

Peer-Review Policy

General information

The policy outlined here applies to the Journal of the Laser and Health Academy.

The following types of contribution to the Journal of the Laser and Health Academy are peer-reviewed: Original Articles, Reviews (all types), Case Reports.

For any general questions and comments about the peer-review process, the journal or its editorial policies that are not addressed here, we encourage reviewers to contact the editorial office.

We ask peer-reviewers to declare any competing interests and to submit their reports via e-mail to the editorial office (journal@laserandhealth.com).

Criteria for publication

To be published in the Journal of the Laser and Health Academy, a paper should meet four general criteria:

- Provides strong evidence for its conclusions.
- Novel (we do not consider meeting report abstracts and preprints on community servers to compromise novelty).
- Of great importance to medical professionals and researchers in the field of application of laser technology in medicine
- Ideally, interesting to researchers and medical professionals in other related disciplines.

The review process

All submitted manuscripts are read by the editorial staff. Manuscripts judged to be of potential interest to our readership are sent for formal review, typically to two reviewers (more in extraordinary circumstances). The editor then makes a decision based on the reviewers' advice, from among several possibilities:

- **Accept**, with or without editorial revisions
- Invite the authors to **revise their manuscript** to address specific concerns before a final decision is reached
- **Reject outright**, typically on grounds of lack of novelty, insufficient conceptual advance or major technical and/or interpretational problems

Editorial decisions are based on the evaluation of the strength of the arguments raised by each reviewer and by the authors, and we may also consider other information not available to either party.

None of the editors participate in review of manuscripts on which they are co-authors.

Appealing a Review Decision

An author who disagrees with a review decision may appeal it, stating in writing the wish to do so within 15 days of receiving a negative review. The appeal is processed by the Journal Publications Committee. The decision reached by the Journal Publications Committee is final.

Writing the review

The primary purpose of the review is to provide the editors with the information needed to reach a decision. The review should also instruct the authors on how they can strengthen their paper to the point where it may be acceptable. As far as possible, a negative review should explain to the authors the weaknesses of their manuscript, so that rejected authors can understand the basis for the decision and see in broad terms what needs to be done to improve the manuscript for publication elsewhere. The reviewers are asked to use the Peer review form (accessible at <http://www.laserandhealth.com/journal>)

Timing

The Journal of the Laser and Health Academy is committed to rapid editorial decisions. We therefore ask reviewers to respond promptly within the number of days agreed. If reviewers anticipate a longer delay than previously expected, we ask them inform the editorial office so that we can keep the authors informed and, where necessary, find alternatives.

Anonymity

We do not release reviewers' identities to authors or to other reviewers, except when reviewers specifically ask to be identified. We ask the reviewers to forward any such request to the editorial office before undertaking any action which might disclose their identity.

Peer-review publication policies

Authors are welcome to suggest suitable independent reviewers and may also request that the journal excludes one or two individuals or laboratories. The journal sympathetically considers such requests and usually honours them, but the editor's decision on the choice of referees is final.

As a condition of agreeing to assess the manuscript, all reviewers undertake to keep submitted manuscripts and associated data confidential, and not to redistribute them without permission from the journal. By this and by other means, The Journal of the Laser and Health Academy endeavours to keep the content of all submissions confidential until the publication date. Although we go to every effort to ensure reviewers honour their promise to ensure confidentiality, we are not responsible for the conduct of reviewers.

Reviewers should be aware that it is our policy to keep their names confidential, and that we do our utmost to ensure this confidentiality. We cannot, however, guarantee to maintain this confidentiality in the face of a successful legal action to disclose identity.

Acknowledgement

The Journal of the Laser and Health Academy is appreciative of its peer-reviewers. We appreciate the time that reviewers devote to assessing the manuscripts we send them, which helps ensure the very highest quality of the published material.