

Guidelines for Peer Reviewers

Purpose and scope

- ◆ Uphold scholarly quality, fairness, inclusivity, and methodological rigor across diverse Humanities and Social Sciences.
- ◆ Provide actionable feedback that improves the manuscript and informs editorial decisions.
- ◆ Assess fit with the journal's scope, audience, and standards.

Reviewer responsibilities and ethics

- ◆ Maintain confidentiality of the manuscript, data, and ideas; do not share or use for personal advantage.
- ◆ Declare conflicts of interest (recent co-authorships, same institution, advisor–advisee ties, close competition, financial or ideological stakes).
- ◆ Evaluate scholarship, not identity or affiliations; avoid biased assumptions about methods, geographies, or institutions.
- ◆ Accept only if you can review within the requested timeline; propose a realistic date if you need an extension.

Core evaluation criteria

- ◆ Originality and significance: Addresses a clearly framed problem, advances debates, offers novel evidence, interpretation, or method, and moves the field forward.
- ◆ Theoretical contribution: Conceptual clarity, appropriate use of theory, extension or critique of existing frameworks, and coherence between theory, questions, and findings.
- ◆ Literature engagement: Accurate, balanced, and current engagement with relevant international and local scholarship; avoids parochial citation practices and recognizes diverse voices and geographies.
- ◆ Methodological rigor: Transparent and appropriate design for the question; alignment between data, methods, and claims; justified limitations and scope conditions.
- ◆ Evidence and analysis: Validity and credibility of sources or data; careful analysis; clear logical progression from evidence to claims; robustness or triangulation where appropriate.
- ◆ Argumentation and structure: Clear research questions, logical organization, effective signposting, and a persuasive, cumulative argument.

- ◆ Writing and style: Clarity, accessibility for the journal's readership, correct use of disciplinary terminology, and consistency of key concepts throughout.
- ◆ Fit with the journal: Relevance to aims and readership; appropriate length and format.
- ◆ Offer concrete suggestions: clarify concepts, tighten the question, add missing literature, adjust analyses, reframe claims, improve organization, or revise figures/tables.
- ◆ Maintain a constructive, respectful tone; critique arguments and methods, not authors.
- ◆ Avoid prescriptive self-citation; suggest any self-citations only when essential and explain why.
- ◆ Separate "Comments to the Author" from "Confidential Comments to the Editor."

Recommendation categories

- ◆ Accept: Only if the manuscript is strong across criteria and needs trivial edits.
- ◆ Revision: Solid contribution with limited, clearly addressable issues (clarity, small analyses, minor literature additions) or valuable potential but substantial work needed (reframing, additional analysis, methodological clarification, expanded evidence, ethical documentation).
- ◆ Reject: Fundamental flaws in originality, evidence, ethics, or fit; or revisions would amount to a new study. Offer guidance for resubmission elsewhere when possible.

Guidance for revisions and re-reviews

- ◆ Evaluate whether authors addressed each major point with adequate evidence or explanation.
- ◆ Check that new analyses or materials are sound and consistent with claims.
- ◆ Avoid introducing new demands unless essential to validity or ethics.
- ◆ Confirm that tone, inclusivity, and ethical language are maintained after revisions.

Reviewer checklist

- ◆ Is the research question clear, important, and situated in the field's debates?
- ◆ Is the contribution original and significant for the journal's audience?
- ◆ Are theory, methods, data, and claims aligned and transparent?
- ◆ Are evidence and analysis credible, rigorous, and proportionate to the claims?

- ◆ Are ethics approvals, consent, and protections adequately documented?
- ◆ Is the writing clear, organized, and accessible without oversimplifying?
- ◆ Does the manuscript adhere to journal scope and standards?
- ◆ Are your comments constructive, specific, and actionable?

Sample review structure

- Summary of aims, methods, arguments, and main findings in 4–6 sentences.
- Context, clarity, and analytical approach in 3-5 sentences.
- Overall assessment of contribution, rigor, and fit in 3–5 sentences.
- Major comments: 5–10 numbered, actionable points prioritizing validity and contribution.
- Minor comments: Style, clarity, references, figures, and small fixes.
- Recommendation: Accept, Revision, Reject
- Confidential comments to editor, if any: Clear recommendation and any sensitive concerns.