
Journal Editor Job description

Overview

The key role of a journal editor is to promote the journal in the specialist field associated with the journal, whilst also promoting the journal as the best journal to publish in. Journal editor will need to encourage new and established authors to submit articles and set up a reliable panel of expert reviewers. Editors are also responsible for offering feedback to reviewers when required and ensure that any feedback to authors is constructive.

The Editor is responsible for the overall quality of the intellectual content of the journal and for overseeing the review process to ensure it is thorough, fair, and timely. The Editor is responsible for upholding the mission and scope of the journal and for selecting papers that provide new, original, and important contributions to knowledge. The Editor selects associate editors, editorial board members, reviewers, and any other editorial positions required in developing content for the journal. The Editor serves as chair of the editorial board and oversees its work. The Editor may write editorials and solicit manuscripts on special issues and may assign guest editors for these special issues. The Editor seeks opportunities to hold an annual editorial board meeting and prepares an annual report for the publisher/ Executive Board.

RESPONSIBILITIES

It is an editor's responsibility to ensure that a journal has sufficient articles in their editorial system for all their Issues per year. To do this they need to manage the journal so that articles are being submitted, being sent to reviewers for review and returned promptly within an agreed timeframe, decisions on revisions, acceptance and rejections made as quickly as possible and new revised papers re-submitted. An editor's role is vital to the success of the journal and most importantly the dissemination of research and scholarly articles. Setting up systems for these decisions to be made is an essential part of a new editor role- but the outcome will of course depend entirely on the way in which the publishers/ Executive Board support the journal financially and with other resources.

'Regularity: No delay in the publication schedule' and it would be to the advantage of the journal if it is published on a regular basis. If the Subject Chair reviewers see a journal that has for example 3 issues outstanding in being published and that only 2 or 3 articles have been published in previous articles then this is an issue of concern and would be a disadvantage in the review process, as it indicates that the journal has what is often called "copy flow" problems.

Editor should endeavor to be a leader in the specific field of practice underpinning journal content as it helps the journal development, presence and standing within the international community.

An editor should always be mindful of the number of papers in review and should encourage reviewers to speed up the process if they know the deadline is near. It would therefore be helpful to ensure that everyone is aware of the deadline. We suggest using electronic alerts for reviewers whenever possible. Again, this depends on how the journal is managed by the Executive Board

/publisher as much as the editor, as it is the publisher who normally has the funding for much of what can be achieved outside of the editorial processes.

One way to ensure some new articles for publication is having ‘special issues’ of the journal, focusing on a specific topic, as they are slowly becoming a popular source of article contribution.

Another way is to have ‘conference special issues’ and for Editors to speak to delegates at various conferences to encourage new authors to contribute articles. Publishers can also issue a ‘call for papers’ alert to invite more contribution of articles. All these types of developments for encouraging authors to write and publish in the journal can be made visible on the journal web site which is why and up to date user friendly and informative web site is so important. There should also be an effective promotion of the journal whenever possible to reach as many potential authors as possible who might want to submit their articles to your journal.

Editor should also familiarize themselves with the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) ‘Code of Conduct and Best Practice Guidelines for Journal Editors’.

Journal journals will have Associate Editors, Assistant Editors or Section Editors to help them with making those important decisions. For example, any decision involving unethical practice, will often involve the publisher or their representative alongside the Editor and a Section Editor who has discovered the issue.

The structure that a journal takes gradually develops over time but first and foremost, it depends on the aims and scope of the journal. As an Editor, journal may choose to have an Associate Editor who has more responsibility with article decisions, and then have Sub-editors for different sections of the journal. However, it is important to note that the Editor still has the overall responsibility for the decision-making process and the overall quality of the journal and its content.

As an editor, you will have three or four groups of people to contact on a regular basis: a) Executive Board / the publisher, b) the authors c) the reviewers and d) direct contact with the production team who manage the publication side of the journal. This latter group will work with the editor to agree which articles to place in each edition, ensure that the Editor does not use more than the agreed number of pages per issue or article and send editor information concerning all articles in their various stages of the editorial process. The Production team member dedicated to that Editor may also be responsible for communicating with authors and reviewers directly.

An editor would probably need more time on developing the journal, improving copy flow (article submissions) of the journal, communicating with and developing the reviewer panelists, as well as working with the Editorial Board members. Once, the journal becomes more established and visible, then an editor could work up to 2 whole days or more on the journal.

DUTIES

1. The Editor oversees the mission and scope of the journal in consultation with the publisher and Executive Board.
 - a. The Editor periodically reviews the Editorial mission and scope of the journal, consults with the editorial board, and makes recommendations to board and the publisher to change the mission and scope when deemed appropriate.
 - b. The Editor ensures that the papers published are consistent with the editorial mission.
 - c. The Editor is responsible for making the decision to publish any thematic issues of the journal and for recruiting the papers to be published. The Editor may select a guest editor(s) for a thematic issue if desired.
 - d. The Editor may recommend to the publisher that a special issue be published in addition to the regular issues of the journal. The publisher will have the responsibility for approving or rejecting such a proposal.
2. The Editor is responsible for overseeing the editorial review process.
 - a. The Editor selects associate editors (if associate editors are part of the structure of the editorial process), the editorial board members, reviewers, and any other special editors such as book or media editors, digest editors, or column editors. This staff must be approved by the AASP Executive Board, and each member must have (or obtain before service to the journal) a current professional membership to board.
 - b. The Editor will use the publisher-provided peer-review system (currently Scholar One Manuscripts) to conduct the editorial review process.
 - c. The Editor will assign papers to reviewers who have the appropriate knowledge and skill to evaluate them, will monitor the quality of the reviews prepared, and will replace editors whose reviews are inadequate or untimely.
 - d. The Editor will be the final arbiter regarding the acceptance of papers when reviewers differ in their evaluations.
 - e. The Editor will ensure that the review process is completed in a timely way and that authors receive constructive feedback about papers submitted.
3. The Editor provides the manuscripts accepted for each issue to the publisher.
 - a. The Editor forwards the manuscripts for each issue to the publisher, submitting them to the Managing Editor assigned to the journal.
 - b. The Editor ensures that the manuscripts are complete, including illustrations, references, and contact information for the authors.
 - c. The Editor submits the manuscripts for each issue on time according to the schedule agreed upon with the publisher.
4. The Editor will see that the journal follows customary ethical policies for scholarly publishing.
 - a. The Editor will identify, investigate, and address any ethical breaches of conduct by authors and reviewers.
 - b. The Editor will see that authors are treated with fairness, courtesy, objectivity, and honesty.
 - c. The Editor must be prepared to deal with errors and allegations of misbehavior.
5. The Editor will seek opportunities to promote the journal.
 - a. The Editor will seek to speak at conferences and other events about the purpose and values of the journal, inviting potential contributors to consider submitting papers to the journal.
 - b. The Editor will identify indexes in which the journal should be included and pass that information on to Human Kinetics.
 - c. The Editor will help the publisher promote the journal by identifying places, events, and individuals to whom promotional material should be sent.

6. The Editor may write editorials for the journal.
7. The Editor will provide the publisher with appropriate information about the editorial activities of the journal.
 - a. The Editor will prepare an annual report according to an agreed upon schedule.
 - b. The Editor will report opportunities about which the publisher should know to help improve the journal.
 - c. The Editor will report any significant problems that might affect the quality or timely release of the journal.

AUTHORITY

The Editor/ Executive Board has the final decision-making responsibility for the acceptance or rejection of all manuscripts submitted to the journal. The publisher will not become involved in editorial decisions.

To Invite a new editor position: Typical criteria for an editor position

- Expertise and experience in the specialist field related to the journal
- Publication record of several articles and /or books (related to the specialist field)
- Being a reviewer for an international peer reviewed journal
- PhD qualification or a senior research position with equivalent experience in research
- Enthusiasm to undertake the Editor role, but ensuring recognition of all aspects of the reality of the role and the work involved

What should an Editor look for in an article?

the Editor (s) should normally check the articles to see if they meet the minimum criteria for publication in the journal. This will ensure that some articles are rejected without being sent out to review and additional work for reviewers. In general, an Editor is looking for essential characteristics in an article in order to maintain the quality of the journal. Examples are: The author has clearly read the aims and scope of the journal because the article meets that requirement

It should be well written in the language of the journal with a good abstract in both English and specific language (non – English language journals) and the same in English language journals. In either journal it is important to make the article easy to read without complicated language

It should fit with the aims and scope of the journal and where possible it offers new knowledge and research findings (This will be dependent of the journal).

If it has good reviews from the reviewer with constructive comments for revision (very few articles are accepted without some required revision) it is expected that the authors will consider these comments and revise accordingly.

The article should not have any unethical publishing nor unethical research practices (for factsheets on plagiarism, salami slicing, research fraud, duplicate submission, authorship, and conflict of interest).

If it is a research article the authors should have included both an ethics statement regarding permission for the research to be conducted but also if human subjects involved, it is also important to include a statement concerning protecting of research participants

It is expected as good practice that when authors submit their articles for review that a letter should accompany that article which states that all the authors are in agreement with the submission and that the paper is not being sent to another journal nor has it been published anywhere.

It is good practice to ensure that authors have considered all the author guidelines for the journal in relation to the article structure and content.

Case of plagiarism or other type of unethical publication practice

On a practical level the first thing an editor should do is conduct an early investigation using iThenticate/CrossCheck or other anti-plagiarism software if they have access to these programmes. If they do not have access to one of these then they need to access by other means initially the articles that are related to the suspected case of plagiarism or other unethical practice to check accuracy of either the reviewer feedback and observations or the Editors own observations. This may be easier if they already have access to Platforms such Anti-plagiarism software however will not identify “salami slicing”.

If the editor determines that there is case of plagiarism to be investigated, then if the journal has a publisher who is in regular contact then they need to be notified. This will ensure that any communication with an author has their support.

It is imperative that each case is looked at individually and therefore we do not advocate the use of one statement of actions to penalize the offender. Each case is considered separately, and editors will need to decide if it is a deliberate action on the part of the author or is it due to lack of understanding of the requirements of ethical writing. This can happen for new authors or some authors where translation to English is often difficult.

If these are agreed to be plagiarized, the paper will be withdrawn from a journal, and this will also be stamped across the paper wherever it is archived. The author in such circumstances may well experience serious consequences from his /her employer. Journal needs to ensure that it has policies in place to manage unethical writing in articles and in research itself.

To learn more about plagiarism and other breaches of publication ethics, you can refer to the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) guidelines here:

<http://publicationethics.org/resources/guidelines>.

They also have flow charts or decision-making pathways for journal editors to consider when unethical practice is suspected.

Direct communication with an Editor about their paper

the editor should have the unique email address for the journal which comes either direct to them or via their publishing system depending on the inquiry. So authors can send an inquiry either directly or to the Administration editors /managers regarding their articles. This can often be a query about how long will be review process be and when will they get a decision about their article. The Editor responsible for that article can of course reply to the author regarding those type of queries , it is matter of courtesy and also helps authors but until the review process is complete and a decision is reached about an article then the editor does not normally have any other contact with that author.

Some potential authors may however contact the Editor with an inquiry as to whether their research would be of interest and value to the journal. Again, it is courtesy on the behalf of the editor to respond to such inquires and if often an opportunity to encourage new authors to submit their work.

Academic contribution to the field

It is the extent to which the journal makes a unique contribution compared with existing literature/ research evidence in the field. The greater the impact in terms of scientific advancement, societal, environmental and economic the more it can be seen to contribute to the field or discipline it comes from. The academic contribution to the field as it relates to the journal and its content is in essence the combined works of all the articles in that journal. Journal editors look for articles that are innovative and report excellent research and developments in the specialist field. This is not for just one journal issue but the combined effort of all the journal issues over time.