

EDITORIAL DECISION APPEAL PROCESS

International Journal of Ayurveda

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POLICY STATEMENT

The International Journal of Ayurveda is committed to fair, transparent, and consistent editorial decision-making. This policy establishes a comprehensive appeal process that allows authors to challenge editorial decisions when they believe errors in judgment, procedure, or evaluation have occurred, while maintaining the integrity of the peer review system.

Fundamental Principles

- **Fair Process:** All appeals receive impartial and thorough consideration
- **Transparency:** Clear procedures and criteria for appeal evaluation
- **Academic Freedom:** Protection of legitimate scholarly discourse and inquiry
- **Quality Maintenance:** Preservation of publication standards throughout appeal process
- **Continuous Improvement:** Learning from appeals to enhance editorial procedures

Scope of Coverage

This policy applies to appeals of:

- **Manuscript rejection** decisions
 - **Major revision requirements** deemed excessive or inappropriate
 - **Editorial policy** interpretation and application
 - **Peer review process** concerns and procedural irregularities
 - **Post-publication decisions** including corrections and retractions
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GROUNDS FOR APPEAL

Procedural Violations

Editorial Process Errors

Valid grounds include:

- **Failure to follow** established review procedures
- **Inadequate review** with insufficient expert evaluation
- **Timeline violations** without proper communication or justification
- **Conflict of interest** mismanagement in editorial or review process
- **Policy misapplication** or inconsistent guideline interpretation

Peer Review Irregularities

Appealable issues:

- **Reviewer bias** evidenced in review comments or recommendations
- **Incompetent review** lacking appropriate expertise or thoroughness
- **Ethical violations** by reviewers including confidentiality breaches
- **Conflict of interest** not properly identified or managed
- **Review quality** significantly below professional standards

Communication Failures

Procedural problems:

- **Inadequate feedback** failing to provide constructive guidance
- **Unclear decisions** lacking sufficient rationale or explanation
- **Missing correspondence** or failure to respond to author inquiries
- **Inconsistent messaging** from different editorial staff members
- **Timeline miscommunication** creating unreasonable expectations

Substantive Decision Challenges

Scientific Merit Disputes

Challengeable assessments:

- **Methodological criticism** not supported by current best practices
- **Statistical evaluation** errors in review or editorial assessment
- **Significance underestimation** of research contribution or impact
- **Literature review** inadequacy in editorial or peer evaluation
- **Cultural bias** affecting traditional medicine research evaluation

Editorial Interpretation Issues

Valid appeal areas:

- **Scope determination** decisions about journal fit and appropriateness
- **Quality standards** application that appears inconsistent or excessive
- **Policy interpretation** differing from established guidelines
- **Precedent inconsistency** with previous similar manuscript decisions
- **Innovation resistance** to new methodologies or approaches

Reviewer Competence Concerns

Legitimate challenges:

- **Expertise mismatch** between reviewer qualifications and manuscript content
- **Factual errors** in reviewer assessments or recommendations
- **Outdated knowledge** reflected in reviewer comments and suggestions
- **Methodological misunderstanding** by reviewers lacking appropriate background
- **Cultural insensitivity** in evaluation of traditional medicine research

APPEAL ELIGIBILITY AND TIMING

Eligible Appellants

Primary Appellants

- **Corresponding authors** acting on behalf of all co-authors
- **All co-authors jointly** when corresponding author is unavailable
- **Institutional representatives** for authors who are deceased or incapacitated
- **Legal representatives** in cases involving legal guardianship or power of attorney
- **Authorized agents** with written permission from all authors

Authorization Requirements

For multi-author manuscripts:

- **Written consent** from all co-authors for appeal submission
- **Clear designation** of spokesperson for appeal communications
- **Conflict resolution** among authors before appeal submission
- **Representative authority** documentation when applicable
- **Unanimous support** for appeal position preferred but not required

Appeal Timeline

Standard Timeline

- **30 calendar days** from date of editorial decision notification
- **Business days calculation** excluding weekends and recognized holidays
- **Email timestamp** used for deadline determination
- **Extension requests** considered for exceptional circumstances
- **Late appeals** generally not accepted unless extraordinary justification provided

Timeline Extensions

Granted for:

- **Medical emergencies** affecting author availability
- **Natural disasters** or other force majeure events
- **Legal proceedings** requiring author attention
- **Technical difficulties** preventing timely submission
- **Language barrier** issues requiring translation assistance

Extension process:

- **Written request** submitted before original deadline
- **Supporting documentation** for extension justification
- **Maximum extension** of 15 additional calendar days
- **One extension** per appeal generally permitted
- **Emergency exceptions** considered on case-by-case basis

APPEAL SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Required Documentation

Formal Appeal Letter

Must include:

- **Manuscript identification** with title, authors, and submission ID
- **Decision being appealed** with date and specific details
- **Grounds for appeal** clearly stated with supporting arguments
- **Specific remedy** requested from appeal review
- **Supporting evidence** attached as appropriate documentation

Supporting Materials

May include:

- **Expert opinions** from qualified specialists in relevant field
- **Additional literature** supporting author's position
- **Methodological justification** for approaches questioned in review
- **Institutional support** letters when appropriate
- **Comparative examples** of similar published research

Author Information

Required details:

- **Contact information** for all authors and designated spokesperson

- **Institutional affiliations** and current positions
- **Conflict of interest** declarations relevant to appeal
- **Previous correspondence** with journal regarding manuscript
- **Authorization documentation** for representative appeals

Appeal Format and Structure

Executive Summary (Maximum 300 words)

- **Brief overview** of appeal grounds and requested remedy
- **Key arguments** supporting appeal position
- **Significance statement** regarding research contribution
- **Process concerns** if applicable to appeal basis
- **Desired outcome** clearly and specifically stated

Detailed Arguments (Maximum 2,000 words)

- **Point-by-point response** to specific review comments and editorial concerns
- **Evidence presentation** supporting author's position
- **Literature citations** validating methodological and interpretive approaches
- **Expert opinions** when relevant to technical or methodological issues
- **Process documentation** if procedural violations are alleged

Supporting Appendices

- **Original manuscript** and all versions submitted
- **Complete review** correspondence and comments
- **Editorial decisions** and communications
- **Expert opinions** and supporting letters
- **Relevant literature** and comparative studies

APPEAL REVIEW PROCESS

Initial Assessment

Administrative Review (5 business days)

Editorial office conducts:

- **Completeness verification** of appeal submission and required documentation
- **Timeline compliance** checking for submission deadline adherence
- **Eligibility confirmation** of appellant authority and standing
- **Grounds assessment** for appeal validity and appropriateness
- **Process assignment** to appropriate review level and personnel

Preliminary Screening

Criteria evaluated:

- **Prima facie validity** of appeal grounds and supporting arguments
- **Substantial new evidence** or significant procedural concerns
- **Reasonable prospect** of successful challenge to original decision
- **Good faith submission** rather than frivolous or vexatious appeal
- **Appropriate remedy** possibility within journal's authority and procedures

Appeal Review Levels

Level 1: Editorial Review (Standard appeals)

Conducted by:

- **Senior editorial** board members not involved in original decision
- **Subject matter experts** with appropriate expertise for manuscript evaluation
- **Independent reviewers** when additional expertise required
- **Appeal committee** of 3-5 qualified members for complex cases
- **External consultants** when specialized knowledge needed

Review process:

- **Complete file review** including original manuscript, reviews, and editorial correspondence
- **Appeal assessment** evaluating validity of grounds and supporting arguments
- **Independent evaluation** of manuscript scientific merit when appropriate
- **Procedural analysis** if process violations alleged
- **Recommendation development** with detailed rationale and supporting evidence

Level 2: Independent Review (Complex or sensitive appeals)

Reserved for:

- **Editor-in-Chief involvement** in original decision requiring independent oversight
- **Significant procedural** violations with potential systematic implications
- **High-profile manuscripts** with broad community interest or impact
- **Novel methodological** approaches requiring specialized expert evaluation
- **Appeals with legal** implications or institutional conflicts

Review panel:

- **External experts** with no connection to journal or involved parties
- **Senior academics** with editorial experience and relevant expertise
- **International perspective** when appropriate for global research evaluation
- **Diverse representation** across relevant specialties and demographics
- **Ethics expertise** when appeal involves research integrity issues

Review Timeline

Standard Processing

- **Level 1 appeals:** 4-6 weeks from submission to decision
- **Level 2 appeals:** 6-8 weeks from submission to decision
- **Complex cases:** Up to 12 weeks with regular progress updates
- **Emergency appeals:** Expedited processing when urgency demonstrated
- **Status updates:** Bi-weekly communication of review progress

Expedited Review

Available for:

- **Time-sensitive research** with immediate public health implications
- **Conference deadlines** with demonstrated academic importance
- **Career implications** for early-career researchers with documented needs
- **Legal proceedings** requiring expedited resolution
- **Grant deadlines** with significant funding implications

APPEAL OUTCOMES AND DECISIONS

Possible Appeal Decisions

Appeal Upheld

Original decision reversed or modified:

- **Acceptance** of previously rejected manuscript
- **Revision requirement** reduction from major to minor
- **Additional review** with different or additional reviewers
- **Policy clarification** and reapplication to manuscript
- **Process restart** with corrected procedures

Implementation:

- **Immediate notification** to authors of successful appeal outcome
- **Process correction** and implementation of modified decision
- **Timeline adjustment** for any required revisions or additional review
- **Quality assurance** to prevent recurrence of identified problems
- **Policy updates** if systematic issues identified through appeal

Appeal Partially Upheld

Some concerns validated, others not:

- **Procedural corrections** without decision reversal
- **Additional review** addressing specific concerns while maintaining overall decision
- **Policy clarification** with decision modification
- **Enhanced guidance** for revision requirements
- **Compromise solution** addressing valid concerns while maintaining standards

Appeal Denied

Original decision confirmed:

- **Grounds not substantiated** by evidence or argument
- **Process appropriate** despite author concerns
- **Quality standards** appropriately applied
- **Review competent** and decision well-supported
- **Policy correctly** interpreted and applied

Communication:

- **Detailed explanation** of appeal review findings and rationale
- **Specific response** to each ground raised in appeal
- **Process validation** or identification of acceptable variations
- **Future guidance** for potential resubmission or alternative approaches
- **Final decision** notification with no further appeal possible

Decision Communication

Notification Format

Written decision includes:

- **Clear outcome** statement (upheld, partially upheld, denied)
- **Detailed rationale** for appeal committee findings and conclusions
- **Specific responses** to each argument and ground raised in appeal
- **Process summary** of review conducted and experts consulted
- **Next steps** for authors including any required actions or options

Decision Implementation

For successful appeals:

- **Immediate action** plan with timeline for implementation
- **Author communication** regarding modified process or requirements
- **Editorial team** notification and instruction for process changes
- **Quality monitoring** to ensure proper implementation
- **Follow-up confirmation** of satisfactory resolution

SPECIAL APPEAL CATEGORIES

Post-Publication Appeals

Correction Requests

Appeal grounds:

- **Factual errors** in published content requiring correction
- **Editorial errors** introduced during publication process
- **Attribution problems** with inadequate or incorrect credit
- **Permission issues** discovered after publication
- **Technical errors** in formatting, figures, or references

Process:

- **Error documentation** with specific identification and proposed corrections
- **Impact assessment** of error on research validity and interpretation
- **Correction method** determination (erratum, corrigendum, or editorial note)
- **Timeline for** correction publication and distribution
- **Notification process** to readers and indexing services

Retraction Appeals

Challenge grounds:

- **Insufficient evidence** for misconduct allegations
- **Procedural violations** in retraction investigation
- **Disproportionate response** to identified problems
- **New evidence** contradicting retraction basis
- **Process bias** in retraction decision-making

Review process:

- **Independent committee** review of retraction evidence and process
- **Legal consultation** when potential liability or defamation issues exist
- **Expert evaluation** of scientific merit and integrity questions
- **Institutional coordination** with author's organization and relevant authorities
- **Public interest** consideration in retraction maintenance or reversal

Expedited Appeals

Career-Critical Situations

Examples include:

- **Tenure decisions** dependent on publication timeline
- **Graduate defense** deadlines requiring publication
- **Grant applications** with submission deadlines
- **Job applications** where publication status matters
- **Award nominations** with specific deadlines

Requirements:

- **Documentation** of career impact and timeline criticality
- **Institutional verification** of deadline importance and consequences
- **Exceptional circumstances** beyond normal academic timelines
- **Good faith efforts** to meet standard deadlines before requesting expedited review

- **Limited scope** of expedited review focusing on most critical issues

Public Health Urgency

Applicable when:

- **Immediate health** implications of research findings
- **Disease outbreak** relevance requiring rapid publication
- **Treatment innovations** with urgent clinical applications
- **Safety warnings** or risk notifications
- **Policy implications** for public health measures

Process:

- **Expert consultation** with public health specialists
 - **Risk-benefit analysis** of expedited publication versus standard review
 - **Provisional publication** with enhanced post-publication review when appropriate
 - **Community notification** of expedited process and rationale
 - **Quality monitoring** to ensure standards maintained despite urgency
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APPEAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

Committee Composition

Standard Appeal Committee

Membership includes:

- **Senior editorial** board members (minimum 3)
- **External experts** in relevant field (minimum 2)
- **Methodological specialist** when statistical or design issues central
- **Ethics consultant** when research integrity questions involved
- **Cultural expert** when traditional knowledge or cultural sensitivity issues present

Selection Criteria

Committee members must have:

- **Relevant expertise** in manuscript subject area
- **Editorial experience** with peer-reviewed publications
- **No conflicts** of interest with authors, reviewers, or institutions involved
- **Professional reputation** for fairness and scholarly integrity
- **Available time** to complete thorough review within established timeline

Conflict Management

Committee members must:

- **Declare any relationships** with authors, institutions, or subject matter
- **Recuse themselves** when conflicts cannot be appropriately managed
- **Maintain confidentiality** throughout appeal process and beyond
- **Avoid future conflicts** stemming from appeal participation
- **Professional conduct** in all communications and evaluations

Committee Procedures

Review Process

Systematic approach:

- **Complete file review** by all committee members independently
- **Preliminary assessment** sharing among committee members
- **Discussion session** to identify key issues and areas of agreement/disagreement
- **Expert consultation** when additional specialized knowledge needed
- **Consensus building** toward final recommendation and rationale

Decision Making

Process requirements:

- **Majority decision** sufficient for appeal outcome determination
- **Dissenting opinions** documented when significant disagreement exists
- **Rationale development** with detailed explanation of reasoning
- **Evidence basis** for all conclusions and recommendations
- **Quality assurance** review of decision logic and supporting documentation

QUALITY ASSURANCE AND IMPROVEMENT

Appeal Process Monitoring

Statistical Tracking

Regular monitoring of:

- **Appeal frequency** and trends over time
- **Success rates** by appeal type and grounds
- **Timeline performance** against established standards
- **Author satisfaction** with appeal process and outcomes
- **Editorial learning** and process improvements identified

Outcome Analysis

Systematic evaluation of:

- **Decision patterns** and consistency across similar appeals

- **Process effectiveness** in identifying and correcting errors
- **Quality impact** of appeal process on overall editorial standards
- **Stakeholder feedback** from authors, reviewers, and editorial board
- **Continuous improvement** opportunities and implementation

Process Enhancement

Regular Review

Annual assessment includes:

- **Policy effectiveness** evaluation and improvement identification
- **Procedure streamlining** to improve efficiency while maintaining quality
- **Training needs** assessment for editorial staff and board members
- **Technology integration** opportunities for process improvement
- **Best practice** comparison with other journals and publishing organizations

Stakeholder Feedback

Input collection from:

- **Authors** who have used appeal process
- **Editorial board** members involved in appeal reviews
- **External experts** serving on appeal committees
- **Legal counsel** regarding process integrity and fairness
- **Publishing community** regarding best practices and innovations

COMMUNICATION AND TRANSPARENCY

Public Information

Policy Accessibility

- **Website publication** of complete appeal policy and procedures
- **Author guidelines** integration of appeal information
- **Editorial board** training and familiarization with appeal procedures
- **Reviewer notification** of appeal process existence and implications
- **Stakeholder education** about appeal rights and procedures

Transparency Measures

Regular reporting of:

- **Appeal statistics** (anonymized) in annual journal reports
- **Process improvements** resulting from appeal outcomes
- **Policy updates** and enhancement announcements
- **Best practice** sharing with publishing community

- **Stakeholder engagement** in process development and refinement

Confidentiality Protection

Information Security

Strict confidentiality for:

- **Appeal content** and supporting documentation
- **Committee deliberations** and individual member opinions
- **Author identity** protection during review process
- **Institutional information** not relevant to appeal evaluation
- **Commercial information** with competitive implications

Limited Disclosure

Appropriate sharing includes:

- **Process statistics** without identifying information
- **Policy lessons** learned from appeal outcomes
- **Best practice** examples with anonymized details
- **Legal consultation** when professional advice required
- **Quality improvement** discussions with editorial leadership

CONTACT INFORMATION

Appeal Submission

Email: editor@internationaljournalofayurveda.org

Subject Line: APPEAL SUBMISSION - [Manuscript ID] - [Author Last Name]

Response Time: 5 business days for acknowledgment and initial assessment

Appeal Inquiries

Email: editor@internationaljournalofayurveda.org

Subject Line: Appeal Process Inquiry - [Specific Question]

Response Time: 3 business days for procedural questions

Urgent Appeals

Email: editor@internationaljournalofayurveda.org

Subject Line: URGENT APPEAL - [Manuscript ID] - [Urgency Reason]

Response Time: 24 hours for acknowledgment, expedited processing when justified

Appeal Status Updates

Email: editor@internationaljournalofayurveda.org

Subject Line: Appeal Status Request - [Appeal Reference Number]

Response Time: 2 business days for status updates

CONCLUSION

The Editorial Decision Appeal Process ensures that all authors have fair opportunity to challenge editorial decisions when legitimate grounds exist. This process balances the need for consistent quality standards with recognition that editorial judgment, while generally sound, can occasionally benefit from independent review and correction.

The appeal process serves multiple important functions: protecting author rights, maintaining editorial quality, identifying process improvements, and building community confidence in journal integrity. By providing clear procedures, reasonable timelines, and thorough review mechanisms, this policy supports both individual author needs and broader scholarly communication goals.

Authors are encouraged to use this appeal process when they believe errors have occurred, while also recognizing that editorial judgment involves subjective elements where reasonable experts may disagree. The appeal process provides a valuable safeguard while maintaining respect for peer review integrity and editorial independence.

This appeal process reflects our commitment to fairness, transparency, and continuous improvement in scholarly publishing, ensuring that the International Journal of Ayurveda maintains the highest standards of editorial integrity while providing authors with appropriate recourse when concerns arise.

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