Caribbean Journal of Criminology Peer Review Policy

Peer Review Policy

This policy has been informed by practices outlined in other journals and comments from researchers and Editors of varying disciplines and subject area focus. In addition to this a review of the COPE Conduct for Peer Reviewers was done to assist with the content and focus of the policy. This policy was not reviewed by COPE and in no way was endorsed by COPE.

There is no charge for peer reviewing a manuscript. However authors should consult the CJC Open Access policy to learn about author processing charges for the cost of publishing an article under Open Access.

Type of Peer Review

The review is to ensure that the contribution made by authors is of the highest scientific, empirical quality. The CJC conducts a double blind review of all submissions accepted. This means that the author is unknown to the reviewer and the peer reviewer is unknown to the author. The Editor serves as a mediator between the author and peer reviewer.

Adhering to the submission guidelines for CJC is the minimum consideration for acceptance for publication. It is not typical that an article may be rejected by the Editor before it undergoes peer review but it can happen if submissions do not meet the submission guidelines. The Editor reserves the right to reject submissions that do not meet these guidelines.

All articles submitted for publication in the CJC are given a reference number and this is communicated to the author (s) who should use this reference number in all correspondence with the CJC Editor(s).

Manuscripts that meet the submission guidelines are sent for peer review by the Editor.

How the Peer Reviewer is selected

The CJC Editorial team maintains a database of experts on various subject matter. This database is also updated based on referral by the CJC Editorial Board. Two peer reviewers are normally identified to review an article. In some instances the CJC Editor may serve as a second reviewer if a second peer reviewer is not available.

Serving as a peer reviewer for CJC is voluntary and based on peer reviewer availability and willingness to do a review. Once approached to conduct a review, the peer reviewer is expected to communicate if they can perform and submit the review in a timely manner.

Length of Review Process

Typically manuscripts go through the peer review process in six weeks. But it may take longer and may be due to a second opinion being sought from another reviewer upon the recommendation of the first reviewer. The review process and its length is also subject to the availability of a reviewer.

Peer Review Reports

Each peer reviewer is given an assessment sheet prior to the review of a manuscript. The assessment sheet allows the reviewer to report on the manuscript's contribution to knowledge in the field, indicate rejection of the manuscript, recommend changes and publication, and publication without needed changes. In an email, the outcome of the review is communicated to the Editor, who makes the final decisions concerning rejection, revisions, or publication and who then emails the author.

The CJC peer review process is not for language correction or for formatting. The reviewer might make comments on these two and suggestions where they may improve or have taken away from the quality of the manuscript. The peer reviewer is not expected to be inflammatory or abusive in their comments but instead be constructive.

Manuscripts selected for publication are proof read, formatted after the review process.

Final Report and Decisions

The assessment from the reviewer serves as a recommendation to the Editor and the Editor's decision is final. The author of the manuscript will receive a letter with the reviewer's comments and an indication of acceptance, revisions suggested, or rejection of the manuscript for publication.

Peer reviewing and diversity

The CJC strives to be inclusive of peer reviewers who have the most experience and respectability in the subject area. At the same time, it seeks to balance this with geographic, racial and gender representation when updating its peer reviewer database.

Peer reviewers should not be biased towards the content of manuscripts because of their origin, geographic focus.

Peer reviewing confidentiality

Author information should not be shared between the Editor and peer reviewer. Peer reviewers should not disclose or share contents of manuscripts with third parties throughout and after the review process. Manuscripts in possession of the reviewer should not be shared with third parties for comments or for review.

Peer Review misconduct

It is the responsibility of the CJC Editor to verify the information of every peer reviewer in the CJC database to ensure that they satisfy a record of academic achievement or service in the subject matter associated with them. Where it has been identified that a peer reviewer has provided false information about his or her credentials, or the Editor suspects such, the reviewer may be asked to verify the information provided, or their institution or organization may be contacted to assist with verifying information. If there is evidence of false information The Editor will immediately remove the peer reviewer from the CJC database. The verification process in all situations should support fairness before final decisions are made.

Peer reviewers may engage in misconduct in other ways. Misconduct can include:

- Not providing a true representation of expertise and relevance in the assessment sheet.
- Communication of a timeline for submission of a report, not doing so and failing to provide updates when contacted.
- Sharing details of the manuscript during and after the review process with third parties
- Not declaring individual or organizational conflicts of interest.
- Failing to bring to the attention of the Editor any conflicts of interest identified in the manuscript or material that diminishes originality of the manuscript content.
- Not preparing and writing the peer reviewer report on their own.

Reviewers for Special Issues

CJC Special Issues may have one or more Guest or Special Issue Editors. During a Special Issue such as CJC Vol. 1 Issue 4, the journal may be themed and the Editor(s) may or may not receive unsolicited articles specific to the theme. The Editors may also work with reviewers who are subject matter experts on the theme but not necessarily a reviewer in the CJC database. Ultimately Guest or Special Issue Editors report to the Editor of CJC and the Editor of CJC has the final say regarding the publication direction and quality control of the Special Issue.

Application to be a peer reviewer

The CJC also welcomes applications from individuals who wish to serve as a peer reviewer. Applications are received by the Editor who determines the merit of the application based on existing subject matter peer reviewers available to CJC. Applications can be emailed with the Subject Line: Peer Reviewer Application

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Acknowledgement

We are grateful to the management committee at COPE for directing us to the COPE website for their guidelines and to allow us a reading of such, even while we are presently not members.

COPE Council. COPE Ethical guidelines for peer reviewers — English. https://doi.org/10.24318/cope.2019.1.9 Version 2: September 2017.