

# PEER REVIEW PROCEDURE

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## 1. General principles

This procedure sets out the rules for the peer review of scholarly texts submitted for publication with the Press. The procedure complies with the guidelines of the Polish Ministry of Science and Higher Education, the recommendations of the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE), and the international standards applied by reputable academic publishers.

1. Every text submitted for publication is subject to mandatory scholarly peer review.
  2. Every text is assessed by independent external reviewers holding at least the degree of habilitated doctor (or an equivalent qualification) in the relevant field.
  3. Reviewers may not have a conflict of interest with the authors (professional subordination, family relationship, direct research collaboration within the preceding 5 years).
  4. Reviewers receive remuneration for preparing the scholarly review in accordance with the rates applicable at the Press.
  5. The general peer review principles are available on the Press's website.
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## 2. Stages of the peer review process

### 2.1. Preliminary verification (desk review)

Upon receipt of a submission, the Press's Academic Editor carries out a preliminary assessment of the text with regard to:

- Thematic conformity with the profile of the Press or the publication series.
- Compliance with formal requirements (format, length, structure, scholarly apparatus).
- Originality of the work – the text is checked using an anti-plagiarism system (e.g. iThenticate, Crossref Similarity Check).
- Completeness of documentation (author's declaration, ethics clause, declaration of funding sources).

A text that does not meet the formal requirements may be returned to the author for supplementation or rejected without being sent for review.

### 2.2. Selection of reviewers

The Press's Academic Editor selects reviewers from among recognised specialists in the relevant field, guided by the following criteria:

1. Subject-matter expertise confirmed by a publication record in the topic of the reviewed text.
  2. Absence of a conflict of interest with the author(s).
  3. Affiliation at an institution other than that of the author(s).
  4. Reviewing experience and timeliness in the completion of previous reviews.
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### 2.3. Review process

The assessment covers the following criteria:

1. Originality and scholarly value – whether the work makes a new contribution to the state of knowledge in the given field.
2. Methodological soundness – adequacy of research methods, representativeness of the material, reliability of the analysis.
3. Structure and logic of the argument – coherence of argumentation, clarity of the work’s layout.
4. Grounding in the literature – currency and completeness of the literature review.
5. Linguistic and editorial correctness – quality of scholarly language, clarity of style.
6. Correctness of the scholarly apparatus – footnotes, bibliography, tables, figures, appendices.
7. Compliance with the principles of research and publication ethics.

The review must be prepared in writing and must contain an unambiguous conclusion (recommendation for a decision) together with a justification. One-sentence reviews, overly brief reviews or reviews lacking argumentation are not accepted.

### 2.4. Editorial decision

On the basis of the reviews received, the Press’s Academic Editor takes one of the following decisions:

Decision	Description
<b>Acceptance without changes</b>	The text is accepted for publication in its present form.
<b>Conditional acceptance</b>	The text requires minor technical or editorial corrections; a further review is not required.
<b>Revision and re-review</b>	The text requires substantial substantive changes; after revision it will be sent for a further review.
<b>Rejection</b>	The text does not meet the Press’s standards and is not accepted for publication.

In the event of divergent reviews (e.g. one positive, one negative), the Editor may appoint a third reviewer or take a decision independently on the basis of their own substantive assessment, providing a written justification.

### 2.5. Revision and re-review procedure

1. The author receives anonymised reviews together with the Editor’s decision and detailed guidelines regarding the required changes.
2. The author prepares a revised version of the text together with a response letter in which they address each reviewer’s comment point by point.
3. The revised version is sent to the same reviewer(s) who raised the objections, for verification of the changes made.
4. The maximum number of revision rounds is three. After a third inconclusive review round, the text may be rejected.

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### 3. Ethical principles and prevention of misconduct

The Press applies publication ethics principles in accordance with COPE guidelines:

#### 3.1. Author obligations

1. Submission of a declaration of originality of the work and non-infringement of the rights of third parties.
2. Disclosure of all sources of research funding and potential conflicts of interest.
3. Assurance that the text is not simultaneously submitted to another publisher.
4. Indication of the contributions of individual co-authors (in the case of multi-author works) in order to prevent guest authorship and ghostwriting.
5. Obtaining all necessary approvals (ethical, legal) for the conduct of the research and the publication of results.

#### 3.2. Reviewer obligations

1. Carrying out a reliable, objective and substantive assessment of the text.
2. Maintaining confidentiality – not discussing the content of the reviewed text with third parties.
3. Reporting to the Editor any suspicions of plagiarism, data falsification or other ethics breaches.
4. Declining a review where a conflict of interest arises or where the subject matter falls outside their area of expertise.
5. Meeting the agreed deadlines or promptly informing the editorial office of the inability to complete the review on time.

#### 3.3. Obligations of the Press's Academic Editor

1. Ensuring the impartiality of the peer review process and protection of the anonymity of the parties.
2. Making decisions solely on the basis of the substantive merit of the text, regardless of the origin, gender, religion, political orientation or affiliation of the author.
3. Archiving all review documentation for a period of at least 5 years.
4. Implementing anti-plagiarism procedures and responding to detected breaches in accordance with COPE flowcharts.

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### 4. Peer review timeline

Indicative timeframes for the individual stages of the peer review process:

Stage	Timeframe
Preliminary formal verification	7 working days

Assignment of reviewers	7 working days
Preparation of reviews	21–45 days
Editor’s decision	14 working days
Author’s revision (if required)	30–60 days
Re-assessment after revision	21 days
Technical and copy-editing	42 days
Publication (upon acceptance)	30 days

The Press endeavours to ensure that the total time from submission to a final decision does not exceed 6 months. In justified cases, the deadlines may be extended, in which case the author is informed without delay.

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## 5. Scope of the reviewer’s assessment

The standard scope of a review comprises the following elements:

1. A general descriptive assessment of the text.
2. A detailed assessment according to the criteria: originality, methodology, structure, literature, language, scholarly apparatus.
3. Justification of the assessment – substantive comments and suggestions for corrections.
4. Confidential comments for the Editor (not forming part of the review communicated to the author).
5. An unambiguous recommendation: acceptance / conditional acceptance / revision / rejection.
6. A declaration of the absence of a conflict of interest.

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## 6. Appeals procedure

The author has the right to appeal against a decision to reject a text. The appeals procedure comprises the following principles:

- The appeal must be submitted in writing within 30 days of receipt of the decision, together with a substantive justification.
- The Press’s Academic Editor may appoint an additional reviewer for the purpose of a re-assessment of the text.
- The decision taken as a result of the appeals procedure is final.

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## 7. Final provisions

- This procedure shall enter into force on the date of its publication on the Press’s website.
- The procedure shall be reviewed and updated no less frequently than once every two years.

- Any amendments to the procedure require the approval of the Press's Academic Board.
- The text of the procedure is published on the Press's website in Polish and English.
- In matters not regulated by this procedure, the COPE guidelines and the applicable provisions of law shall apply.