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# APPENDIX TO BOARD MINUTES

## BEST PRACTICES IN JOURNAL PUBLISHING

### I Guidelines for Journals

#### *Publicity:*

Journals should give detailed and up-to-date information on their areas of interest and review practice on their websites. This information should include:

- Statistics on submissions and acceptances.
- Areas of philosophy and the types of essays (stand-alone essays, discussion notes, replies to essays published in the journal) in which the journal is especially interested.
- Any special requirements for acceptance, e.g., maximum word count.
- The average review time and average time from acceptance to publication.
- The journal's practice regarding desk rejections.
- The journal's policy for reviewing resubmitted papers.
- The journal's policy on allowing authors to self-archive their work once it has been accepted/published.

#### *The Review Process:*

In acknowledging receipt of a manuscript for review, journals should make clear the expected review time and the point at which the author may appropriately inquire as to the manuscript's status. When a review is taking considerably longer than an author has been led to believe would be the case, the author should be kept informed of the progress of the review. Journals should ideally provide comments for authors when the review time significantly exceeds their own stated norms.

As noted above, journals should describe their practice regarding desk rejections on their websites. All submissions should be read anonymously on their first reading before a decision to desk reject is made. Journals should give at least a brief explanation for desk rejections that take longer than their own stated norms.

It is strongly recommended that journals use triply anonymous refereeing: the author's name and institutional affiliation should not be revealed to the editor or to the referees, and the names of the referees and their institutional affiliations should not be made known to the author. At a minimum, doubly anonymous refereeing, in which the author and the referees are ignorant of each other's identities, should be practiced.

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While any acknowledgements included in a manuscript may help editors identify appropriate referees, they should be deleted from the essays sent to referees.

Potential referees should be asked if they have any conflicts of interest with regard to the paper they are being asked to referee. If they do, another referee should be used, if at all possible. There may be good reason for editors to send papers for review to referees whose work the papers discuss. These reasons may include an interest in hearing from those written about whether an essay offers a fair and honest critique. Plus, comments from such persons may be of great use to authors. Nevertheless, their comments should always be read in context, with editors left to the use of their discretion, and substantial efforts should be made to have at least one reader who has no potential conflict of interest. Although the practice of having authors recommend referees may help save editors time, it should not be used. The potential for conflicts of interest outweighs the benefits.

Invitations to review should be very clear about the expectations and work involved. At a minimum, referee requests should note the title of the submitted piece (and preferably include the abstract where possible) and some information about what would be required from a potential referee if this person were to accept the invitation. For example, the journal should be clear as to whether or not there is a specific form that must be completed. Referees should be asked to complete a review within a specified timeframe, ideally one month. In certain instances—such as the review of papers on specialized topics—referees may be few and additional time may be required. Referees should be asked to report on submissions in a civil manner and base their recommendations on the quality of the submission and the journal's standards. Where appropriate, referees should be asked to redraft comments or editors should edit reviews to best serve the interest of authors.

It is likely and appropriate that different journals will have different practices with regard to recommendations that an author revise and resubmit a paper. It is important in every case, however, that referees be given guidance on when such a recommendation is appropriate. Authors should also be given a clear indication of just what a revise and resubmit recommendation means and informed of the required timeframe, if any, for submitting revisions. As already noted, editors should describe on the journal's webpage their general policy for reviewing resubmitted papers.

*Time to Publication:*

Journals should strive to avoid a delay of more than a year from acceptance to publication. Journals should keep in mind the possibility of publishing papers online prior to their appearance in print.

*Professional Responsibility:*

Editors should keep in mind that the profession benefits from a rich and diverse body of philosophical research.

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## **II Guidelines for Authors**

### *Manuscript Preparation:*

Prior to submitting a manuscript to a journal for review, an author should check the journal's website. There one can normally find relevant information, such as:

- The journal's stated interests as to areas of philosophy, types of essays (stand-alone essays; discussion notes; replies to essays published in the journal), and essay length.
- The journal's guidelines for manuscript preparation, especially those on how to prepare the manuscript for anonymous review.
- The journal's acceptance rate, average time for manuscript review, and average time from acceptance to publication.

Authors should make use of such information to ensure that their choice of a journal is appropriate and that they have properly prepared their manuscript for anonymous review.

### *Manuscript Submission/Resubmission:*

In submitting a manuscript for review, an author is indicating that it is not under review or forthcoming in any other publication. Journals will not review papers whose content, either in full or in substantial part, is already under review elsewhere.

If a manuscript receives a revise and resubmit recommendation, the author should promptly inform the editor of his or her intentions in this regard.

### *Requests for Information:*

While frequent requests for updates on the review of a manuscript can retard the review process, authors should not hesitate to confirm the status of their manuscript's review after a period of four months, unless the journal has already specified that the review process is likely to take longer.

### *Preparation for Publication:*

Once a manuscript is accepted for publication—and indeed throughout the review process—the author should carefully heed the editor's guidelines on manuscript preparation and respond promptly to inquiries.

In preparing a final version of the manuscript, the author should follow all instructions provided by the journal, copy-editing and proofreading the work promptly and with great care.

## **III Guidelines for Referees**

### *Professional Responsibility:*

The professional responsibility to referee falls on all members of the profession.

### *Appropriate Response Times:*

Potential referees should respond to invitations to review within one week at most. Taking longer prolongs the review process unnecessarily.

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Referees should agree to review a submission only if they believe they are likely to complete the review in the requested timeframe. If a review is likely to take more than the time requested, the referee should inform the journal editor of that fact so that the editor has the opportunity to arrange for an alternative referee.

*Civility and the Promotion of Quality Research:*

Referees should keep in mind that their role is to support the development and publication of quality research by providing comments that will not only guide the editors in their decisions but also aid the authors in improving their papers. Reviews lacking in civility or failing to respond to the quality of the research may be counterproductive.

*Standards for Review:*

While referees must ultimately rely on their own professional judgment in evaluating any manuscript, their evaluation should be informed by the journal's standards for publication. They should also decline to review manuscripts that are beyond their expertise or for which they cannot provide a fair, unbiased evaluation.

*Conflicts of Interest and Anonymity:*

Referees should identify any potential conflicts of interest to editors. They should, in particular, tell editors when they know the identity of the author. Editors can then make an informed judgment on whether to proceed with the review.

Since many philosophers post their papers on the web prior to submitting them for publication, referees are often able to identify authors by a web search. Referees should not attempt to identify the authors of papers they are reviewing.

*General Advice:*

General advice for referees is offered by Thom Brooks in "Guidelines on How to Referee" (here: [http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=1719043](http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1719043)).

#### **IV Editorial Practices Related to Copyright and Publication**

*Consideration of Previously Posted Papers:*

It is common in some disciplines for scholars and scientists to post their papers on the web prior to submitting them for consideration by a journal, for example, by releasing them to electronic archives like <http://arxiv.org/> or <http://www.ssrn.com/>. This practice is becoming more common among philosophers. In philosophy of science, Pitt provides an electronic archive for reprints, the PhilSci Archive: <http://philsci-archive.pitt.edu/>. The purpose of these archives is to facilitate rapid distribution of new work. Provided that these papers are not subject to copyright restrictions deriving from this web posting and provided that the web posting does not effectively amount to publication in an online journal (for example, because the posting is controlled by a peer-reviewed selection process),

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journal editors should, in general, be willing to consider papers which have been released to pre-print archives.

*Self-Archiving:*

Journals exhibit a range of policies for permitting authors to self-archive their published work on their own websites. Some have no conditions on self-archiving, some require acknowledgment of the published version and a link to the journal's typeset PDF, some permit only the "penultimate" version of the paper, some ask that no version of the paper which has had any editorial input be posted.

For example, the University of Chicago Press, which publishes *Ethics*, encourages authors to post the final PDF, subject only to comportsing with the embargo period imposed by archives such as JSTOR and "provided that the server is non-commercial and not intended for the systematic storage, retrieval, and delivery of scholarly material" and that appropriate credit is given to the journal. As another example, here is the policy for Springer journals (<http://www.springer.com/authors/journal+authors?SGWID=0-154202-12-467999-0>):

An author may self-archive an author-created version of his/her article on his/her own website and/or on his/her institutional repository. He/she may also deposit this version on his/her funder's or funder's designated repository at the funder's request or as a result of a legal obligation, provided it is not made publicly available until 12 months after official publication. He/she may not use the publisher's PDF version which is posted on [www.springerlink.com](http://www.springerlink.com) for the purpose of self-archiving or deposit. Furthermore, the author may only post his/her version provided acknowledgement is given to the original source of publication and a link is inserted to the published article on Springer's website. The link must be accompanied by the following text: "The original publication is available at [springerlink.com](http://springerlink.com)."

Journals should make clear to authors what their policies are about the post-acceptance and post-publication posting of their own articles. Policies significantly more restrictive than the examples above should be avoided, absent some special rationale.

*Permissions to Reprint:*

Journals and publishers are generally willing to allow authors to reprint (without charge) their published work in their own books/collected papers. Such a policy is to be favored. By contrast, it is common for publishers and journals to reserve the right to charge a fee for republication of work in an anthology which is not edited by the author him or herself. Such a policy is not unreasonable.

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