

Thoughts about Refereeing
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December 2023

Below I am providing a few considerations about the refereeing process:

1. **Be constructive:** Maximise the value for the authors. Focus your reports on issues that are fixable and that can help improve the paper. It is also important to single out issues that are not fixable.
2. **Keep it short:** Your referee reports should not be longer than 2-3 pages unless there are exceptional circumstances. If a paper is clearly below the bar, a short report (less than a page) is fully sufficient.
3. **Stay on time:** Only accept the referee request if you can submit your report in time. If you can't make it on time, please alert the editor before accepting the referee request.
4. **Appreciate novelty:** It is a key skill in research to recognize new ideas. Novel research often relies on less traditional methods, and it's important to keep an open mind and not only accept research that follows traditional best practices. When evaluating rigour of a study you need to account for the novelty and ambition of the project.
5. **Keep it to the essentials:** When recommending a "revise and resubmit", differentiate clearly between "non- essential" and "essential points" that need to be met in a revision. It is often most efficient to focus on "essential points".

6. **Be aware of publication biases:** The valuation of research is subject to a series of biases, including [biases against null results](#). Try to ask yourself how you would evaluate this research study if the study had yielded a different result. Null results that are highly powered (with a credible first-stage) and provide a test of a relevant mechanism can be [highly informative](#) and important.
7. **Be aware of negativity biases:** The culture in economics is very much focused on the problems of papers. Being polite, generous and positive is very valuable to enhance a more constructive work environment.