

The peer review guideline

This guide for reviewers contains information about basic considerations that should be applied when reviewing a manuscript that has been submitted to *Hormozgan Medical Journal*, and about the editorial standards of the journal. Submitted manuscripts are usually reviewed by two or more experts. Peer reviewers will be asked to recommend whether a manuscript should be accepted, revised or rejected. They should also alert the editors of any issues relating to author misconduct such as plagiarism and unethical behavior.

Publication of research articles by *Hormozgan Medical Journal* is dependent primarily on their validity and coherence, as judged by peer reviewers and editors. The reviewers may also be asked whether the writing is comprehensible and how interesting they consider the article to be. Submitted manuscripts will be sent to peer reviewers, unless they are out of scope or below the interest threshold of *Hormozgan Medical Journal*, or if the presentation or written English is of an unacceptably low standard.

Reviewers are asked to provide detailed, constructive comments that will help the editors make a decision on publication and the author(s) improve their manuscript. A key issue is whether the work has serious flaws that should preclude its publication, or whether there are additional experiments or data required to support the conclusions drawn. Where possible, reviewers should provide references to substantiate their comments.

Reviewers should address the points below and indicate whether they consider any required revisions to be 'major compulsory revisions', 'minor essential revisions' or 'discretionary revisions'. In general, revisions are likely to be 'Major compulsory revisions' if additional controls are required to support the claims or the interpretations are not supported by the data, if further analysis is required that may change the conclusions, or if the methods used are inadequate or statistical errors have been made.

1. Is the question posed original, important and well defined?

The research question posed by the authors should be easily identifiable and understood. It is useful to both the editors and authors if reviewers comment on the originality and importance of the study within the context of its field. If the research question is unoriginal because related work has been published previously, please give references. Reviewers should ask themselves after reading the manuscript if they have learnt something new and if there is a clear conclusion from the study.

2. Are the data sounds and well controlled?

If you feel that inappropriate controls have been used please say so, indicating the reasons for your concerns, and suggesting alternative controls where appropriate. If you feel that further experimental/clinical evidence is required to substantiate the results, please provide details.

3. Is the interpretation (discussion and conclusion) well balanced and supported by the data?

The interpretation should discuss the relevance of all the results in an unbiased manner. Are the interpretations overly positive or negative? Conclusions drawn from the study should be valid and result directly from the data shown, with reference to other relevant work as applicable. Have the authors provided references wherever necessary?

4. Are the methods appropriate and well described, and are sufficient details provided to allow others to evaluate and/or replicate the work?

Please remark on the suitability of the methods for the study, which should be clearly described and reproducible by peers in the field. If statistical analyses have been carried out, specify whether or not they need to be assessed specifically by an additional reviewer with statistical expertise.

5. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the methods?

Please comment on any improvements that could be made to the study design to enhance the quality of the results. If any additional experiments are required, please give details. If novel experimental techniques were used please pay special attention to their reliability and validity.

6. Can the writing, organization, tables and figures be improved?

Although the editorial team may also assess the quality of the written English, please do comment if you consider the standard is below that expected for a scientific publication. If the manuscript is organized in such a manner that it is illogical or not easily accessible to the reader please suggest improvements. Please provide feedback on whether the data are presented in the most appropriate manner; for example, is a table being used where a graph would give increased clarity? Are the figures of a high enough quality to be published in their present form?

7. When revisions are requested.

Reviewers may recommend revisions for any or all of the following reasons: data need to be added to support the authors' conclusions; better justification is needed for the arguments based on existing data; or the clarity and/or coherence of the paper needs to be improved.

8. Are there any ethical or competing interests issues you would like to raise?

The study should adhere to ethical standards of scientific/medical research and the authors should declare that they have received ethics approval and or patient consent for the study, where appropriate. Whilst we do not expect reviewers to delve into authors' competing interests, if you are aware of any issues that you do not think have been adequately addressed, please inform the editorial office.

9. Confidentiality

Any manuscript sent for peer review is a confidential document and should remain so until it is formally published.