

**Peer Review process of TUJM, Published by Central Department of Microbiology,
Tribhuvan University**

1. **Submission of the manuscript:** Authors are advised to submit their manuscripts through e-mails (cdm1990@microbiotu.edu.np or the emails of the officers as assigned by chief editor of the journal. Please follow Author's guidelines of the journal from the website: www.cdmi.tu.edu.np.
2. **Initial checks:** The journal staff and in-house editorial team perform an initial quality check to identify potential issues such as:
 - Competing interests
 - Compliance with editorial policies and ethical standards
 - Financial disclosures
 - Data availability

Submissions may be returned to authors for changes or clarifications at this stage.

3. **Editorial Review:** After completing internal checks, each new submission is assigned to an academic editor with relevant expertise. The editor reviews the manuscript against our publication criteria and determines whether reviews from additional experts are needed to evaluate the manuscript. The handling editor is usually a member of the TUJM Editorial Board.
4. **Peer Review:** The handling editor selects reviewers based on expertise and publication history, and invites them to provide feedback on the manuscript. After agreeing to review, external peer reviewers typically have 10 days to submit their review. The journal office will follow up with late reviewers and keep you informed if there are any delays. TUJM uses double blinded peer review system, which indicates that both the reviewer and the author are blinded to each other during the process.

Note: TUJM sent manuscript for peer review as follows:

- Original Articles and Systematic Reviews/Meta-analyses will typically be sent to at least 2 peer reviewers.
 - Case reports, Medical Education, Viewpoints will be sent to at least 1 peer reviewer.
 - However, it remains the discretion of the editorial board, that it may be send to more reviewers upon conditions that manuscript requires more evaluations.
5. **Editorial decisions:** The handling academic editor makes the final decision on each manuscript. The time to render a first decision averages about 30 days, but times vary depending on how long it takes for the editor to receive and assess reviews. The editor considers reviewer feedback and their own evaluation of the manuscript in order to reach a decision. The following decision types are available:
 - Reject
 - Major revision
 - Minor revision
 - Accept

Decisions are communicated to the corresponding author in a formal letter, along with reviewer feedback and any other requirements from the journal office.

6. **Revisions:** If the editor feels that your manuscript has the potential to be published, but requires changes, you'll be invited to revise it. You'll have 20 days to resubmit the revised manuscript for both a major or a minor revision.

In most cases, the revised manuscript is re-assigned to the original Academic Editor. The editor may make a new decision based on their own assessment of the revised manuscript and your response to reviewers, or request additional input from external peer reviewers.

7. **Submission Instructions:** If you are submitting a revised manuscript, upload your revised submission to the submission system and include the following items:

- Response to reviewers: Address the specific points made by each reviewer. Include your responses to all the reviewers' and editors' comments and list the changes you have made to the manuscript. Remember, if you choose to publish the peer review history of your manuscript, your response to reviewers will appear online alongside the final article. Upload this document as a "Response to reviewers" file.
- Revised manuscript (marked-up copy): Include a marked-up copy of your manuscript file showing the changes you have made since the original submission. The best way to show these changes is the "Track Changes" option in Microsoft Word. Upload this as a "Revised Article with Changes Highlighted" file.
- Revised manuscript (clean copy): Upload a clean copy of your revised manuscript that does not show your changes. Upload this as your "Manuscript" file.

8. **Accepted Manuscripts:** TUJM uses two levels of accept decision. When the handling editor is satisfied with the scientific aspects of the manuscript they'll issue an editorial accept decision. This is a provisional acceptance, pending final checks for formatting and technical requirements. When a manuscript is editorially accepted, it will go through a final round of checks to ensure the formatting and content meet our technical requirements. Some of the manuscript elements checked at this stage include:

- Author names and affiliations
- Funding statement
- Competing interests statement
- Data availability statement
- Figure and table formatting
- File names for figures, tables, and supporting information

Once the final requirements are fulfilled, the journal office will send a formal accept decision, and your manuscript will move on to production.

Guidelines for Reviewers

TUJM relies on members of the scientific research community to assess the validity of articles under consideration through peer review.

1. **Invitation to Review:** TUJM will email peer reviewers to invite them to review a manuscript. The email will generally include the scope of the journal, review process and the timeline to provide comments and recommendations. Furthermore, it also includes an abstract of the manuscript and ask the reviewer to accept or reject the review invitation. The reviewer can also have a detail view of the entire manuscript after acceptance of the review process.
2. **Role of reviewers:** TUJM ask peer reviewers to recommend following options:
 - Accept
 - Minor revision
 - Major revision
 - Reject

Note: In the case of discordant reviews, the Editorial Office may seek review by an additional expert. Our Editors-in-Chief will consider reviewers' comments and will make the final decision to accept or reject a manuscript.

3. **Submitting your review:** Before writing your review, it may be helpful for you to review our [Author's guidelines](#) to understand what JNHRC is looking for. The main criteria on which we ask reviewers to assess manuscripts include:
 - Importance and relevance of the topic
 - Originality of the work that adds value to the existing body of knowledge
 - Sound methodology
 - Sound use of evidence during the whole process.
 - Compelling conclusions that are based on the evidence presented
 - Presentation and clarity of writing

There are two sections once you have completed reviewing the manuscript.

- First section is “for author and editor” which actually is space provided for comments to the author to help him improve the manuscript. In case you have a broader comment, which is line by line, please upload the commented file. Please use track changes(preferred) or review comments while commenting individually.
- Second section is “for editor” where you will have the opportunity to provide confidential comments to the Editors that the author will not see. We encourage you to use this space to provide your important comments to the Editors to help them make a decision on the manuscript.

TUJM request following good practices for the reviewers

1. **Confidentiality:** Please maintain confidentiality. Do not disclose details of the manuscript or your review to anyone without permission, including colleagues or the manuscript authors.
2. **Conflict of Interest:** Please declare any conflicts of interest. If you have a personal or professional relationship with the authors that might bias your review, disclose it to the editor.
3. **Expertise:** Please review within your expertise. Assess manuscripts within your field of expertise to provide a well-informed evaluation.
4. **Timeliness:** Please submit your review within 10 days of acceptance. Respect the time constraints of the editorial process and notify the editor if you cannot meet the deadline.
5. **Constructive Feedback:** Please provide constructive criticism. Offer specific comments and suggestions for improvement to help authors enhance the quality of their work.
6. **Clarity and Objectivity:** Please be clear and objective in your comments. Clearly articulate your thoughts, focusing on the content of the manuscript rather than personal opinions.
7. **Ethical Considerations:** Please assess ethical aspects. Check for ethical issues such as plagiarism, data fabrication, or any violations of research ethics.
8. **Completeness:** Please ensure a thorough review. Review all aspects of the manuscript, including methodology, results, discussion, and references, providing a comprehensive evaluation.
9. **Relevance:** Please assess the relevance of the research. Consider whether the research addresses important questions in the field and contributes meaningfully to existing knowledge.
10. **Constructive Critique:** Please offer criticism constructively. If identifying flaws, provide guidance on how the authors could address these issues or improve their work.
11. **Suggestions for Improvement:** Please include specific suggestions. Propose specific improvements or experiments that could strengthen the manuscript.
12. **Understanding Author's Perspective:** Please understand the author's perspective. Consider the authors' intentions and interpretations, and avoid imposing your personal views.
13. **Diplomacy:** Please be diplomatic in your language. Use respectful and professional language even when expressing criticism to maintain a positive and collaborative atmosphere.
14. **Adherence to Journal Guidelines:** Please evaluate adherence to journal guidelines. Ensure that the manuscript aligns with the specific requirements and scope of the journal.
15. **Recognize Limitations:** Please acknowledge limitations. Recognize that no research is perfect, and appreciate the effort made by the authors.
16. **Recommendation:** Please clearly state your recommendation. Indicate whether you recommend acceptance, revision, major revision, or rejection, providing justifications for your decision.