

International Journal of Therapy and Rehabilitation

GUIDELINES FOR REFEREES

The following information may be helpful when reviewing articles for the *International Journal of Therapy and Rehabilitation*.

The primary aim of the journal is to promote interdisciplinary working through the publication of original research and scholarly articles from all disciplines involved in therapy and rehabilitation. IJTR aims to explore the relationship between theory and practice and to stimulate cross-fertilisation of ideas between professionals involved in therapy and rehabilitation. The scope of articles published in the journal should reflect the development and expansion of this area in general. The journal aims to keep professionals informed of new developments in all aspects of rehabilitation and therapy practice, education, management and research. IJTR welcomes manuscripts and correspondence from all professional groups.

Articles are sent to two referees for blind review. The referee in reviewing articles is informing and advising the Editor and Editor-in-Chief who will make the final decision regarding publication. The specific referees' comments will normally be passed on (anonymously) to the author. For this reason it is important to give detailed comments that will help both the editorial team decide on the suitability of the article for publication and help the author(s) develop and improve his/her work/research. The academic level of the articles should generally aim at MSc level with a minimum level of a good BSc (honours) being reached. The referee has the choice of accepting, rejecting or re-examining the article following revision. Finally, your feedback and comments are greatly valued on all articles as this is one of the most important factors in maintaining editorial quality and integrity. Thank you for all your hard work and help in undertaking the review process and also for your dedication to the journal.

The review process

When you are invited to review an article, you will receive an email from the Editor via epress, the journal's online management system. This email will include a link to an anonymised version of the author's manuscript and another link to the website where you can post your comments online. Referees who feel inadequately qualified or who cannot give an unbiased opinion are asked to declare this lack of expertise or conflict of interest and return the manuscript. If further statistical review is required, the referees are asked to request this from the Editor, who will arrange for the statistical reviewer to assist with the interpretation of unclear data.

We usually give approximately 4 weeks for a review and we aim to send compiled comments back to the author(s) within 6 weeks of the original submission. Occasionally, where an article is being aimed for a specific forthcoming issue, we may have to give a short deadline. If you will be unable to review an article within the time given, please inform the Editor immediately, so that either an extension can be given or an alternative referee found. It is of utmost importance that reviews are returned promptly so that we can return feedback to the authors within a reasonable period of time.

You will be asked to provide some constructively expressed feedback for the author, designed to help them revise or rewrite the article for this journal or another. Your comments can be anywhere between a paragraph and something much fuller, depending on what you think appropriate to the particular article. We are happy for you to make specific suggestions on the article (using the 'track changes' option) and email these separately to the Editor, Joanna Bakewell, at email: joanna.b@markallengroup.com, but please also ensure that you complete the referee's decision form with the information requested.

Please consider the relevance of the content to the target audience, the use of the literature and discussion of cited research, and the degree of critical analysis and evaluation.

The referee's decision form is divided into two parts — first, for the attention of the Editor, the second for the benefit of the author. The first should state your overall recommendation about the suitability of the article for publication. There are five options detailed on the referee's decision form:

1. **Accept:** can be published now with no amendments or following minor editorial attention
2. **Accept with minor revisions:** will be ready for publication following minor revision by the author
3. **Revise and resubmit:** a major re-working of the text is still needed
4. **Reject –** not suitable for publication
5. **Submit to another journal.**

Referee checklist:

General articles:

- Has the author adhered to the journal's Instructions to Authors?
- Is the article suitable for IJTR readership?
- Is the title relevant/accurate?
- Is the information clinically or otherwise important? Does the article add to knowledge in its specific field?
- Does the article have a sound theoretical, research, or philosophical base?
- Is the article well organized and logically developed?
- Are the graphs/tables/statistics adequate and appropriate? Are they labelled correctly?
- Are the interpretations and conclusions justified from the data?
- Does the author include further recommendations for practice?
- Is the writing style satisfactory, i.e. grammatical and easy to understand?
- Is the article logically presented and are the tables and figures easy to understand?
- Is the article of appropriate length? (i.e. approximately 3000 words)
- Is the article too long and are there any areas that could be omitted or condensed?
- Does the abstract accurately reflect the content of the article?

Research reports:

- Is the study original?
- Is the overall design of the study appropriate?
- Are the following adequately and clearly stated: Rationale, Research question, Aims, Methods, Data collection and analysis, Findings, Limitations, Conclusion?
- Has ethical approval been sought?
- Are the results relevant to the problem posed and are they credible and well presented (including the use of tables and figures)?
- Does the study incorporate critical analysis of the data collected?
- Does the study use appropriate statistical tests to analyse data and are these correctly used?

References:

- Is the Harvard style of referencing used?
- Are the references correct? (i.e. author, date, title, publisher, place)
- Are they adequate, up-to-date and relevant? Do more need to be included? If so, are there any suggestions?
- No more than about 40 references should be used.

Other points to note:

- Have the names of bodies and common concepts (e.g. DoH, RCN, EBP) been included in full at the first mention? Is the use of acronyms/abbreviations consistent?
- Is the English good? Has the author avoided the use of too much jargon?
- Does the author cite too much of his/her own work?
- Is there any evidence of plagiarism?
- Has copyright been infringed?