PUBLISHER POLICY

Peer Review Policy

This publisher-level policy establishes the minimum peer review requirements for Eldran Academic journals. A journal may publish additional discipline-specific requirements, but those requirements must not reduce the safeguards set out here.

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PERMANENT WEB VERSION	https://eldranacademic.com/policies/peer-review/

1. Purpose and scope

This policy defines how manuscripts are assessed, how reviewers are selected and managed, how conflicts and confidentiality are handled, how editorial decisions are reached, and how disputes or integrity concerns arising during peer review are addressed.

The policy applies to all Eldran Academic Press journals and to all editors, reviewers, authors, guest editors, editorial board members, and staff or contractors who participate in manuscript evaluation. Where a journal has discipline-specific review requirements, those requirements supplement this policy.

Peer review is an expert quality-control process; it is not a guarantee that an article is free from error. Authors remain responsible for the accuracy, originality, ethical conduct, and integrity of their work before and after publication.

2. Core principles

Eldran's peer review system is governed by the following principles:

- Editorial independence. Decisions are made on scholarly and ethical grounds and are not determined by commercial considerations, article processing charges, institutional prestige, author nationality, seniority, or the publisher's financial interests.
- Expert evaluation. Manuscripts are assessed by editors and reviewers with relevant subject, methodological, or analytical expertise.
- Fairness and consistency. Comparable manuscripts should be evaluated using comparable standards, while allowing for legitimate disciplinary differences.
- Confidentiality. Submitted manuscripts, review reports, editorial correspondence, and unpublished data are treated as confidential.
- Constructive scrutiny. Review should identify material strengths and weaknesses and provide actionable, evidence-based feedback.
- Research integrity. Every submitted manuscript must undergo plagiarism and text-similarity screening and an AI-writing check before external peer review. Eldran uses a licensed Turnitin or iThenticate service for these mandatory checks: Turnitin (https://www.turnitin.com/products/similarity) and iThenticate (https://www.ithenticate.com/). Similarity and AI indicators are evidence for human editorial assessment; no score alone establishes misconduct or determines an editorial decision.
- Transparency of process. The review model, decision categories, conflicts rules, appeals route, and exceptions are described publicly.

- No target rejection rate. Eldran does not instruct editors to achieve a predetermined acceptance or rejection percentage.

3. Peer review model and anonymity

The default model is double-anonymous peer review: reviewers are not told the identities of the authors, and authors are not told the identities of the reviewers. The handling editor and authorised editorial personnel may know the identities of both parties because this is necessary to administer conflicts of interest, reviewer selection, and editorial decisions.

Authors must submit an anonymised review version when the journal requests one. Names, affiliations, acknowledgements, identifying file metadata, author contribution statements, and unnecessarily self-identifying language should be removed from the review file. References to the authors' own previous work should normally be written in the third person.

Absolute anonymity cannot be guaranteed. A preprint, public dataset, conference presentation, highly distinctive research programme, or other public information may make authorship inferable. Reviewers must not deliberately search for author identities and must disclose to the editor if they believe they have identified an author and that this creates a conflict.

Eldran does not routinely publish reviewer identities or confidential review reports. A journal may adopt an open-review initiative only if that model is clearly announced in advance and all affected participants are informed of the applicable terms.

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 Authors

- Submit work that is original, within scope, ethically conducted, accurately reported, and prepared in accordance with the journal's author guidelines.
- Provide an anonymised review manuscript where required and avoid attempts to identify or contact reviewers.
- Disclose relevant competing interests, funding, prior dissemination, related manuscripts, and other information required by the journal.
- Respond to reviewer and editor comments carefully and professionally, normally through a point-by-point response.
- Correct factual errors identified during review and explain, with evidence or reasoned argument, any reviewer request that is not adopted.
- Notify the journal promptly if a significant error, ethics issue, authorship dispute, duplicate submission, or other integrity concern is discovered.

4.2 Reviewers

- Accept assignments only when they have sufficient expertise and can return a careful review within the requested timeframe.
- Declare conflicts of interest or circumstances that could reasonably affect, or appear to affect, impartiality.
- Assess the manuscript on its scholarly merits, methods, analysis, evidence, reporting, ethics, and fit with the journal.
- Provide specific, constructive, respectful, and evidence-based comments rather than unsupported judgments.
- Keep the manuscript and review process confidential and refrain from using unpublished ideas, methods, data, code, or findings for personal advantage.
- Avoid coercive citation, personal criticism, discriminatory language, or attempts to influence authors for non-scholarly reasons.

- Notify the editor promptly if plagiarism, fabricated data, manipulated images, undeclared conflicts, unethical research, or other serious concerns are suspected.

4.3 Handling editors

- Conduct an independent editorial assessment and select reviewers whose expertise is appropriate to the manuscript.
- Manage conflicts of interest, reviewer invitations, deadlines, additional review, and communication with authors.
- Evaluate the substance and quality of review reports rather than treating reviewer recommendations as votes.
- Make or recommend decisions using the manuscript, reviewer evidence, journal standards, and any research-integrity findings.
- Intervene when reviews are abusive, irrelevant, coercive, superficial, conflicted, or otherwise unsuitable.
- Escalate unresolved integrity, appeals, or complex procedural matters to the Editor-in-Chief or designated publisher-level function.

4.4 Editors-in-Chief and senior editorial oversight

Editors-in-Chief are responsible for the integrity and consistent application of peer review within their journals. They may reassign a manuscript, request additional expert review, review a disputed editorial decision, or intervene where process quality, conflict of interest, or research integrity requires senior oversight. They must recuse themselves from cases in which they have a conflict.

4.5 Editorial Office and Research Integrity function

The Editorial Office administers technical checks, workflow controls, communications, documentation, and policy compliance. A designated Research Integrity Lead or equivalent function may investigate concerns before, during, after, or independent of peer review. Integrity findings may affect whether a manuscript proceeds, is paused, is rejected, or requires further expert assessment.

5. Article types and level of review

Original Research, Review Articles, Systematic Reviews and Meta-analyses, Methods or Technical Articles, substantial Perspectives, Policy or Practice Articles, Case Studies, and other content presented as peer reviewed normally undergo full external peer review.

Full external peer review ordinarily requires at least two independent reviewer reports before acceptance. Additional reviewers may be invited when expertise is divided, reports conflict materially, specialist statistical or methodological assessment is needed, or the editor considers the evidence insufficient for a reliable decision.

Editorials, publisher notices, corrections, retractions, obituaries, short invited introductions, and certain commentaries may undergo editorial review rather than external peer review. Such content must not be presented or labelled as externally peer reviewed unless external review actually occurred.

Transparency rule The review pathway must match the label shown to readers. Editorially reviewed content must not be represented as externally peer reviewed.

6. Submission and technical screening

Before substantive editorial review, the Editorial Office may assess whether the submission is administratively and technically ready to enter the review process. Checks may include:

- journal and article-type fit at a basic administrative level;
- completeness of manuscript files, figures, tables, declarations, and required metadata;

- author identity and contact information;
- anonymisation of the review file where required;
- mandatory plagiarism, text-similarity and AI-writing screening through Turnitin or iThenticate, followed by human editorial review;
- ethics approval, consent, trial registration, animal-research information, or other required declarations;
- authorship, contributorship, funding, competing-interest, data-availability, and AI-use statements;
- image, figure, data, reference, and citation anomalies where screening tools or editorial review identify concerns;
- basic language and presentation sufficient to permit meaningful expert review.

A technical check is not peer review and does not imply that the manuscript will be sent to external reviewers. Authors may be asked to correct administrative deficiencies before editorial assessment.

7. Editorial assessment before external review

A handling editor or Editor-in-Chief conducts an initial scholarly assessment. A manuscript may be declined without external review when the editor concludes that external review would not be a responsible use of reviewer time.

Reasons for an editorial rejection without external review may include:

- the manuscript is materially outside the journal's aims and scope;
- the research question or scholarly contribution is insufficiently defined for the article type;
- the study design, methods, analysis, or evidence contain fundamental limitations that cannot reasonably be corrected through revision;
- the submission lacks essential ethical approval, consent, registration, or legal permission required for the work;
- the manuscript is duplicative, substantially overlapping, plagiarised, fabricated, falsified, or otherwise incompatible with publication-integrity requirements;
- the presentation is so incomplete or unclear that reliable peer review is not possible;
- the work does not meet the journal's minimum reporting, transparency, or evidentiary requirements.

Editorial rejection without external review should identify the principal reason sufficiently clearly to allow the authors to understand the basis of the decision. It is not a judgment of the authors' standing or institutional reputation.

8. Reviewer selection and verification

Reviewers are selected for subject-matter, methodological, statistical, technical, policy, disciplinary, or other expertise relevant to the manuscript. Selection should be based on demonstrated knowledge rather than title or institutional prestige alone.

The editor should consider, as appropriate:

- relevant publication, professional, technical, methodological, or practice expertise;
- independence from the authors and the work under review;
- the need for complementary expertise across the reviewer panel;
- reasonable diversity of institutions, geography, career stage, and perspective without compromising expertise;
- previous review quality, timeliness, and professional conduct;
- identity verification using institutional profiles, ORCID, publication records, professional webpages, or other reliable sources.

Author-suggested reviewers may be considered but are not guaranteed to be invited. Editors must independently verify their suitability and identity. Requests to exclude particular reviewers may be considered when a specific conflict or credible concern is provided, but the final selection remains an editorial decision.

Editors should be alert to suspicious reviewer identities, non-institutional email addresses unsupported by a verifiable scholarly profile, unusual reviewer clusters, rapid or formulaic reports, and other indicators of manipulated peer review.

9. Conflicts of interest

Editors and reviewers must disclose any relationship or interest that could reasonably be expected to affect impartiality or create a perception of bias. Disclosure allows the editor to determine whether recusal or other safeguards are required.

Potential conflicts include, but are not limited to:

- current employment at the same institution or organisational unit as an author;
- recent coauthorship, active collaboration, grant partnership, supervisory relationship, or close professional dependency;
- personal, family, financial, commercial, legal, ideological, or competitive relationships that could materially affect judgment;
- direct involvement in the work, dataset, intervention, technology, policy, product, organisation, or dispute being evaluated;
- a strong public position for or against a central claim when that position would make impartial assessment doubtful.

A prior professional acquaintance is not automatically disqualifying; the relevant question is whether a reasonable person could doubt the individual's ability to provide an independent assessment. When in doubt, disclosure is required.

10. Reviewer invitations and acceptance of assignments

Reviewer invitations should provide the manuscript title and abstract or equivalent summary, expected review timeframe, journal review model, confidentiality requirements, and a mechanism to accept or decline.

By accepting, a reviewer confirms that they have appropriate expertise, can meet the deadline, have disclosed relevant conflicts, will preserve confidentiality, and will comply with this policy.

A reviewer who later discovers a conflict, lacks sufficient expertise, becomes unable to complete the review, or believes another expert is required should contact the editor promptly rather than submit an inadequate report.

11. Confidentiality and secure handling of manuscripts

Manuscripts under review are confidential documents. Reviewers and editors must not share them, reproduce them, discuss them outside the authorised review process, or use unpublished information for research, commercial, competitive, teaching, media, or other purposes without permission.

Reviewers must not contact authors directly about the manuscript. All substantive review communication should pass through the journal's editorial system or Editorial Office.

Where a reviewer needs confidential input from a colleague or trainee, prior permission from the editor is required and the contributor must be identified to the editor. The invited reviewer remains responsible for the submitted report.

Downloaded manuscript files should be stored securely and deleted when no longer required for the review, subject to any institutional record obligations that have been disclosed to the journal.

12. Use of artificial intelligence in peer review

Editors and reviewers must not upload confidential manuscripts, figures, datasets, supplementary files, unpublished review materials, or identifiable author information to public or third-party generative AI systems unless Eldran has expressly authorised a secure tool for that purpose and the applicable confidentiality and data-protection conditions are satisfied.

A reviewer remains personally accountable for the intellectual content, accuracy, confidentiality, and fairness of the review. AI-generated text must not substitute for expert evaluation.

If an authorised AI-assisted tool is used in an editorial or review task, any disclosure required by Eldran's current AI policy must be made. Suspected undisclosed use that compromises confidentiality or review quality may result in the report being disregarded and the reviewer being removed from the assignment.

13. Reviewer assessment criteria

Reviewers should evaluate the manuscript in relation to its article type and discipline, including where relevant:

- Scope and contribution: whether the manuscript addresses a clear question, problem, objective, or scholarly purpose appropriate to the journal.
- Originality and context: whether the work is sufficiently distinct from prior literature and accurately situated within relevant scholarship.
- Methods and design: whether the design, materials, sampling, procedures, models, instruments, interventions, or analytical methods are appropriate and described with sufficient transparency.
- Analysis and evidence: whether analyses are technically sound, appropriately interpreted, and adequate to support the claims made.
- Results and reporting: whether results are presented clearly, completely, and without selective emphasis or unsupported extrapolation.
- Conclusions: whether conclusions follow from the evidence and appropriately acknowledge uncertainty and limitations.
- Reproducibility and transparency: whether data, code, protocols, materials, computational settings, or other resources are described or made available as appropriate to the field.
- Research ethics: whether relevant ethics, consent, registration, welfare, privacy, biosafety, or legal requirements appear to have been satisfied.
- References: whether citations are relevant, balanced, current enough for the topic, and free from obvious citation manipulation.
- Presentation: whether figures, tables, terminology, structure, and language support accurate understanding of the work.

14. Reporting standards and research ethics

Reviewers are not expected to act as compliance officers for every reporting guideline, but they should identify material omissions that affect interpretability, reproducibility, ethical assessment, or confidence in the findings.

Where relevant to the study design, authors and reviewers should use recognised reporting and ethics resources, including:

- EQUATOR Network reporting guidelines: https://www.equator-network.org/reporting-guidelines/
- CONSORT and SPIRIT: https://www.consort-spirit.org/
- PRISMA: https://www.prisma-statement.org/

- ARRIVE Guidelines: https://arriveguidelines.org/
- World Medical Association Declaration of Helsinki: https://www.wma.net/policies-post/wma-declaration-of-helsinki/

Journal-specific author guidelines may identify additional standards for particular disciplines, methods, datasets, clinical designs, animal research, qualitative research, policy evaluation, computational work, or other study types.

15. Standards for review reports

A useful review report should be sufficiently detailed to support an editorial decision and help the authors understand what must be addressed. It should distinguish essential concerns from optional suggestions.

Review reports should normally contain:

- a brief overall assessment of the manuscript and its principal contribution;
- major comments addressing validity, methods, analysis, ethics, interpretation, reporting, or other issues that could affect the publication decision;
- minor comments addressing clarity, presentation, references, terminology, or limited corrections;
- specific page, section, figure, table, equation, or line references where practical;
- a confidential recommendation to the editor using the journal's decision categories;
- confidential comments to the editor only when information should not appropriately be disclosed to the authors.

Reviewers should not make personal remarks about authors, speculate about motives, demand unnecessary experiments merely to expand the paper, require citations for the purpose of increasing personal or journal citation counts, or rewrite a manuscript to reflect the reviewer's preferred style when the original is scientifically adequate.

16. Editorial decisions

Reviewer recommendations inform but do not determine the editorial decision. Peer review is not a vote. The editor must evaluate the reasoning, expertise, consistency, conflicts, and evidentiary basis of each report together with the manuscript itself.

The standard decision categories are:

- Accept: the manuscript is suitable for publication subject only to production-level corrections.
- Minor revision: limited changes are required and the central design, analysis, and conclusions are not materially in question.
- Major revision: substantial changes, clarification, additional analysis, methodological justification, or restructuring are required before a publication decision can be made.
- Reject: the manuscript is not suitable for publication in its current form and the identified problems are not reasonably addressable through the journal's revision process.
- Reject without external review: an editorial decision made before full external review for reasons described in Section 7.

Editors should provide authors with the substantive reviewer comments used in the decision, except where a confidential comment raises a legitimate privacy, security, misconduct, legal, or other issue that should not be transmitted verbatim.

17. Revision and author response

A revision invitation does not guarantee eventual acceptance. Authors should submit a revised manuscript and a point-by-point response explaining how each material comment was addressed.

Authors are not required to accept every reviewer suggestion. When a requested change is not made, the response should explain the scholarly, methodological, ethical, practical, or evidentiary reason.

Major revisions will normally be returned to one or more original reviewers. Minor revisions may be assessed by the handling editor without further external review when the editor can reliably determine that the requested changes have been completed.

If a revision introduces substantial new methods, data, analyses, claims, or ethical considerations, the editor may obtain additional review even if the previous reviewers had recommended acceptance.

18. Additional review, disagreement and specialist review

Conflicting reviewer recommendations are not resolved mechanically. The handling editor should identify the substantive source of disagreement and may decide the matter, seek clarification, invite an additional independent reviewer, or obtain specialist statistical, methodological, technical, ethics, or other advice.

Additional review should be used to resolve a genuine evidentiary or expertise gap, not merely to search for a preferred recommendation.

A reviewer may recommend rejection at any stage, but the final decision remains editorial. A reviewer may also withdraw from an assignment; the editor will determine whether replacement review is required.

19. Acceptance and final validation

For article types requiring full external peer review, acceptance ordinarily requires completion of the minimum review requirement, resolution of material reviewer and editor concerns, and a final editorial determination that the manuscript meets the journal's publication standards.

Before publication, Eldran may conduct final checks including:

- completion and adequacy of peer review;
- required ethics, authorship, funding, competing-interest, AI-use, and data-availability declarations;
- reference and metadata completeness;
- figure, table, image, data, supplementary-file, or licence issues;
- resolution of research-integrity concerns;
- production readiness and consistency between accepted files and metadata.

An acceptance decision may be paused or reconsidered before publication if a material integrity, legal, ethical, authorship, data, conflict, or peer-review-process concern is discovered.

20. Rejection and withdrawal from consideration

A manuscript may be rejected before external review, during review, after revision, or before publication when the editorial record supports rejection under the journal's scholarly, ethical, or integrity standards.

Reasons may include:

- fundamental methodological, analytical, evidentiary, or interpretive weaknesses;
- failure to address material peer review concerns after a reasonable revision opportunity;
- insufficient support for the principal conclusions;
- serious reporting deficiencies that prevent reliable evaluation;
- ethics, consent, registration, privacy, biosafety, legal, authorship, data, image, or research-integrity problems;

- plagiarism, duplicate publication, fabrication, falsification, manipulated review activity, or other misconduct;
- persistent non-responsiveness after the journal's final communication.

Authors may withdraw a manuscript before acceptance by submitting a clear withdrawal request. A withdrawal request does not prevent Eldran from completing an integrity assessment if a serious concern arose while the manuscript was under consideration.

21. Research integrity intervention

Peer review does not replace research-integrity review. If a concern arises, the editorial process may be paused while the Editorial Office, Editor-in-Chief, Research Integrity Lead, or an appropriately independent expert examines the issue.

Eldran may request original data, ethics documentation, consent records, protocol information, image files, code, authorship clarification, institutional confirmation, or other materials reasonably necessary to investigate a concern.

Where appropriate, Eldran may follow recognised publication-ethics procedures and may contact an author's institution, funder, ethics body, or another journal when necessary to investigate or protect the scholarly record, subject to applicable confidentiality and legal obligations.

22. Peer review manipulation and fraudulent review activity

Eldran prohibits attempts to manipulate reviewer selection, reviewer identity, editorial assignment, review reports, or decision-making. Examples include fabricated reviewer identities, false email accounts, impersonation, peer review rings, undisclosed third-party review preparation, coordinated reciprocal reviewing, and submission of deceptive or fabricated review reports.

Suspected manipulation may lead to reviewer removal, reassignment of the manuscript, cancellation of affected reviews, rejection, editorial-board action, post-publication investigation, or notification of relevant institutions or organisations where appropriate.

Editors must independently verify reviewer identities and should not rely solely on reviewer contact details supplied by authors.

23. Citation ethics and coercive citation

Reviewers and editors may recommend additional references when they are genuinely necessary to correct an omission, support a claim, provide relevant context, or improve methodological accuracy.

Requests designed primarily to increase citations to the reviewer, editor, journal, publisher, research group, or preferred school of thought are prohibited. A reviewer who repeatedly makes unjustified citation demands may be removed from assignments or the reviewer pool.

Authors should not add citations solely to satisfy coercive requests. They should explain in the response letter when a requested citation is not relevant or necessary.

24. Professional conduct and respectful communication

All participants must communicate professionally. Critical assessment is expected; hostile, insulting, discriminatory, threatening, harassing, or demeaning language is not.

Editors may edit or withhold inappropriate reviewer wording while preserving the scholarly substance of the review, request that a reviewer revise the report, disregard the report, or remove the reviewer from the assignment.

Persistent abusive conduct by an author, reviewer, or editor may result in termination of the review interaction and further action under Eldran's complaints, ethics, or governance policies.

25. Timelines and non-responsiveness

Eldran aims for rigorous review without unnecessary delay. Timeframes are operational targets rather than guarantees because reviewer availability, study complexity, revisions, specialist advice, and integrity checks vary.

Stage	Typical target	Notes
Technical screening	3-5 business days	Longer where documents or integrity clarification are required.
Initial editorial assessment	5-10 business days	May result in external review, revision before review, or rejection without review.
Reviewer response to invitation	Up to 5 days	Non-response may result in replacement invitation.
External review after acceptance	14-21 days	Complex or specialist work may require more time.
Minor revision	Usually 14 days	Extensions may be requested before the deadline.
Major revision	Usually 30 days	Longer periods may be granted for substantial work.
Decision after complete reports/revision	Usually within 7 business days	May be longer if additional review or integrity assessment is needed.

If authors do not respond to revision or editorial requests, the journal may send reminders and a final notice. A manuscript may be administratively closed or rejected after approximately 30 days of unexplained non-responsiveness following the final communication, depending on the stage and circumstances.

Reviewers who become overdue may receive reminders and may be replaced if delay threatens timely editorial handling. Repeated unexplained lateness may affect future invitations.

26. Appeals and complaints

Authors may appeal a rejection or other substantive editorial decision when they believe there has been a material factual error, procedural irregularity, undisclosed conflict, misapplication of policy, or significant misunderstanding of the manuscript.

An appeal should normally be submitted within 30 calendar days of the decision, identify the manuscript, state the specific grounds, and provide a concise evidence-based explanation. Repetition of arguments already considered, disagreement without new reasoning, or demands for acceptance are not by themselves grounds for an appeal.

Where practicable, an appeal will be reviewed by a senior editor who was not responsible for the original decision. The reviewer may uphold the decision, request further assessment, return the manuscript to review, or identify a procedural remedy.

Scientific disagreement and service complaints are distinct. Complaints about conduct, delay, communication, conflicts, or administration should follow Eldran's Complaints & Appeals Policy. Integrity allegations should be directed to the Research Integrity function.

Intended contacts for the public policy are:

- Editorial enquiries: editorial@eldranacademic.com
- Appeals and complaints: appeals@eldranacademic.com
- Research integrity: integrity@eldranacademic.com

27. Special issues and guest-edited content

Special issues, thematic collections, and guest-edited content are subject to the same peer review, conflict, integrity, and decision standards as regular submissions.

Guest editors must not handle their own submissions or manuscripts where they have a conflict. The journal's Editor-in-Chief or an independent senior editor retains oversight and may reassign manuscripts, replace reviewers, require additional review, or overturn a guest-editor recommendation where policy compliance or integrity requires it.

Commercial sponsorship, conference affiliation, institutional partnership, or collection targets must not determine acceptance decisions.

28. Submissions from editors, board members and publisher personnel

Editors, editorial board members, staff, and publisher personnel may submit scholarly work, but they must have no role in selecting the handling editor, selecting reviewers, accessing confidential reviews, or making the decision on their own manuscript.

Such submissions must be assigned to an appropriately independent editor. Where the author is an Editor-in-Chief, the manuscript should be handled by another senior editor or a suitably independent external editor.

The published article may include a transparency statement describing the author's editorial role and the independent handling arrangement.

29. Editorials, commentaries and other non-research content

Not every item published by Eldran requires the same form of external peer review. Editorials, publisher statements, corrections, retractions, and certain invited commentaries may be assessed editorially for accuracy, relevance, ethics, conflicts, and clarity.

Where an Editorial, Commentary, Perspective, or similar item undergoes external peer review, that status may be stated. Where it does not, the article must not carry language implying external peer review.

Editorial review may include assessment by the Editor-in-Chief, another independent editor, or a subject expert where the topic, conflict profile, or complexity warrants additional scrutiny.

30. Preprints and prior dissemination

Posting a manuscript as a legitimate preprint does not ordinarily disqualify it from consideration. Authors must disclose relevant preprints and update them in accordance with the journal's preprint policy.

Because public preprints can reveal author identity, double-anonymous review cannot guarantee that reviewers will be unable to infer authorship. Reviewers must nevertheless evaluate the manuscript independently and must not deliberately investigate author identity.

Conference abstracts, theses, repositories, working papers, reports, and other prior dissemination are assessed under the journal's originality and prior-publication policies.

31. Reviewer recognition and confidentiality

Eldran may provide reviewer acknowledgement letters, certificates, annual recognition, or verified review credit where technically available and where doing so does not breach manuscript confidentiality.

Any future ORCID-based peer review recognition will be implemented only with reviewer consent and appropriate privacy safeguards. Recognition of service does not require publication of the confidential review report or disclosure of the manuscript reviewed.

32. Peer review records, audit and data protection

Eldran maintains editorial records necessary to document reviewer invitations, conflicts, reports, decisions, revisions, appeals, and integrity actions. Access is restricted according to role and operational need.

Records may be retained for audit, dispute resolution, research-integrity work, legal obligations, and protection of the scholarly record in accordance with Eldran's Privacy Policy and records-retention practices.

Peer review information is processed for scholarly publishing purposes. Participants should not place unnecessary personal, sensitive, or confidential information in review reports or editorial correspondence.

33. Article processing charges and editorial independence

Article processing charges, waiver requests, discounts, sponsorship, and an author's ability or inability to pay must not influence peer review or editorial decisions.

Reviewers are not informed of an author's payment or waiver status unless an exceptional administrative reason makes disclosure necessary. Editors must not make acceptance contingent on payment.

Where an APC applies, it is handled after the editorial decision in accordance with the journal's APC & Waiver Policy. Rejected manuscripts are not charged an APC.

34. Post-acceptance and post-publication peer review concerns

A manuscript may be returned to review after provisional acceptance if a material issue emerges before publication. After publication, credible concerns about methods, data, ethics, authorship, images, reporting, conflicts, peer review, or conclusions may trigger post-publication assessment.

Post-publication action may include requests for clarification, correction, expression of concern, retraction, or other measures under Eldran's Corrections & Retractions and Research Integrity policies. Prior peer review does not prevent correction of the scholarly record.

35. Policy exceptions, amendments and precedence

A documented exception may be approved when the manuscript type, field, legal requirement, emergency public-interest circumstance, or other legitimate reason makes the standard process inappropriate. Exceptions must preserve editorial independence and research-integrity safeguards.

Where a journal-specific peer review statement is more stringent than this policy, the more stringent requirement applies. Where there is a conflict, this publisher-level policy takes precedence unless Eldran Academic Press has formally approved and published the journal-specific exception.

Eldran may revise this policy as publishing standards, technology, law, or editorial practice evolve. Material changes should be dated and published with a new version number.

36. External standards and guidance

This policy is intended to operate consistently with recognised scholarly-publishing and reporting guidance. The following resources are provided as direct external references:

- Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE): https://publicationethics.org/
- COPE Ethical Guidelines for Peer Reviewers: https://members.publicationethics.org/sites/default/files/cope-ethical-guidelines-peer-reviewers-v2_0.pdf
- COPE Core Practices: https://publicationethics.org/core-practices
- EQUATOR Network reporting guidelines: https://www.equator-network.org/reporting-guidelines/

- CONSORT and SPIRIT: https://www.consort-spirit.org/
- PRISMA: https://www.prisma-statement.org/
- ARRIVE Guidelines: https://arriveguidelines.org/
- World Medical Association Declaration of Helsinki: https://www.wma.net/policies-post/wma-declaration-of-helsinki/

37. Scholarly standards and infrastructure

Eldran uses external standards and infrastructure as sources of guidance, identity information, reporting frameworks and scholarly services. A citation or link does not state that Eldran is a member, accredited publisher, indexed journal or certified participant. Any formal status statement must be published only after that status has been verified.

ORCID records may support reviewer or editor identity checks where an individual supplies an identifier, but an ORCID record does not by itself establish expertise, independence or suitability. Editors must consider the complete evidence available and manage conflicts under this policy.

- ORCID: https://orcid.org/
- EQUATOR Network: https://www.equator-network.org/

38. Related policies

These pages provide the related publisher-level requirements and should be read together with this document where their subject matter applies.

- How We Publish and Editorial Independence: https://eldranacademic.com/policies/how-we-publish/
- Research Integrity: https://eldranacademic.com/policies/research-integrity/
- Complaints and Appeals: https://eldranacademic.com/policies/complaints-and-appeals/
- Corrections and Retractions: https://eldranacademic.com/policies/corrections-and-retractions/
- Thematic Collections and Special Issues: https://eldranacademic.com/policies/thematic-collections/
- Privacy Policy: https://eldranacademic.com/policies/privacy/
- Author Guidelines: https://eldranacademic.com/author-guidelines/

Appendix A. Editorial decision definitions

Decision	Meaning
Reject without external review	The manuscript is declined following editorial assessment before full external peer review. The decision should identify the principal reason.
Major revision	Substantial scientific, methodological, analytical, ethical, interpretive, or reporting concerns must be addressed before a publication decision is possible.
Minor revision	The core work is potentially publishable and required changes are limited, specific, and do not normally require redesign of the study.
Accept	The scholarly review is complete and only production-level or very limited editorial corrections remain.
Reject	The manuscript cannot be accepted through the current revision process because material concerns remain or because publication standards are not met.

Reviewer recommendation and editorial decision are deliberately distinguished. A reviewer recommends; the editor decides. An editor may reach a decision different from a reviewer recommendation when the record supports that outcome and the reasoning is documented.

Appendix B. Reviewer checklist

Reviewers can use the following checklist when preparing a report.

Area	Reviewer question	Notes / concerns
Scope and contribution	Is the question or purpose clear, relevant to the journal, and sufficiently grounded in prior work?	
Originality	Does the manuscript explain what is new, different, confirmatory, or otherwise useful?	
Study design	Is the design appropriate to the question, and are limitations acknowledged?	
Methods	Are procedures, materials, data sources, models, interventions, or analytical steps described well enough to evaluate?	
Sampling and data	Are inclusion criteria, sample construction, data quality, missing data, exclusions, and relevant sources described appropriately?	
Analysis	Are statistical, computational, qualitative, policy, or other analytical methods suitable and correctly interpreted?	
Results	Are the findings presented clearly and completely, without selective reporting or unsupported emphasis?	
Conclusions	Do the conclusions follow from the evidence, and are uncertainty and limitations treated appropriately?	
Ethics and permissions	Are ethics approval, consent, registration, privacy, animal welfare, biosafety, or legal permissions addressed where relevant?	
Reproducibility and transparency	Are data, code, protocols, materials, computational settings, or other resources described or shared as appropriate?	
Reporting guidelines	Does the manuscript follow applicable discipline-specific reporting guidance?	
References	Are references relevant and balanced? Are important omissions or suspicious citation patterns present?	
Figures and tables	Are visual materials accurate, legible, necessary, and consistent with the text?	
Language and presentation	Is the manuscript understandable enough to permit reliable scientific assessment?	
Integrity concerns	Is there any indication of plagiarism, fabrication, falsification, image manipulation, duplicate publication, undisclosed conflict, or peer review manipulation?	
Recommendation	Which decision category is supported by the reasons given in the report?	

Final reviewer reminder The purpose of review is to provide an independent expert assessment that helps the editor reach a defensible decision and helps the authors improve the scholarly record. A strong review is specific, proportionate, respectful, evidence-based, and focused on issues that materially affect quality, validity, transparency, or interpretation.

CONTACT

Eldran Academic Press - editorial@eldranacademic.com - https://eldranacademic.com