

Australasian Journal of Early Childhood (AJEC)

There are a number of approaches to reviewing articles, and the AJEC Committee has adopted a structured approach as shown in the accompanying Review Evaluation Form. This review form provides the basis of presenting your comments and recommendations regarding the suitability of the article for publication in AJEC.

The role of AJEC

AJEC publishes peer-reviewed articles on all aspects of the education and care of young children, to impart new information and encourage the critical exchange of ideas among practitioners, academics and students in the early childhood field.

Readership

The *Australasian Journal of Early Childhood* (AJEC) is a leading scholarly journal in Australasia.

The target audience of the journal includes practitioners, academics and students in all fields related to the care and education of young children from birth to eight.

AJEC invites submissions from a variety of disciplines, incorporating a range of perspectives and approaches, from both less-established and renowned authors worldwide.

Inclusive/universal language

AJEC acknowledges the breadth and diversity of those studying and working within the early childhood field.

Authors should be aware of this diversity when writing their submissions.

Where appropriate, articles should be inclusive of and relevant to a variety of settings, such as those of family day carers, primary school educators etc. Authors should use universal terms such as 'early childhood settings', 'early childhood professionals' etc, and aim to be as clear as possible when using ambiguous terms such as 'Prep', 'kindergarten' etc.

AJEC's readership comprises those from all states of Australia as well as overseas. Authors should be mindful of using localised terms in which the meaning may not translate to other contexts.

The review process

Each article is sent to two reviewers. Neither the reviewers nor the authors know each other's identity at this stage. If these two reviewers do not reach a consensus, the article will be sent to a third reviewer for a decision. In the case of themed editions, this may be an edition editor.

Whether or not an article will be revised and resubmitted is the author's prerogative. The timelines for resubmission are relatively flexible, though after 12 months any revisions may be treated as an initial submission.

If the changes being requested are minor, and the article is being solicited for a specific themed edition, there may be short timelines (e.g. five working days) imposed on the author to revise and return the article.

All correspondence between the authors and the reviewers will be handled through the ECA Publishing and Marketing Section to ensure confidentiality of authors and reviewers. The AJEC Committee reserves the right to make the final decision regarding all articles submitted for publication.

Ideally, it is our objective that the review process for any article should be completed within a maximum of three reviews.

If no agreement is reached between the two initial reviewers after the second review, these reviewers may be put in contact in order to discuss the article and agree on a decision as to its status.

It is our objective to complete the review process as professionally and as quickly as possible. To be effective, we rely on YOU, our reviewers. Accordingly, when articles are sent to you for review, if you are unable to proceed with the review immediately, please advise the ECA Publishing and Marketing Section about your availability and preferences regarding the review process. Maintaining good contact with you is essential for all concerned.

Types of articles

AJEC invites articles from a variety of disciplines, incorporating a range of perspectives and approaches, from both less-established and renowned authors worldwide.

Some of the types of articles that may be submitted:

- **Primary research:** Articles reporting on high quality research projects. Articles in this category are expected to meet the highest international standards for publication of research.
- **Research notes:** These may be shorter than primary research articles and could report on research in progress as well as completed projects. Students and graduate students are encouraged to submit articles on their research, as are first-time authors and practitioners engaged in reflective practice or practice research. Research reported in this category may not meet the highest standards in terms of significance, methodology or presentation but is encouraged in order to facilitate the emergence of beginning researchers (students and practitioners) into publication and to enhance the circulation of ideas to a broad early childhood audience.
- **Commentaries:** This category includes critical scholarly writing as well as practitioner papers. The category is characterised by a secondary rather than primary research focus. Articles in this category will present well-rounded and reasoned arguments and/or illustrate examples of best practice.

If you have been invited to review a type of paper that doesn't reflect your own areas of interest or expertise, and which you are uncomfortable in reviewing, please inform the ECA Publishing and Marketing Section.

Non-traditional/controversial articles

AJEC is actively seeking to put to press 'non-traditional' articles in order to stimulate debate. As such, some papers submitted for review will be deliberately challenging and will not reflect current practice or the dominant ideology. However, AJEC will not accept articles of poor taste or those which are of no value in advancing debate in the field.

If you receive a non-traditional article to review, please review the content in relation to:

- how well the paper is argued
- how well the ideas are supported by, or referenced to existing literature
- how well the paper will stimulate debate.

Key steps in the review process

Below are some key steps in the review process which may assist you in your decision making.

1. Read through the article, taking the perspective of an AJEC subscriber, and ask yourself:

- i. Did I find the article interesting?
- ii. Is the article appropriate for AJEC's readership?
- iii. Will the article offer new information or new perspectives on issues of importance to those working in early childhood?
- iv. Has the topic been covered in AJEC during the past 12 months?
- v. Did I find the article easy to read?
- vi. Does the article meet the requirements of the Guidelines for Authors (these can be obtained upon request or from our website)?

If the answer to i, ii and/or iii is NO, strongly consider rejecting the article.

If the answer to iv is YES, ask yourself, 'Does this article add significantly to the previous article?'; and if the answer is NO, strongly consider rejecting the article.

If the answer to v and/or vi is NO, re-read the article to determine the changes that can be suggested to improve the presentation of the article. Make sure you know the practices and standards of AJEC in these respects.

2. Decide which option you will recommend as a reviewer.

You have five possibilities as follows:

- i. Publish article as is
- ii. Request resubmission to in-house editor following minor revision
- iii. Request resubmission to reviewer following minor revision
- iv. Invite resubmission following substantial revision
- v. Reject

Whichever option you choose, you must state clearly the reasons for your recommendations. Be as positive as possible without being dishonest.

3. Return all correspondence as requested to the ECA Publishing and Marketing Section within the given timelines for each article.