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Title: Peer Reviewing Made Easy

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Declarations: Dr. Neel Halder is the trainee editor of The Psychiatrist; Dr. Rosalind Ramsay is the book reviews editor of the Psychiatrist and the British Journal; of Psychiatry; Professor Casey is the editor of The Psychiatrist; Professor Tyrer is the editor of the British Journal of Psychiatry

Abstract

Peer review in scientific journals has existed for over 200 years (Kronick, 1990). This process is currently the accepted way of assessing scientific manuscripts prior to publication for most journals. Despite this, little has been written about the process of peer reviewing, with hardly anything specific to psychiatric journals. This article answers fundamental questions related to peer reviewing including providing practical tips to writing reviews.

This article will be helpful for those keen on improving their knowledge about the peer review process. It will not only benefit those who are reviewers or thinking about becoming reviewers, but also authors, who can use the information to improve their chances of publication.

Background

Every author can relate to the satisfaction of completing an article or piece of research. There remains only one thing in the way between submission and publication- the peer review. Will all that hard work and investment of time pay off? The wait may be agonising for the seasoned professional as well as for the novice.

Before accepting the role as trainee editor of the *Psychiatric Bulletin* (now *The Psychiatrist*) in 2008, NH had not peer-reviewed for a journal. The literature on this subject was sparse, with no clear guidelines on how to write a review. As a participant at a workshop with the authors at the Royal College of Psychiatrists' Annual Meeting in 2009, NH described the principles of how to carry out peer review. This generated considerable interest from many colleagues desperate for information on the topic. This article is the result of amalgamating information from a variety of sources, including feedback from the workshop, discussions with senior peer reviewers and editors of Royal College journals, and consulting papers and books written on the subject.

What is peer review?

Peer review is a "formal system whereby a piece of academic work is scrutinised by people [the peer reviewers] who are not involved in its creation but are considered knowledgeable about the subject" (Wager, Godlee, Jefferson, 2002).

The peer review process is important and all reviewers have a duty to ensure the highest possible standards are met. The quality of this process is rightly cited as one of the main influences on a journal's reputation and standing (Council of Science Editors, 2009). It serves as a "quality control" mark for published articles.

Peer reviewers may find it helpful to think of themselves as "Consultant advisors". The reviewer has 2 broad aims, which are directed at 2 main parties shown below:

1. The author(s)- to help improve quality and therefore the chances of publication (in any journal)
2. The editor- to aid decision making

These should be at the forefront of any reviewer. Ultimately the editor makes the decision. It would be wise to be mindful of not conveying your decision to the author as this could be construed as going over the editor's head. More information about the reviewers' responsibilities toward authors, editors and readers is available from the Council of Science Editors' white paper on promoting integrity in scientific journal publications (2009).

Types of review

There are broadly speaking two types of review- open and masked reviews.

Masked is the same as blinded review. As in randomised controlled trials such concealment can be either single blind where the authors do not know the identity of the peer reviewers or double blind where neither authors nor reviewers know each other's identities.

Advantages of masked reviews: Reviewers may be prejudiced by an author's identity or place of work; masking theoretically reduces personal bias and makes the review more objective. Some editors believe it improves the quality of reviews (Yankauer, 1982; Robin & Burke, 1987). It appears that most reviewers favour anonymity from authors. In one of the largest international surveys of authors and reviewers, 58% of the 4037 researchers said they would be less likely to review if their signed report was published. 76% favoured the double blind system where only the editor knows who the reviewers and authors are (Peer Review Survey, 2009).

Disadvantages of masked reviews: It is difficult and expensive to keep the author's identity hidden from a reviewer. This is because authors tend to cite their own work, and in certain field researchers are familiar with one another's work. One study showed up to 42% of reviewers not told the identity of the authors were still able to identify them. (Goldbeck-

Wood, 1998). Reviewers may run the risk of abusing their position because they do not feel accountable, a point highlighted by the Council of Science Editors (2009).

Open reviews are when reviewers and authors know each other's identity. Reviewers are asked to sign their own work and some have their comments posted on the journal's website.

Advantages of open reviews: It makes the process transparent and there is greater accountability of reviewers. Fiona Godlee, editor of the *British Medical Journal,* argues that open review is ethically superior for the reasons given above (Godlee, 2002). She agreed with other authors (Fabiato, 1994) that open reviews would decrease opportunities for making judgements that were unjustified or biased because reviewers could not hide under the "cloak of anonymity". Reviewers may feel the fruits of their hard labour go unnoticed; but open reviews mean they can get credit for their work.

Disadvantages of open reviews: reviewers may feel inhibited about expressing their true feelings. This is especially apparent when junior reviewers are asked to review the work of senior colleagues, which might lead to more reviewers declining work. There is always the possibility of bullying tactics to place pressure on junior reviewers to accept an article for publication. Despite these disadvantages, the *British Medical Journal* adopts an open peer review system, but reviewers can express their concerns anonymously if intimidated (Smith, 1999).

Advantages and disadvantages of a peer reviewed journal

A peer reviewed journal is one in which submitted articles are independently examined by a panel of external experts prior to publication. *The Psychiatrist* and *British Journal of Psychiatry* all plan on having at least two independent peer reviews before approving an article for publication, and the *Advances in Psychiatric Treatment* usually uses one reviewer.

Advantages

1. Peer reviewing normally helps ensure the journal maintains a certain standard.

2. It is more likely that errors and flaws in the paper are detected before being accepted for publication, and helps to weed out unsatisfactory papers.

3. It helps to separate original papers from 'me-too' ones and prevents potential biases, particularly those of the editor and editorial board.

4. It acts as quality assurance. In the Peer Review Survey (2009) 91% said their last paper was improved through peer review; the discussion section being the biggest area of improvement.

5. They are held in greater esteem than non-peer reviewed journals.

Disadvantages

1. It adds a considerable delay between submission and publishing (in *The Psychiatrist* it is eight months although this time is getting shorter).

2. Reviewers may know or guess the identity of the author (see above).

3. Revolutionary or unpopular conclusions drawn by the authors may be rejected by reviewers (e.g. portraying psychiatrists in a bad light).

4. There is potential for personal bias- i.e. depends on what the peer reviewers like and dislike.

5. Publication bias still operates (i.e. papers reporting positive findings are more likely to be accepted).

6. Papers may be turned down because of rivalry between the reviewer and author, irrespective of scientific merit.

The role of an editor.

The editor is the person who has ultimate responsibility for the direction and content of the journal. When a scientific paper is submitted the editor has to read the paper to ascertain that it is deserving of peer review. Sometimes the initial in-house review is carried out by a member of the editorial board with expertise in that particular area. Many journals have a committee to decide on this and in the *British Journal of Psychiatry* it is known as the Janitor Committee. After review it is the editor who makes the final decision on whether a paper should be published or not. The role of the reviewer is to act as advisor to the editor and their recommendations may be over-ridden in certain circumstances, such as when the editor believes the reviewer did not adequately consider the paper, made injudicious comments, or made a recommendation to publish without appreciating the pressures on space in the journal. In circumstances where the editor is dissatisfied with the standard of the review a further review may be sought. Some journals, such as the *British Medical Journal*, have a "hanging committee" whose role is to aid the editor in reaching a decision on publication in the event that there is uncertainty.

When two reviewers disagree on one paper, the response of the editor will differ depending on the stage of the review process. If it occurs early in the process, say after the initial submission, it is important to read both reviewers comments carefully since the score given may not be commensurate with their review or it may be apparent that the reviewer has not been diligent enough or has been excessively harsh. The editor can then make a decision based on his/her own evaluation of the merits of the paper taking into account the reviewers comments Alternatively another reviewer may be selected to replace the outlier. If the disagreement occurs after the paper has been resubmitted the editor may make the decision with an explanatory letter to the author or ask for a third review. In this way the likelihood of an appeal is lessened and may be seen as fairer by the author.

The editor of a journal has many different roles and is extremely busy. Good reviewers help enormously in aiding the decision-making process.

How an editor chooses reviewers

Submitting papers to journals are now mainly done electronically. The process is usually explained within the front or back journal cover, or on its website. Differing journals have their own software that they use. Essentially whenever authors submit papers, their names are added to the e-submission system as potential reviewers in their field, whether their papers are published or not. Those who have expressed an interest in reviewing will also be added, thus building up a list of reviewers. All are asked to provide information on their areas of expertise. Performance as a reviewer is monitored automatically to include the number of reviews over a set period, the turnaround time and dates of the reviews. There is a facility in some databases for the editor to rate the quality of that person's reviews. However these ratings are not shared with the reviewers. A drawback is that the database needs regular updating so that when a reviewer moves or develops another area of expertise it needs amending and it is the reviewer who is responsible for this. The lists on many databases are out of date.

If a reviewer is contacted but does not reply within a specified deadline, the reviewing software alerts the editorial office. The reviewer invitation process then begins again. Thus, failure to update the database has the effect of increasing the time to publication for the individual paper. The editor of *The Psychiatrist* (PC) once had to contact 14 possible reviewers before finding one who would agree.

What to do on receipt of invitation to review?

It is a privilege to peer review a paper. The reviewer plays an important part in the advancement of scientific knowledge, and ensuring the quality and standards of the journal are met. Being a peer reviewer is a great addition to a C.V.; for trainees it covers several of the competencies required from curricula for the portfolio; for speciality doctors and consultants it will help with revalidation. This does not mean one should merely jump at the chance when asked to review; tempting as it may be to agree with H.G. Wells: "No passion in the world is equal to the passion to alter someone else's draft". The role is one that should be taken responsibly and seriously. As such, there are preliminary questions to ask prior to reviewing (Wagner, Godlee, Jefferson, 2002) (see box 1). The authors have expanded on the answers suggested by Wagner, Godlee and Jefferson (2002), and the numbers below correspond to the numbers in box 1.

1. Ideally the reviewer needs the manuscript to be on a field he or she knows well, and should have good knowledge of the current literature. If the reviewer has inadequate knowledge about the content or methods, and feels unable to write a good review then it is alright to decline the invitation. If the reviewer feels able to write the review but bits of it are outside their field of expertise it is important to declare that to the editor. The editor may choose to consult additional reviewers. When the audience at the College Annual Meeting was asked what was the most commonly encountered problem with regards to this scenario, the overwhelming response was "statistics". The reviewer may ask for independent scrutiny from a statistician. There are in-house statisticians for some journals (*British Journal of Psychiatry*) but not for others (*The Psychiatrist*).

2. The three main Royal College Psychiatric journals (*British Journal of Psychiatry, The Psychiatrist, Advances of Psychiatric Treatment*) operate a single blind review system (see above). If the reviewer feels uncomfortable with the review system, concerns should be raised with the editor. If there are strong views that cannot be addressed, the offer for reviewing may have to be declined.

3. As a novice reviewer (certainly compared to the other authors), NH takes about 4 hours with a range of 2-5 hours to review papers submitted to *The Psychiatrist*. Some suggest that first time reviewers should put aside 8-12 hours, with some complex submissions taking up to 48 hours! (Wager, Godlee, Jefferson, 2002). Others have found that on average, reviewers spend 2 to 4 hours on a review (Yankaur, A., 1990). One study looking at the quality of the review for articles submitted to the *BMJ* (as rated by editors and authors) found that quality increased with time spent on a review, but only up to 3 hours, and not beyond (Black, Rooyen, Godlee, Smith, Evans, 1998).

4. Most journals ask to complete a review within a few weeks. *The British Journal of Psychiatry* and *The Psychiatrist* request a turn around time of approximately 3 to 4 weeks. Some software databases for reviewers have an average review time that is tabulated and can be seen by the editor. It is frustrating as an author to wait for a decision on a paper, so reviewers should only agree if they can deliver on time.

5. Conflict of interest includes anything that might unfairly affect the reviewer's view of the manuscript (either positively or negatively). The most common is working with one of the authors (either currently or previously). The reviewer may be referred to in the text of the submission. It is important (but not easy) not to let that bias one's judgement. There may be other conflicts of interests such as financial (e.g. having shares in a company), political or religious. For example, the *Psychiatric Bulletin* previously published an article on psychiatry and religion, which may not be suitable for review by those whose strong beliefs may prejudice the outcome (Keonig, 2008).

The most common reasons for reviewers declining the review are a lack of time, and the paper not being relevant to their area of interest or expertise (Tite & Schroter, 2007).

What a reviewer should do on receipt of the paper- first steps

- Right from the start, the reviewer should be asking whether the paper suits the journal. If the reviewer is not familiar with the journal, the editorial office can send a copy of the instructions to authors. This will act as a guide as to whether the authors have successfully adhered to what the journal is looking for. The reviewer may wish to read other articles published in the journal to get a feel for the style and level of what gets published. It may help to see if the cited references in the submitted paper contain papers published in the same journal.
- The reviewer should read it through once fully, resisting the temptation to start critiquing it at this stage.
- Make a note of first impressions. Unlike reviewers, most readers will only read it once. Therefore the reviewer's first impressions are likely to be similar to other like-minded colleagues. If it does not make much sense to the reviewer, it probably would not make sense to other readers.
- Read it again slowly. This time make notes. Guidance to what is required is in the template below.
- The authors find it helpful to then sleep on it, and come back the next day. This may give new insights on previously missed points.
- The reviewer should bear in mind that two reports need to be written (one to the editor, and one to the author) but often a single report can be written for both author and reviewer.
- In the case of research papers, the reviewer may find it helpful to use the PICO rule as guidance to make sure the basic elements are covered (box 2).
- Some reviewers prefer an even simpler checklist- the 4 W's in box 3 (Albert, 2009). The reviewer should be able to adequately describe to a colleague the points covered by the 4 Ws.
- The underlying factor driving the critique should be the scientific merit of the paper.

How to write the review

Templates can be useful for making sure nothing major is omitted. It is rather akin to many trainees who learn mental state examinations by initially using templates to remember all the sections. However, even for more experienced reviewers, templates can be useful. Figure 1 is an example of a template that can be used.

The summary ideally should contain no more than three sentences. The first should describe the topic and method. The second should comment on major shortcomings and/ or changes that need to be made. The third should make helpful concluding comments to the author/ editor about your overall opinion. Figure 1 has an example for illustration.

There are many ways of structuring a review. Figure 1 broadly splits things into major and minor points as shown.

An alternative is to go through the paper systematically in the order the authors have written it, writing a paragraph under each sub-heading. These should be numbered to make it easier for authors to respond.

For example, starting with the abstract, this is often the first and only thing many psychiatrists read when searching the literature. Bearing this in mind, the reviewer needs to make sure that this accurately reflects the main body of the manuscript. Note, prior to accepting or declining the review, the reviewer will be able to read the author's abstract.

The reviewer then needs to check that there is a stated aim or hypothesis. Following this it is important to make sure the methods are clearly described, valid and appropriate to the question posed. The results should not be repeated in the discussion and the conclusion should be based on the results. The conclusions should be true, accurate and justifiable from the data available. The discussion should be appropriately focussed. The reviewer can provide additional references, which can be helpful to authors. It is important to scrutinise the references – if they are too old they may be inappropriate. It is pertinent to at least read the abstracts of the references listed since authors sometimes cite inappropriate references clearly without having read them.

Editors rightly place a lot of onus on the grammar, syntax and language. The *Advances of Psychiatric Treatment* aims for language that is concise, lucid and unambiguous (Bouch, 2009). Although journals may have copy-editors that check such detail, it is good practice for reviewers to pick up any errors and comment in the specific points section.

Reviewers may need to do their own literature search and add it to the review. This is important when discussing originality or if only old papers are referenced or if one is dealing with a paper concerned with peripheral or esoteric area e.g. the reviewer has an interest in suicide and is asked to review a paper on suicide by motor cycle accident.

Remember, no paper is perfect, and most papers require revision.

The length of review will depend on the complexity of the individual manuscript and how much the reviewer has to say. One or two lined reviews are not acceptable, nor are raising new methodological flaws on a redrafted paper that were not spotted on a previous review.

The words of Einstein ring true here: "*Everything should be made as simple as possible, but not simpler..*" (Calaprice, 2005).

Template for peer review

[figure 1]

Do's and don'ts of writing a review

[Suggested placement of Box 5]

What to do after the review has been completed

For the *British Journal of Psychiatry* and *The Psychiatrist* the reviewer needs to score the submission on a rating scale out of five (box 4) but other journals will have a different scoring system.

Very few manuscripts are accepted first time (Peter Tyrer estimates less than 1% for the *British Journal of Psychiatry)***.** Joe Bouch (2009) states his record has been 6 resubmissions in his capacity as editor of the *Advances in Psychiatric Treatment*. For the *Psychiatric Bulletin*, out of 214 new submissions from 1/10/07 to 31/09/08, 21 (10 %) were rejected without review, 32 (15%) were rejected but invited to submit the paper as a letter, and 40 (19%) were rejected after review. The total number rejected was 93 (44%) and the total number accepted was 108 (50%). 13 (6%) were withdrawn, deleted or invited to revise.

Once the review has been submitted, the reviewer has to wait for the editor's decision, which is usually communicated via email several weeks later.

What makes a good reviewer?

Some authors believe a good reviewer is one that combines a critical eye with a positive creative attitude aimed at improving manuscripts and educating fellow researchers. The best reviewers concentrate on offering useful advice to authors rather than give summary judgements to editors. Other core attributes include courtesy, punctuality, thoroughness, keenness, and being knowledgeable in the discipline (Golbeck-Wood, 1998).

Many younger reviewers of junior academic status are reluctant to review, feeling inadequately skilled especially when the author is a senior well-known figure. However, the evidence suggests that younger reviewers make better quality reviews (Stossel, 1985; Evans, McNutt, Fletcher & Fletcher, 1993; Kliewer, Freed, DeLong, Pickhardt & Provenzale, 2005). Research training and postgraduate qualifications were not associated with review quality. Black et al (1998) attempted to determine the characteristics of reviewers who produce high

quality reviews for the *British Medical Journal* as determined by both editors and authors. In a logistic regression analysis the only significant characteristics were younger age and those with training in epidemiology or statistics. Other authors have found no significant correlation between quality of reviews and sex, years of reviewing and academic rank (Kliewer et al, 2005).

Obtaining feedback is always a good thing in order to support reviewer development. The reviewer may wish to ask the editor for it; many journals give the reviewer the comments from other reviewers of the same paper,. Reviewers may find it helpful to ask for objective feedback of their reviews using a tool developed by Van Rooyen, Black & Godlee (1999), called the Review Quality Instrument (RQI). This instrument considers seven aspects of a review (importance of research question, originality, methodology, presentation, constructiveness of comments, substantiation of comments, interpretation of results), each scored on a five-point likert scale (1=not at all or poor). The total score is the mean of the 7 item scores. There is an additional 8th item for the overall assessment of the quality of the review. One may assume that those reviewers who work through questions from the Review Quality Instrument (box 6) might make for better reviews.

The bottom line is whatever your age or background, editors would love to hear from enthusiastic potential reviewers who feel they can do a good job. After reading this article, we hope reviewers are in a better position to do that.

Reviewing books

Book reviews offer a good introduction to get a first publication – the reviewer is presented with a book or books to read and a request to write a review. A temptation is simply to list the contents and contributors and to make a comment on the potential audience, length or cost of the book. More interesting though for the reader and a challenge for the reviewer is to write a short article using the book as a starting point. Writing to potential reviewers the College journal book review editors comment that a review is an opportunity to inform the reader of a book's merits, but should also be interesting in its own right. Pulling out one or two themes and exploring how the book has approached them requires careful reading and thinking about what the book is presenting. Book reviewers can develop their skills with practice by taking on different sorts of book to review from single author books focused on a specific issue to books covering more varied material and with sometimes many contributors. To quote Simon Wessely 'a review should inform, entertain and occasionally provoke'… and the best reviews 'are often jewels of argument and exposition, essays in their own right'. (Wessely, 2000). The reviewer should respect the amount of time that goes into writing and editing a book; this is not to say that a review cannot be critical – but any critical comments should not be offensive (Crown, Lee and Ramsay, 2000).

To find out more

The following books and articles may be useful to peer reviewers of today and tomorrow.

- The Doctor's Guide to Critical Appraisal *(Gosall & Gosall, 2009)*
- How to Read a Paper *(Greenhalgh, 2000)*
- How to write a paper *(Hall, 2008)*
- Critical Appraisal for Psychiatry *(Lawrie, McIntosh, Rao, 2001)*
- How to get Published- All you need to know to publish in psychiatry *(Bayle, 2006)*
- How to Survive Peer Review *(Wager, Godlee, Jefferson, 2002)*
- A Systematic Guide to Reviewing a Manuscript. *(Provenzale, Stanley, 2005)*

A great deal of emphasis is currently placed on psychiatrists' ability to systematically appraise published literature, and it now forms a key part in the MRCPsych exams and journal clubs. Interestingly, there is little such emphasis for adopting a robust and systematic approach to peer reviewing submitted manuscripts.

Next steps- how do I become a reviewer?

Those wishing to become reviewers should contact the editor of the journal and explain why they wish to do this work. They should also indicate their areas of scientific interest. It is important for them to provide a reference attesting to their ability to critically consider papers and also to meet deadlines. They will also be required to demonstrate that they have a true expertise in a particular area and not simply a more than average interest since they are likely to be asked to consider papers by those who may have published a substantial number of papers in a particular area.

Good reviewers are highly sought after and desperately needed. 1 in 5 researchers surveyed thought peer review is unsustainable due to not enough willing volunteers. 86% of volunteers enjoyed peer reviewing, but the majority said there was a lack of guidance and formal training would help. (Peer Review Survey, 2009). This article goes some way to addressing the issue.

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Box 1 Questions to ask when invited to review

1.Is the manuscript within my field of expertise?

2.Am I happy with the journal's peer review process?

3.Do I have time to do this review?

4.Can I meet the deadline?

5.Do I have any conflicts of interest?

Ref: With permission from How to Survive Peer Review. Wagner, Godlee, Jefferson (2002). BMJ books.

Box 2 – PICO

- **P**atient or Problem –*Is it well defined?*
- **I**ntervention- *What is the main intervention, exposure, test or prognostic factor ?*
- **C**omparison- *Is there a comparative intervention? (not always needed)*
- **O**utcomes- *did the authors describe what they hope to achieve, measure or affect?*

e.g.
P= In a middle aged man with schizophrenia…
I= ..what is the likelihood of Olanzapine..
C= ..compared with Haloperidol…
O= ..producing better reduction in positive symptoms?

Ref: With permission from Doctor's Guide to Critical Appraisal 2nd ed. Gossall & Gossall (2009) Past Test Ltd. ISBN: 9781905635 566

Box 3- 4W's

-What they looked at *(usually covered in the introduction)*
-What they did *(the method)*
-What they found *(the results)*
-What is means *(usually in the discussion and is the key point).*

Ref: Albert, 2009

Box 4- scoring system for reviews

1. Excellent
2. Strongly recommended *(minor changes)*
3. Potential value *(significant changes)*
4. Not for acceptance *(but may be re-written as a letter?)*
5. Rejected

Box 5- *Do's and Don'ts of Peer Reviewing*

- Do make sure to be courteous
- Do point out the positive
- Do ask for a statistical review if you are uncertain
- Do structure your review
- Do divide into major and minor concerns
- Do be objective
- Do whenever possible offer evidence for your views and opinions

- Don't personalise the review
- Don't make intemperate comments
- Don't assume that a paper you don't understand is your fault – it may be unintelligible
- Don't tell the writer what study you would have done unless methods are flawed
- Don't write one liners e.g. "this is a poor paper and should not be published"
- Don't raise new methodological flaws in a redrafted paper that you didn't spot in a previous review. It is unfair to authors who have acted on all previous recommendations.

Box 6-Questions from Review Quality Instrument (RQI)

1. Did the reviewer discuss the importance of the research question?
2. Did the reviewer discuss the originality of the paper?
3. Did the reviewer clearly identify the strengths and weaknesses of the method (study design, data collection and data analysis)?
4. Did the reviewer make specific useful comments on the writing, organisation, tables and figures of the manuscript?
5. Were the reviewer's comments constructive?
6. Did the reviewer supply appropriate evidence using examples form the paper to substantiate his or her comments?
7. Did the reviewer comment on the authors' interpretation of the results?
8. How would you rate the quality of the review overall?

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Figure 1- Template for Peer Review

Comments to the author/ editor (delete as appropriate)

Title of paper:_____

Authors:_____

Summary: e.g. A highly readable and topical article on the validity of Work Place Based Assessments using quantitative and qualitative methods. However, there were too many tables, some of them could be incorporated into the discussion. This is of potential value but significant changes are needed.

General/ major points:

(Checklist- abstract, overall layout, validity, use of tables and figures, generalisability, likely appeal) Always think- how can this work be improved?

1.

2.

3.

Originality (with brief literature review)

Specific/ minor Points:

(Checklist- spelling and grammatical errors, comments/ ideas on specific tables and sections, editing, pruning, omissions)

1.

2.

3.

References- (*Checklist- are they relevant, too old, correctly and appropriately cited)*

MCQs

1.Advantages of masked reviews over open reviews include:

a. they are cheaper and easier

b. reduces personal bias

c. more transparency

d. greater accountability of reviewers

e. authors can communicate with reviewers

2. Advantages of a peer reviewed journal include:

a. reviewers can guess the identity of the author

b. there is no chance of personal bias operating

c. it helps to weed out unsatisfactory papers

d. positive findings are more likely to be accepted

e. there is less delay from submission to publication

3. The aims of a peer reviewer include:

a. decide whether to publish the paper in the journal

b. re-write the paper correcting the flaws

c. aid the editor in the decision making process

d. only write back to the editor regarding a decision

e. criticise the author

4. A peer review should include the following:

a. personal comments to the author

b. a score out of 5 to the author

c. comments on the generalisability of the study

d. comments on how you would re-write the methods

e. comments on your own research in the field

5. The following have been shown to make for a good reviewer:

a. ethnicity

b. seniority

c. having a research based degree

d. punctuality

e. female

Correct answers:

There is only one true answer in each question. All the other options are false. The following are the true answers

1. b 2. c 3. c 4. c 5. d