

Bristol Medical Student Journal

Instructions for peer-reviewers

Background

The Bristol Medical Student Journal (BMSJ) is a newly established project that is run by final year medical students. Our objective is to showcase interesting work undertaken by students, to their colleagues, peers and superiors, while introducing them to the academic side of medicine. It aims to provide students with a platform to explore the research field, a process so integral in the development of medicine. For this purpose, we are looking out for 5th year medical students to act as peer-reviewers for the journal. You will be credited for your role in the journal. A peer reviewer is expected to proof-read a manuscript assigned to them and provide a fair and honest critique of the strengths and weakness of that piece of work. This process will contribute directly to determining which articles are included in the journal and hence, the role of a peer-reviewer is vital in publishing this first edition of the Bristol Medical Student Journal.

This document outlines the instructions for peer-reviewers reading the submissions to the journal.

If interested, please contact bmsjournal@outlook.com with your name and contact details.

Instructions for reviewers:

Reviewers are expected to read the manuscript in detail, from different angles each time. Below is a rough guide on what is expected.

1st read: Gaining a bird's eye view of the paper

- Does this piece of work fit in with the theme of the journal?
- Is it part of or within your line of expertise?
- Establishing the main objective and methods to execute that
- Is the article/topic novel – does it answer a new question or does it corroborate already published work?
- Is this article worthy of publication in this medical school journal or are there amendments to be made in order for it to be publishable?
- Is this piece of work relevant to the target audience of medical students, clinicians, and educators? Will it help them make better decisions? How so?

2nd Read: Evaluating the science/medicine behind the article – this largely applies to scientific research articles, however, the general structure can be used for non-scientific articles as well, if appropriate

- Is the aim, methods, results and relevance clearly defined and indicated in the abstract and introduction?
- Does this work add to already existing literature? What does it add?
- Are the methods appropriate to answer the questions outlined in the article?
- Are the results presented accurate and friendly to read?
- Are the results interpreted correctly and relevant to the aims of the articles

- Do the discussion and conclusion address the main aim of the paper and sound convincing and balanced?
- Does the paper evaluate its strengths and weaknesses?
- Are the references up-to-date and relevant?

3rd Read: General coherence, construction, and writing of the paper should be assessed

- Does the paper run logically and in a cohesive manner with reasoning throughout?
- Any grammatical or typographical errors?

Peer-reviewers **must** always provide comments after reading the manuscript. They can wish to submit confidential comments to the editor should they prefer.

Further instructions:

- Be specific in your critique and provide evidence with references in order to facilitate the editing process
- Be professional and avoid inflammatory, hostile, or personal derogatory remarks
- If the work is not clear or does not seem complete due to missing analyses, describe clearly what will help to clarify and substantiate the work submitted
- It is not your role to extend the work beyond its scope

What type of articles to expect:

- Original research articles
- Review articles
- Letters
- Audit/QI reports
- Elective reports
- Student choice/student selected component reports

What to expect after applying to be a peer-reviewer:

You will be assigned an article to proof-read and will be give around 2-4 weeks to appraise it. All articles submitted in the 2021/2022 academic year aim to be published in the summer of 2022.

General enquires: bmsjournal@outlook.com