

EDITORIAL POLICY FOR THE SOUTH AFRICAN OPTOMETRIST

By Professor WF HARRIS (Updated by Professor A RUBIN, 2004)

Approved by the Editorial Board

Throughout, the South African Optometrist is referred to as the Journal.

1. The Journal shall strive to maintain the highest standards of scholarly publishing.
2. Only material not published elsewhere and not under consideration for publication elsewhere shall be considered for publication.
- 3.1 Anonymous material and material without a postal address shall not be considered.
- 3.2 Material submitted by persons other than the author shall not be considered.
- 3.3 In cases of multiple authorship, material must be submitted by one of the authors on behalf of and with the approval of all the authors.
4. Receipt of an item shall be acknowledged in writing to the author. The author shall be kept informed of decisions concerning the submission.
5. Submissions not in accordance with the Guidelines for Authors (published in each journal and updated periodically) may be rejected.
- 6.1 Accuracy of referencing is regarded as very important.
- 6.2 Unless otherwise indicated a reference listed under References is taken to imply that the author has personally consulted that reference.
- 6.3 The Editor reserves the right to require the author to produce any reference cited or otherwise satisfy editorial policy in terms of the requirements of Clause 6.2.
7. The sole criterion for acceptance of any item shall be the intrinsic worth of the item itself. No other factors shall be considered.
- 8.1 No person or group of persons shall be given preferential treatment.
- 8.2 No person or group of persons shall be discriminated against.
9. Each article shall be assessed by a minimum of two referees who shall supply confidential reports in writing to the Editor. Members of the Editorial Board may serve as referees. The Editor may serve as a referee where the research or paper topic warrants this action.
- 10.1 Decisions concerning acceptance or otherwise shall be made by the Editor.
- 10.2 In making decisions under Clause 10.1 the Editor shall be guided by the recommendations of the referees.
- 11.1 When the Editor is an author, or when not available, the submission shall be handled by the Deputy Editor. In such cases reference to the Editor in all clauses of this document, except in Clauses 11.1 and 11.2, shall be interpreted as referring to the Deputy Editor instead.
- 11.2 When the Deputy Editor is not available to act as provided by Clause 11.1, or when the Editor and Deputy Editor are joint authors, then the submission shall be dealt with by an Editorial Board member or another person appointed for that purpose by the Editorial Board. In such cases reference to the Editor in all clauses of this document, except in Clauses 11.1 and 11.2, shall be interpreted as referring to that member or person.
- 12.1 Every item submitted for publication shall be treated by all as confidential.
- 12.2 Referees shall not discuss the contents of any item with, nor allow the item to be seen by, anyone other than the Editor.
- 12.3 In particular, referees shall not communicate with the author.
- 12.4 Referees shall remain anonymous to all except the Editor, except where referees provide authority for themselves to be identified to authors.

- 12.5 In exceptional circumstances the Editor may permit a referee to communicate with someone other than the Editor but such permission is granted only if there are good reasons for doing so and if such action is likely to be approved by the author.
- 12.6 With regard to any particular submission the Editor shall not reveal any information to any person except as provided for in this document and as required in the normal course of assessing and publishing that submission.
13. Any item supplied to a referee shall be returned in its entirety to the Editor by the referee. The referee may not retain the item or any part thereof nor may the referee make or retain a copy of the item or any part thereof.
- 14.1 All published items shall carry the author's name.
- 14.2 The contents of the item are the views of the author and not that necessarily of the Editor, the Editorial Board, the South African Optometric Association or the Publisher or any other person or body.
15. Every Article, Letter to the Editor and Author's Reply shall carry the date it was received.
- 16.1 The author retains copyright until the submission is accepted for publication at which time copyright is transferred to the South African Optometric Association.
- 16.2 On request the Editor may grant permission for any item already published in the journal to be republished elsewhere. Such permission will be subject to the conditions that the republished item carries suitable acknowledgement and the full original reference. Additional conditions may be imposed.
- 16.3 Permission shall not be granted under Clause 16.2 without approval of the author.
17. If an item deals substantially with an item previously published in the Journal then the author of the latter item shall be offered space for a reply immediately following the former item and in the same issue of the Journal.
18. Debate on all relevant issues is encouraged.
- 19.1 Authors are encouraged to keep to the point, to be factual, to back up facts and arguments with references to scholarly literature and to avoid unnecessary personal attacks and irrelevant attacks on particular bodies. Authors are encouraged to employ styles of language and discourse that befit scholarly communication.
- 19.2 Referees are also encouraged to employ styles of language and discourse that befit scholarly communication. Reviews should encourage development of authors and contribute in a positive and constructive manner towards improvement of submissions.
- 19.3 Clauses 19.1 and 19.2 shall not be interpreted as discouragement of debate or reviews (of submissions) that might be robust or forceful. Intolerance of error is an important component of scholarly debate and peer review.
- 20.1 An item will not be rejected merely because it may be offensive to any persons or persons.
- 20.2 Any person or persons who feel offended by any item published in the journal shall be allowed space in the journal to respond.
21. The Editor may close correspondence on a particular matter but only after the matter has been aired in two issues of the Journal and if, in his/her opinion, further debate would be unproductive.
22. Correspondence closed under Clause 21 may be re-opened only for items that supply additional information or insight that contributes meaningfully to the debate.
23. Titles including Mrs, Mr, Dr or Professor are generally omitted in the text of submissions.
- 24.1 In the case of submissions accepted for publication all documentation shall be retained for six months following publication.
- 24.2 In the case of submissions not accepted for publication documentation will be retained for six months after the decision not to publish has been taken. Authors will be given reasons for non-acceptance of their submission for publication.
25. The Editor shall report regularly to the Editorial Board. Such reports may take various forms including telephonic or electronic (E-mail) communications.
- 26.1 Policy decided or implemented by the Editor is subject to the approval of the Editorial Board.
- 26.2 Alterations to Editorial policy are subject to the approval of the Editorial Board.