

# MAGNETIC RESONANCE IN MEDICINE

## Reviewer's Guidelines

### The purpose and tone of your review

The main goal of the peer review process is to ensure that the published papers are of the highest quality that is reasonably attainable.

Specifically, we ask you as a reviewer to check that:

- There are no apparent inconsistencies in the methodology or results in the manuscript.
- The results are presented in a way that can be understood and reproduced by other scientists.
- Previous work is appropriately acknowledged and referenced.
- The paper is original and not a duplicate or rehash of previously-published work.
- The conclusions are substantiated by the results and excessive speculation is avoided.
- The manuscript conforms to the standards of the journal, as described in the Author's Guidelines and Style Guide
- The scope and content of the paper are of interest to the readers of *Magnetic Resonance in Medicine* and will have an impact on the field.

Please make your review constructive and point out how the manuscript can be improved. As a reviewer, you are speaking for the journal, and your comments may be edited. Please always adopt a professional tone and limit the review to the scope of the manuscript. The review should be courteous and not contain personal or judgmental remarks. Please avoid the use of inflammatory language or excessive punctuation such as “!!” or “?,” or the use of ALL CAPITAL letter case, which can be interpreted as shouting.

### Reviewer criteria

Conflict of Interest. *Magnetic Resonance in Medicine* supports the conflict of interest guidelines from the International Society of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE). The guidelines are described at [http://www.icmje.org/ethical\\_4conflicts.html](http://www.icmje.org/ethical_4conflicts.html). In particular, it is stated that

“Reviewers must disclose to editors any conflicts of interest that could bias their opinions of the manuscript, and they should recuse themselves from reviewing specific manuscripts if the potential for bias exists.”

Specific examples of and discussion about reviewer's conflicts of interest are provided on the ICMJE webpage, mentioned above.

Expertise and general considerations. Please check whether at least some core aspects of the work fall within your areas of expertise. If not, decline the invitation to review. Keep in mind, however, that many manuscripts contain elements from multiple disciplines, and you may have

been invited to provide an expert opinion in one particular area. *Magnetic Resonance in Medicine* always obtains at least two reviews for each manuscript.

Reviewers are selected exclusively by the editor(s), so when declining an invitation to review, please do not pass the manuscript on to any other individual. You are, however, strongly encouraged to suggest alternative referees to the editor(s).

It is perfectly acceptable for you, as a reviewer, to receive an outside opinion on some particular aspect of a manuscript. However, this assistance must be explicitly acknowledged in the confidential comments to the editor(s) accompanying the review. Except for such assistance, the manuscript is to be kept strictly confidential, including from your colleagues and team members, until publication. As stated by the ICMJE: "Reviewers must not use knowledge of the work, before its publication, to further their own interests."

### **Preparing your review**

By agreeing to perform a review, you are obligated to prepare a thorough review in a timely manner. When preparing a review, please:

- Check the originality of the content by performing a literature search. In particular, check that the content of the manuscript is original and cannot be replaced by references to the literature. While saving journal space is important, providing a clear and complete description of the methodology employed can be even more important.
- Check that the experimental design and methods are not erroneous or clearly inferior to widely-accepted practices. Please judge these, however, based on the consistency and functionality of what is described, rather than on an alternative approach that you would have personally chosen.
- Check the consistency of the results. Please avoid judgments, however, based on a pre-conceived expectation of what the results should be. Assume the results to be valid, provided they are supported by the data, and the methods employed appear to be valid. Please check that any disparity with results and conclusions of previously-published work is appropriately discussed in the manuscript.
- Check that the conclusions drawn in the manuscript are sound and can be inferred from the results presented. Speculative statements, which are not conclusively demonstrated by the results, must be clearly identified by the authors as such, and restricted to the discussion section. Please check that excessive claims and sweeping generalizations are avoided.
- Consider the importance and reader interest of the work, based on existing literature and its potential impact.

### **Points to cover and consistency**

While *Magnetic Resonance in Medicine* does not require a structured review format, your critique will typically consist of the following:

- A brief summary of some salient points of the manuscript with an overall assessment about the topic and scope of the paper.
- A summary of your overall impression of the work's strengths and weaknesses, as well as your opinion whether the manuscript has fulfilled its stated purpose.
- A numbered list of major issues.
- A numbered list of minor issues (grammar, conformance to the Style Guide, etc.), with the numbering continued from the major issues.
- Numerical scores and answers to directed questions. Please base your scores on the state of the manuscript as you reviewed it, and not its potential after an optimal revision.

As a reviewer, please check that your comments to the authors are generally consistent with your numerical scores, and that the confidential comments to the editors are generally consistent with your comments to the authors.

Revised December 2012