



September 2021

Peer-Reviewer Guidelines

Dear Peer-Reviewer,

Thank you for your interest in reviewing prospective CJSP articles. The papers you are about to review have undergone an initial pre-selection process by a CJSP Editor to check for their adherence to CJSP submission requirements.

As a Peer-Reviewer, we invite you to comment on the article and provide feedback to the Author(s) in terms of how the material can be further improved. Please be constructive with your feedback and evaluate the relevance of the article's content. Some general questions you may wish to ask yourself whilst reading the article are: *How can this article be improved? What are its strengths? What are its weaknesses?* (See the guidelines below for further suggestions).

Please also be mindful when providing your feedback: whilst the purpose is to provide critical feedback and suggestions for improvement, it is important to deliver comments in a respectful way. Comments should not single out individuals or be degrading, derogatory, demeaning or discriminatory in any form. They should also be appreciative of the Author(s)' efforts and not dismissive of these. Do not forget that highlighting strengths of an article is also helpful for the Author.

Please familiarise yourself with the guidelines below before reviewing an article. Thank you once more, and we wish you an enjoyable peer-reviewing experience!

Guidelines for Reviewing a CJSP Article Submission

Given the broad and interdisciplinary readership of CJSP, we aim to provide Authors with feedback from a variety of perspectives during the peer-review process. As such, we select one specialist Peer-Reviewer and one non-specialist Peer-Reviewer per prospective article. The guidelines below distinguish between specialist and non-specialist Peer-Reviewers.

Please consider the following before agreeing to review the article:

- Do you have time to complete a thorough review of the article? We expect Peer-Reviewers to return their comments within a three-week period. To prevent hold-ups during the peer-review process, please let us



know if you do not think this will be possible, either asking for an extension or rejecting the request.

- Do you have any conflicts of interest (e.g., a working relationship with the Author or competing financial incentives)? If so, please declare these to the CJSP Editor before accepting.

Returning your review

We ask that you return feedback on the article you have been assigned in two separate formats:

1. Comments on the article itself

Please add any comments onto the article itself using the 'New Comment' button in the 'Review' tab of Word. After you have returned this document to your Editor, they will then combine your comments with those from the second Peer-Reviewer and their own in one document.

Before returning the document to your Editor, please anonymise your comments. If you are unsure of how to do this, instructions can be found [here](#).

2. Brief summary

Secondly, please provide a brief summary of your thoughts on the article in a separate Word document. This should just be a paragraph or two highlighting the article's main strengths and weaknesses. After you have returned this Word document to your Editor, they will insert your summary into a Letter to the Author, along with that from the second Peer-Reviewer and their own thoughts.

If you have any questions on your review, please do not hesitate to contact the CJSP Editorial Board at publications@cuspe.org or your Editor.

Guidelines for specialist Peer-Reviewers

Specialist Peer-Reviewers will meet one or more of the following criteria:

- They have sufficient knowledge on the topic of the submitted article;
- They have indicated an interest in the broader field of the submitted article in their peer-reviewer online application form;
- Their existing knowledge is deemed transferable to the topic of the submitted article.



If you are concerned that you are not qualified to be a specialist Peer-Reviewer, please raise the issue with the Editor. It may be that you have been chosen to provide a particular perspective on the paper. Please feel free to suggest an alternative reviewer if appropriate.

In addition to addressing the general questions mentioned above (i.e., *How can this article be improved? What are its strengths? What are its weaknesses?*), the following are some suggested criteria you may wish to consider when reviewing an article:

- **Sophistication of argument** (e.g. topic area is problematised; discussion has an obvious structure, moving from a general to more focused narrative; ideas are clearly and fully developed; circular reasoning is avoided);
- **Appropriate methodology** (e.g., clear justification of why the methodology is chosen over alternative approaches);
- **Clearly defined objectives and aims** (e.g., hypotheses/research questions/objectives are clearly stated);
- **Valid conclusions** (e.g., claims are supported with evidence/references made to existing literature);
- **Clear, coherent text** (e.g., main ideas are understandable and presented in a logical, easy-to-follow manner; main themes are summarised; ideas are not 'out-of-the-blue', i.e., they develop as a result of the discussion);
- **Appropriate reference to relevant, published literature** (e.g., major theoretical or empirical work in the field is not omitted);
- Title of the paper reflects the article's content;
- Minor to no grammar/spelling errors;
- Appropriate use of scientific/academic voice;
- From what you can tell, **no material included in the submission is copyrighted** (e.g., material from books or copied off the internet) **or plagiarised**;
- All figures and/or tables (and any appendices) have suitable captions, are references in the text and their sources, if appropriate, are clearly cited.

Importantly, the specialist Peer-Reviewer must check that any data presented are scientifically sound. Articles submitted to CJSP may contain data from other sources. Please check that the source is cited and reliable, and that the data have not been altered or tampered with for the purposes of supporting the Author(s)' arguments.

Guidelines for non-specialist Peer-Reviewers



The main aim of the non-specialist Peer-Reviewer is to check whether the prospective article can be understood by a non-academic audience (e.g., those in the UK Parliament or the UK's Civil Service).

Non-specialist Peer-Reviewers will meet one or more of the following criteria:

- (Essential) They do not have a specialist knowledge of the topic;
- (Optional) They have sufficient knowledge of science-policy writing.

If you are concerned that you are not qualified to be a non-specialist Peer-Reviewer (e.g., if you have some specialist knowledge on the topic), please raise the issue with the Editor. Please feel free to suggest an alternative reviewer if appropriate.

In addition to addressing the general questions mentioned above (i.e., *How can this article be improved? What are its strengths? What are its weaknesses?*), the following are some suggested criteria you may wish to consider when reviewing an article:

- **Effective communication to a range of educated but generalist audiences** (Do you know more about the topic after reading the article? Are you convinced by the argument? Would you be able to clearly describe this work to another non-specialist?);
- **Clear, coherent text** (e.g. main ideas are understandable and presented in a logical, easy-to-follow manner; main themes are summarised; ideas are not 'out-of-the-blue', i.e. they develop as a result of the discussion);
- **Any context-specific or specialist terminology is defined** (Can any jargon be minimised or removed? Are any acronyms or abbreviations written in full on first use?)
- **Clearly defined objectives and aims** (e.g., hypotheses/research questions/objectives are clearly stated; text is well supported by use of figures and/or tables, any figures and/or tables are easy to interpret)
- **Minimal or no grammar/spelling mistakes.**