

Peer review system

According to the ICMJE Recommendations, editors who make final decisions about manuscripts should recuse themselves from editorial decisions if they have conflicts of interest or relationships that pose potential conflicts related to articles under consideration. Editorial team members must not use information gained through working with manuscripts for private gain. Guest editors should follow these same procedures.

An Editorial Committee meeting comprises 12 Editorial Committee members, each with experience in various specialist fields, under the Editor-in-Chief. The Editor-in-Chief appoints and dismisses the Editorial Committee members based on evaluation by the Editorial Committee.

When a paper is submitted, the Editor-in-Chief appoints editors to be in charge of the paper. In general, two peer reviewers are selected for original articles and one for case reports. In this instance, Editorial Committee members may conduct the peer review themselves.

With reference to peer reviewers' evaluation and comments, the Editorial Committee members decide whether post-peer review manuscripts are to be published unchanged, revised, or rejected.

After a number of repetitions of the peer review and revision process, the Editorial Committee members responsible for the manuscript will decide whether the paper will be published. When it is difficult to make a final decision, the Editor-in-Chief will make the final decision after consulting the Editorial Committee members.

(Peer review evaluation)

The decision to accept or reject a submitted manuscript is made by the Editorial Committee members after completion of the peer review, usually by two peer reviewers.

The Editorial Department emails the paper to the peer reviewers appointed by the Editorial Committee members. The paper can also be sent as print media if the peer reviewers prefer.

Review by the peer reviewers refers to the following points.

1. Does this paper have originality worthy of acceptance?
2. Does the title and summary indicate the content well?
3. Are there flaws in the logic, numerical formulae, or experiments?
4. Is the writing difficult to understand, and does it contain too much redundancy or over-simplification? Does the writing tend to unduly divide the content into small sections?
5. Are there unnecessary or incomplete diagrams, tables, and/or photographs?
6. Are the reference citations appropriate?
7. Does the English abstract indicate the content well?

The results of the peer review will be evaluated for the following items based on the aforementioned matters.

- The manuscript can be accepted without alteration.
 - The points stated in the attachment indicate areas that require clarification and revision. If these areas are resolved or revised, the manuscript may be accepted:
 - After revision/clarification, the decision will be at the discretion of the Editorial Committee members.
 - Another peer review may be conducted after revisions have been made.
 - The paper should be rejected. (Reason: See attachment)
 - The paper is more suited to publication in a different journal.
 - Other (See attachment)
- Information relating to the peer review is not disclosed to the author.

Peer reviewers review the paper they received, and draft the peer review results and comments to the author. The comments are usually written in English, but exchanges between Japanese authors and Japanese peer reviewers/editors may be in Japanese.

The results of the peer reviews for original articles are shared among peer reviewers. The peer review period is two weeks for the first review, and one week for the review of revised papers after the initial results. If the peer reviewers encounter issues with the peer review, they immediately report to and consult with the Editorial Department.

Papers returned from peer reviewers are reported by the Editorial Department via email, together with the peer reviewers' evaluation and comments. The author then responds to the comments.

The author corrects the revised manuscript based on the manuscript data from the Editorial Department, indicating the revised sections in red font to make it easy for the peer reviewers to see the revisions.

The Editorial Department sends the manuscript to the peer reviewers by email after checking the revised paper. When the peer reviewers' results are evaluated as 'After revision/clarification, the decision will be at the discretion of the Editorial Committee members', the Editorial Committee members will review the second peer review to determine if the peer reviewers have made only minor comments. The Editorial Committee members report the first peer review results and those of the revised manuscript after the author's corrections to the Editorial Department.

If the two peer reviewers' results for the first review differ, the Editorial Committee members will review the submitted paper and either reassign the peer reviewers or make a decision on accepting or rejecting the paper, and report the results to

the Editor-in-Chief and Editorial Department. The Editor-in-Chief will consult with the Editorial Committee members as needed when the members request consultation.

After the manuscript is 'accepted', the Editorial Committee members will confirm that the Editorial Department will request proofing to maintain a uniform level of the journal's English. When the author submits an English Certificate of Proofreading and the post-proofing paper is considered to meet the standard of the journal's English, then the proofing will be considered completed.

After checking by the Editorial Committee members, the report indicating that the manuscript has been 'accepted' is sent to the author by email from the Editorial Department on behalf of the Editorial Committee members.

(Expression of Concern)

Editor-in-chief may publish an Expression of Concern notice if he has concerns in a published article and feels that readers should be made aware of misleading information contained in an article.

(Corrections)

If Correction of a published article is needed, authors should send a request detailing the reasons to the editorial office. HJMS follows principally the ICMJE Recommendations for the correction and publish a correction notice detailing changes from and citing the original publication

(Retractions)

When the scientific information in an article is substantially undermined, it is necessary for published articles to be retracted. According to the ICMJE Recommendations, ideally, the authors of the retraction notice should be the same as those of the article, but, if they are unwilling or unable, the editor may under certain circumstances accept retractions by other responsible persons, or the editor may be the sole author of the retraction or expression of concern. The text of the retraction should provide the reason of retraction. Retracted articles are clearly labelled as retracted.