of publication policy or ethical conduct such as plagiarism or conflict of interest, the reviewers who are familiar with the field are more likely to recognize such problems and should alert the editors to any potential problems in this regard.