



Reviewers Guidelines



Campos dos Goytacazes/RJ
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The quality of the main material published in scientific journals, the scientific papers, is the result of a long and complex work involving authors, editors and reviewers, only possible through the partnership between those involved. In this process, the evaluators have an important role, since part of the contributions to the development of the knowledge produced comes from these collaborations that verify, propose, suggest and validate the material to be published, but they can reach this function without any guidance, ignoring their ethical obligations. On the other hand, success in the evaluation process depends on guidance, standardization and clear rules that make this collaborative work feasible, in addition to clear communication. In this sense, we understand that Scientific Journals have an obligation to provide transparent policies for peer review, and reviewers have an obligation to conduct reviews in an ethical and responsible manner. Thus, for this purpose, we present below the **Reviewers Guidelines** for **Vértices** magazine that were prepared based on the recommendations described in the COPE Ethical Guidelines for Peer Reviewers, version 2, September 2017 (https://publicationethics.org/files/Ethical_Guidelines_For_Peer_Reviewers_2.pdf).

1. Concept

Peer review, for the purposes of these **Reviewers Guidelines**, “refers to the reviews provided on manuscript submissions to journals, but can also include reviews for other platforms and apply to public commenting that can occur pre- or post-publication.” (COPE, 2017, p. 1).

Vértices magazine follows the model of peer review presented in Chart 1, elaborated from the recommendations of the COPE Council (2017).

Chart 1. **Vértices** magazine’s peer review model

TIMING	Pre-publication
IDENTIFIABILITY	Double blind
MEDIATION	Editors mediate all interactions between reviewers and authors and have the final decision on publication
PUBLICATION	Peer reviews are not published
FACILITATION	Review facilitated by a third-party (copyeditor and standard reviewers)
OWNERSHIP	Review owned by Essentia Editora

Source: Adapted from COPE Council 2017

2. Professional responsibility of the reviewer

Authors who have benefited from the peer review process should consider becoming peer reviewers as a part of their professional responsibilities. In **Vértices** magazine, the reviewer is invited and follows all posted requirements, sending an email and a link to access the OJS system, in addition to a login and password. The potential reviewer accesses the system and, in the case of acceptance to participate in the review process, selects the option "Accept review", thus becoming part of the board of reviewers. Registered reviewers must update / supplement their personal and professional information in order to represent their knowledge, including verifiable and accurate information.

Reviewers should be aware of these guidelines and follow the requirements proposed to proceed with the evaluation of the manuscript.

It is important to recognize that impersonation of another individual during the review process is considered serious misconduct. This conduct is considered as peer review committed to roles. When approached to review, agree to review only if you have the necessary expertise to assess the manuscript and can be unbiased in your assessment. It is better to identify clearly any gaps in your expertise when asked to review.

3. Competing interests

Ensure you declare all potential competing, or conflicting, interests. If you are unsure about a potential competing interest that may prevent you from reviewing, do raise this. Competing interests may be personal, financial, intellectual, professional, political or religious in nature. If you are currently employed at the same institution as any of the authors or have been recent (e.g., within the past 3 years) mentors, mentees, close collaborators or joint grant holders, you should not agree to review. In addition, you should not agree to review manuscript just to gain sight of it with no intention of submitting a review, or agree to review a manuscript that is very similar to one you have in preparation or under consideration at another journal.

Potential competing or conflict of interests should be informed to the editors of **Vértices** magazine by sending an e-mail to essentia@iff.edu.br

4. Timeliness

It is courteous to respond to an invitation to peer review within a reasonable time-frame, even if you cannot undertake the review. If you feel qualified to judge a particular manuscript, you should agree to review only if you are able to return a review within the proposed or mutually agreed time-frame. Always inform the journal promptly if your circumstances change and you cannot fulfil your original agreement or if you require an extension. If you cannot review, it is helpful to make suggestions for alternative reviewers if relevant, based on their expertise and without any influence of personal considerations or any intention of the manuscript receiving a specific outcome (either positive or negative).

5. Conducting a review

5.1 Initial steps

Read the manuscript, supplementary data files and ancillary material thoroughly (e.g., reviewer instructions, required ethics and policy statements), getting back to the journal if anything is not clear and requesting any missing or incomplete items you need. Do not contact the authors directly without the permission of **Vértices** magazine.

5.2 Confidentiality

Respect the confidentiality of the peer review process and refrain from using information obtained during the peer review process for your own or another's advantage, or to disadvantage or discredit others. Do not involve anyone else in the review of a manuscript (including early career researchers you are mentoring), without first obtaining permission from **Vértices** magazine. The names of any individuals who have helped with the review should be included so that they are associated with the manuscript in the journal's records and can also receive due recognition for their efforts.

5.3 Bias and competing interests

It is important to remain unbiased by considerations related to the nationality, religious or political beliefs, gender or other characteristics of the authors, origins of a manuscript or by commercial considerations. If you discover a competing interest that might prevent you from providing a fair and unbiased review, notify **Vértices** magazine and seek advice. While waiting for a response, refrain from looking at the manuscript and associated material in case the request to review is rescinded. Similarly, notify the journal as soon as possible if you find you do not have the necessary expertise to assess the relevant aspects of a manuscript so as not to unduly delay the review process. In the case of **Vértices** magazine, the review process is double-blind, so if you suspect the identity of the author (s), notify the journal if this knowledge raises any potential competing or conflict of interest.

5.4 Suspicion of ethics violations

If you come across any irregularities with respect to research and publication ethics do let **Vértices** magazine's editors know. For example, you may have concerns that misconduct occurred during either the research or the writing and submission of the manuscript, or you may notice substantial similarity between the manuscript and a concurrent submission to another journal or a published article. In the case of these or any other ethical concerns, contact the editor directly and do not attempt to investigate on your own. It is appropriate to cooperate, in confidence, with the journal, but not to personally investigate further unless the journal asks for additional information or advice.

5.5 Transferability of peer review

If a manuscript is rejected from one journal and submitted to **Vértices** magazine, and you are asked to review that same manuscript, you should be prepared to review the manuscript afresh as it may have changed between the two submissions and the journal's criteria for evaluation and acceptance may be different. In the interests of transparency and efficiency it may be appropriate to provide your original review for **Vértices** magazine (with permission to do so from the original journal), explaining that you had reviewed the submission previously and noting any changes.

6. Preparing a report

6.1 Format

Vértices magazine uses the OJS system and provides an electronic form so that it can be filled out and posted by the reviewer with aspects to be considered as originality and importance of the contribution, adequacy to the **Vértices** editorial line, adequate methodology, compliance with ethical / integrity criteria of the research, relationship between the proposed problem and data presentation / analysis, conclusion supported by the data, clarity, consistency and textual organization, indication of the main strengths and weaknesses of the manuscript.

Be objective and constructive in your review, providing feedback that will help the authors to improve their manuscript. For example, be specific in your critique, and provide supporting evidence with appropriate references to substantiate general statements, to help editors in their evaluation. Be professional and refrain from being hostile or inflammatory and from making libellous or derogatory personal comments or unfounded accusations.

6.2 Appropriate feedback

Bear in mind that the editor requires a fair, honest, and unbiased **assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the manuscript** (positive aspects and strengths of the manuscript, while pointing out the flaws to be remedied). It is possible to provide confidential comments to the editor as well as comments to be read by the authors. In **Vértices** magazine, it is necessary to make a recommendation at the end of the evaluation: unconditional approval / conditional approval with the changes requested on the additional comments / rejection. Any recommendation should be congruent with the comments provided in the review. If you have not reviewed the whole manuscript, do indicate which aspects of the manuscript you have assessed. Ensure your comments and recommendations for the editor are consistent with your report for the authors; most feedback should be put in the report that the authors will see. Confidential comments to the editor should not be a place for denigration or false accusation, done in the knowledge that the authors will not see your comments.

6.3 Language and style

Remember it is the authors' paper, so do not attempt to rewrite it to your own preferred style. Make sure the text is sound and clear; suggestions for changes that improve clarity are important. In addition, be aware of the sensitivities surrounding language issues that are due to the authors. The feedback must be presented appropriately and with due respect.

6.4 Suggestions for further work

The reviewer must comment on the quality and rigour of the work they receive. If the work is not clear because of missing analyses, the reviewer should comment and explain what additional analyses would clarify the work submitted. It is not the job of the reviewer to extend the work beyond its current scope. Suggestions for additional investigations (if any) are essential to support claims made in the manuscript under consideration and which will just strengthen or extend the work.

6.5 Accountability

Prepare the report by yourself, unless you have permission from **Vértices** magazine to involve another person. Refrain from making unfair negative comments or including unjustified criticisms of any competitors' work that is mentioned in the manuscript. Refrain from suggesting that authors include citations to your (or an associate's) work merely to increase citation counts or to enhance the visibility of your or your associate's work; suggestions must be based on valid academic or technological reasons. Do not intentionally prolong the review process, either by delaying the submission of your review or by requesting unnecessary additional information from the journal or author.

If you are the editor handling a manuscript and decide to provide a review of that manuscript yourself (perhaps if another reviewer could not return a report), do this transparently and not under the guise of an anonymous additional reviewer.

7. What to consider after peer review

It is possible that you will receive requests from **Vértices** magazine for a second or third round of review of the manuscript, especially when there are recommendations for "conditional approval with the changes specified on the additional comments page". It is helpful to respond promptly if contacted by a journal about matters related to your review and to provide the information required. Similarly, contact **Vértices** magazine if anything relevant comes to light after you have submitted your review that might affect your original feedback and recommendations. Continue to respect the confidential nature of the review process and do not reveal details of the manuscript after peer review unless you have permission from the author and the journal.

The contribution of the peer review is extremely important and requires careful work, time and effort on the part of the reviewers, but it is necessary to inform that it is up to the editors to make the final decision on the approval or rejection of the manuscript for publication.

The editors of **Vértices** magazine consider that “the dissemination of good practices by peers benefits the entire scientific community, so making policies and procedures, norms and clear rules on how to conduct them should be encouraged” (CALÓ, 2017). Thus, it is possible to increase the efficiency, transparency and quality of the manuscript peer review processes.

References

CALÓ, L. N. Avaliação por pares: recomendações dos periódicos aos pareceristas. *Scielo em Perspectiva*, 20 set. 2017. Available from: <https://blog.scielo.org/blog/2017/09/20/avaliacao-por-pares-recomendacoes-dos-periodicos-aos-pareceristas/#.XHRfuuhKiUk>. Access: 2019 Feb. 25.

COPE. *Ethical guidelines for peer reviewers*. September 2017. Available from: https://publicationethics.org/files/Ethical_Guidelines_For_Peer_Reviewers_2.pdf. Access: 2019 Feb. 04.

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