

UNIVERSITY OF MALTA
Faculty of Health Sciences

Malta Journal of Health Sciences

Manuscript Submission Agreement

Peer review process

All manuscripts are primarily screened by the Editor-in-Chief or an Associate Editor upon submission. Priority is given to articles that will help allied health professionals to make better decisions, increase pertinent knowledge base and support high quality research. Immediate manuscript rejection by the Malta Journal of Health Sciences is expected in the following instances:

- (i) study does not have a theoretical or evidence-based argument for the relevance of the work to allied health practice;
- (ii) manuscript does not contain sufficiently new or important information and therefore does not offer a significant contribution to the literature;
- (iii) reliability study does not include a discussion of the influence that the findings will have in the field;
- (iv) study evaluates a new test without a sound comparison to current tests;
- (v) study has serious flaws in the Methods section;
- (vi) it appears evident that the manuscript breaches and/or infringes third party intellectual property rights;
- (vii) authors did not obtain ethical approval from a properly constituted ethics committee, where appropriate.

Manuscripts that qualify for review are evaluated by at least two experts as appropriate. A double-blind review process is adopted.

After the reviewers receive a paper from the Editor-in-Chief or an Associate Editor, they read it closely and provide individual critiques in which they:

- (i) comment on the validity of the science, identifying scientific errors and evaluating the design and methodology used;
- (ii) judge its significance by evaluating the importance of the finding;
- (iii) determine the originality of the work based on how much it advances the field;
- (iv) recommend that the manuscript is rejected or accepted with minor or major revision; revision will entail further review.

The Editor-in-Chief or an Associate Editor reads the manuscript and the reviewers' comments, makes his/her own comments, and provides guidance to the Editorial Board on the suitability of the manuscript for publication. The Editorial Board will then decide on the content of the feedback letter to the author(s).

The full review is then e-mailed to the author(s) who may decide to drop the submission, or to comply with the suggested changes, provided that in either case, the suggested changes will remain

the property of the Editorial Board and the author(s) cannot use the changes elsewhere without obtaining prior written permission from the Editorial Board. The author(s) are then expected to return the revised manuscript incorporating the suggested changes, along with a covering letter outlining said changes, within a reasonable period of time as established by the Editorial Board (unless any extenuating circumstances present themselves).

The reviewers will be asked to re-review the resubmitted manuscript to determine whether the changes suggested by the reviewers have been effected. Once the Editor-in-Chief or Associate Editor is satisfied with the final version of the manuscript, then the manuscript is accepted and processed for the purposes of publication. If the Editor-in-Chief or Associate Editor is not satisfied with the changes made, the authors may be contacted directly with any problems that may have been encountered within the resubmitted manuscript. Once any outstanding issues are settled, the manuscript is accepted and processed for the purposes of publication.

Failure to return the revised manuscript within the timeframe stipulated by the Editorial Board will automatically imply withdrawal of the submission. Furthermore, following the final process of review, a manuscript cannot be withdrawn except by an authorisation in writing from the Editorial Board. In both cases, the Editorial Board retains the rights to charge the author(s) with the costs which the Malta Journal of Health Sciences would have already incurred in preparing the manuscript for publication at the full discretion of the Editorial Board.

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In this section, authors are expected to disclose any associations that might pose a conflict of interest in connection with the submitted manuscript. Conflict of interest scenarios may include recent collaborations with members of the Editorial Board and reviewers, as in the case of individuals who co-authored a paper or were principal investigators in funded research with the author(s) within the past 48 months. Other examples of possible conflicts include past or present association as thesis supervisor/advise or thesis student, or a family relationship, such as a partner or parent-child relationship.

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If there are no conflicts of interest to report, the author(s) is/are to include the following statement:

The author(s) report/ s no conflicts of interest.

This section should precede the reference list. All sources of funding or products must be included in the Acknowledgements section of the manuscript.

Originality of work

Submission of a manuscript implies that the work described:

- (i) has not been published before (except in the form of an abstract or academic thesis)

- (ii) is not under consideration for publication elsewhere; if the manuscript is accepted for publication, it cannot be published in the same form elsewhere, in print or electronically, in English or in any other language, without the written consent of the copyright holder
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https://www.um.edu.mt/data/assets/pdf_file/0009/95571/University-Guidelines-on-Plagiarism.pdf

Ethical approval

Ethical approval from a research ethics committee and/or institutional review board is required and details regarding the board providing approval should be listed in the Methods section of the manuscript.

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