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ta' Malta**

Malta University Press

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Peer Review Policy and Publishing Conduct

Principles and First Stages of Peer Review

JALS is committed to publishing original, high-quality scholarship (articles, reviews and essays) in the field of Anglo-Italian literary studies. Contributions focusing on art and the history of art, theatre and performance, film and television, and other areas will be considered if related to relevant and appropriate literary contexts and traditions.

JALS assesses submissions for scholarly merit and affinity with the journal's scope and aims, and free from any discrimination based on the author's identity, affiliation, creed or background.

Submissions to *JALS* are screened initially by the Advisory Editorial Board for relevance, originality, academic rigour and adherence to formatting requirements. Submissions may be sent back to authors if the journal's formal requirements, which follow the guidelines of the Fourth Edition of the MHRA Style Guide (which is freely available at <https://www.mhra.org.uk/style/>), are not observed.

JALS has a pool of associated peer reviewers who are chosen on an article-by-article basis on the grounds of their expertise and its appropriacy for the content concerned. Additional reviewers may be invited as and where appropriate. Peer reviewers (whether associated or otherwise) are not typically members of the Editorial Board, but members of the Board may be consulted where the expertise required for fair, comprehensive and searching assessment of a submission so dictates.

Members of the Advisory Editorial Board and associated peer reviewers have a broad range of disciplinary and methodological expertise across literary studies.

The Review Process

If the outcome of the initial desk screening is positive, a submission is subsequently evaluated by two independent reviewers. Should there be a significant discrepancy between the two reviews, the Advisory Editorial Board may seek advice from a third independent and anonymous reviewer.

Reviewers are asked to assess for the following:

- The fit with the journal's scope and aims.
 - Appropriateness for the journal's readership.
 - Originality and the nature of the contribution to the field of studies in Anglo-Italian literary studies.
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- Clarity of argument and appropriateness of approach.
- Depth and breadth of scholarship.
- Engagement with relevant scholarship and literary-historical contexts.
- Structure, style, accuracy and readability.

Reviewers should provide a detailed written assessment with a clear recommendation (Accept / Minor Revision / Major Revision / Reject). Review reports should be constructive, professional, and respectful. They should offer clear indications of how a submission that is conditionally accepted might be improved.

J AIS provides reviewers with a form for their reviews, but reviewers are not obliged to use it as long as the above information is adequately provided. *J AIS* and Malta University Press do not use an online portal for the receipt, review and processing of submissions. Email is the default channel for correspondence on submissions, review and editorial decisions.

The final decision on a submission rests with the *J AIS* Editors. Their decision is reached on the basis of the reviewer reports and the editors' own judgement and following consultation, where appropriate, with members of the Editorial Advisory Board.

The possible outcomes are:

- Accept without changes
- Accept subject to minor revisions
- Major revisions required (subject to further review)
- Reject

Authors receive anonymised reviewer reports along with the editorial decision.

Review Timelines

Desk Review: normally within 3–4 weeks

Peer Review: normally within 6–8 weeks

Editorial Decision: normally within 12–15 weeks of submission

Timeline Following Peer Review: Authors are expected to submit revisions within a specified timeframe (normally 3 weeks for minor revisions, 3 months for major revisions).

In Case of Major Revisions: Authors must provide an outline explaining how they have addressed reviewer comments. Revised manuscripts may be sent back to original reviewers or assessed directly by the editors.

Confidentiality and Ethics

Manuscripts and reviewer reports are confidential and may not be shared or used elsewhere by any member of the Editorial Advisory Board of *J AIS* or by associated or delegated peer reviewers.

Reviewers must disclose to the editors any possible conflicts of interest that they may be aware of.

Submissions found to involve plagiarism, falsification, or unethical research practices are rejected and may be reported to relevant bodies.

Review reports shall not be AI-composed, whether in part or in whole.

The journal undertakes every reasonable effort to ensure the originality, academic integrity, and ethical fairness of the work it publishes. However, ultimate responsibility for the content rests with the author(s). In the event of legal or ethical disputes (including but not limited to plagiarism, copyright infringement, defamation, or breaches of research ethics), the author(s) shall bear sole liability.

Author(s) may appeal editorial decisions by providing strong evidence or new data/information. Author(s) may appeal by submitting a written statement to the Editorial Board, within five (5) working days from the receipt of communication informing the Author(s) of the Editorial Board's decision. Appeals will be considered carefully in consultation with the Advisory Editorial Board. This notwithstanding, under no circumstance will the Editors be obliged to overturn initial decisions. Any decision taken further to an appeal shall be considered final.

JAIS adheres to Malta University Press's standards of publication ethics. The Advisory Editorial Board regularly reviews peer review practices to ensure fairness, rigour, and efficiency.

For more information, email jais@um.edu.mt or mup@um.edu.mt
