

Referee's reports

WHAT IS NEEDED AND WHAT TO INCLUDE

Agenda

- 1) Introduce the coursework
- 2) Define what a referee's report needs to do
- 3) Suggest a structure for your report

Introduction/Reminder of the Task

- 1) Read the "INSTRUCTIONS: Referee's Report"
- 2) Have a **quick** read of the manuscripts
- 3) Select which manuscript you would like to review using the sign-up activity labelled "ACTIVITY: Use this link to select the paper that you will review". **Do NOT attempt to review a manuscript that you have not selected.**
- 4) Write the **2500-word** review - note the marking scheme.
- 5) Submit to the link "SUBMISSION: Referee's Report" by **23.30 on 3rd December 2021.**

Question 1

What do you think should be in a referee's report?

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Reading the Manuscript

You will get 30 min to skim read the manuscript:

- Do not worry if you don't get all of the points.
- Go with your instinct – What are your first impressions?

After 30 min, we will look at the following questions:

- What were the good points in the work?
- What were the bad points of the work?
- What would you do to improve the work?
- Was the work novel?

Initial Thoughts?

How did you read the manuscript?

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Good points?

Bad points?

More challenging...

Recommendations to improve?

Novelty?

Breakout Rooms: Task 1/ Question 3

Now we hopefully have some opinion...

What would your recommendation to the editor be?

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The Report: Context

Every paper that gets published should have gone to 3+ independent referees.

Each referee (anonymously) gives their **reasoned opinion**.

An editor **evaluates** these three reports and opinions

...then **makes judgement** on fate of the manuscript.

An editor needs clear reports to form that judgement...

...that is **your job** with this coursework...

...provide a clear report.

Question 4

Moving on to the report itself...

What should be included in the referee's report?

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Suggested Structure

1) Introduction

Give the editor a summary of the **manuscript and supporting info**.

This shows you understand what has been reported.

2) Context

What has been done before in this area?

How is the work presented different from previous publications?

What new knowledge does it present?

Needs lots of references for evidence

Novelty

After the context, is the work **novel**?

How do you assess novelty?

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Suggested Structure

3) Strong/Positive aspects of the work

Talk the reader through what the strong parts of the work are.

4) Weak aspects of the work

Talk the reader through what the weak parts of the work are.

Justify your views – use literature as evidence.

Remember:

It is the referee's job to uphold scientific standards and rigour.

Suggested Structure

3) Strong/Positive aspects of the work

Talk the reader through what the strong parts of the work are.

4) Weak aspects of the work

Talk the reader through what the weak parts of the work are.

Justify your views – use literature as evidence.

Remember:

Focus on the science – not IMRAD structural stuff

Suggested Structure

5) List of recommendations

Not a simple list

Explain your rationale

Justify your views – give literature for evidence

Be polite and **constructive**

- the person who did most of the work may be a young PhD or MSc student

Try to make the recommendations **achievable** where possible.

Kinda..does the same job as a “future work” section.

Suggested Structure

6) Recommendations/Conclusions

The referee needs a clear recommendation and conclusion.

Summarise the main points quickly and clearly

Recommendation =

- i) Accept for publication
- ii) Accept with minor revisions
- iii) Accept with major revisions
- iv) Reject

Suggested Structure

7) References

Give a list of all of the references you have used.

Obviously.

Remember

For the report, you are trying to answer:

- 1) Is the work presented in the manuscript novel?
- 2) Does the work add any new insight to the existing scientific literature?
- 3) Are the methods presented in the manuscript appropriate and adequately described?
- 4) Are the techniques presented in the manuscript appropriate for what the authors are trying to do?
- 5) Are the results reliable and correctly reported?
- 6) Is the presented data interpreted correctly?
- 7) Are the conclusions concise and adequately supported by the results that were presented?
- 8) Could I make any suggestions for improvement that are fair and constructive?

Marking Scheme

Summary of the main points of the manuscript	20 %
Appraisal of the quality of the methods selected and described	20 %
Appraisal of the novelty and importance of the work	10 %
Identification of strengths and weaknesses of the manuscript	20 %
Justification of referee's final recommendation of publishing (or otherwise)	20 %
Clarity of referee's report	10 %