

Editorial and Submission Policies

Manuscript Status

Authors can check the status of a manuscript at any time on *The Researcher* website under the Submission Status tab. Each author will be assigned a code upon submission of their manuscript, and the article will be listed by that code on the status page. Authors will also be notified by email when a decision is made.

Manuscript Status Definitions

Manuscript submitted	The journal has received the submission and is screening it for basic requirements, defined below under "Initial Review."
Reviewer invited	The journal is identifying potential editors for the submission.
Under review	The editor has begun to invite peer reviewers to evaluate the submission.
Required reviews complete	Some or all assigned reviewers have completed their reviews.
Decision in process	The editor has entered a decision but the decision is not yet finalized and has not been sent to the authors.

Editorial Process

Initial Review

New submissions go through an in-house quality control check to ensure adherence to our policies and requirements, including:

- ethical requirements for human and animal experimentation
- financial disclosures
- competing interests
- data deposition

Manuscripts will not be seen by a peer reviewer until they pass this check.

We aim to check manuscripts as efficiently as possible, but timing may vary depending on whether we need to return the submission to the author for follow-up queries or additional information.

External reviewer assignment

After a manuscript passes the quality control check, it is assigned to the external reviewer according to relevant expertise.

Submission Q & A

How long does it take to assign an external reviewer?

The length of time it takes to assign an editor may vary depending on editor availability or the time of year (e.g., winter or summer holidays).

How long do external reviewers have to review a manuscript?

After agreeing to review a manuscript, external reviewers are typically granted 21 days to complete the assignment. We will follow up with late reviewers and keep authors informed if there are any delays.

Will authors know who is reviewing their manuscript?

Reviewers' identities are anonymous unless a reviewer indicates otherwise.

Can authors ask to exclude reviewers?

Authors may enter the names of potential peer reviewers they wish to exclude from consideration in the peer review of their manuscript. The editorial team will respect these requests so long as this does not interfere with the objective and thorough assessment of the submission.

How many reviewers will a manuscript have?

The majority of submissions are evaluated by 2 external reviewers, but it is up to the Editor to determine the number of reviews required.

When reviews have been received, authors will receive an email stating "Required Reviews Complete." Please note that additional reviews may still be pending after this status is activated.

Who makes the final editorial decision?

The final decision on a manuscript is made by the general editor. The time to receive a decision depends on how long it takes for the editor to assess the reviews.

What are the possible decision outcomes?

After evaluation, the general editor chooses between the following decisions:

- Accept
- Minor Revision
- Major Revision
- Reject

Revisions

Authors who receive a decision of Minor Revision or Major Revision have 35 days to resubmit the revised manuscript.

In most cases, the revised manuscript will be assessed by the editor to determine if it should be re-assigned to the original external review for additional evaluation.

Appeals

Authors may submit a formal appeal for rejected submissions. Appeal requests must be made in writing to editor.researcher@jsums.edu with the word "appeal" in the subject line. Authors must provide detailed reasons for the appeal and point-by-point responses to the reviewers' and/or editor's comments.

Decisions on appeals are final without exception. Priority is given to new submissions, so the appeal process may take longer than the original submission process.