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REVIEWING PROCEDURE

Peer reviewers

The submitted manuscripts are subject to a peer review process. The purpose of peer review is to assists the Editor-in-Chief in making editorial decisions and through the editorial communications with the author it may also assist the author in improving the paper.

The journal uses double-blind peer review, which means that both the reviewer and author identities are concealed from the reviewers, and vice versa, throughout the review process.

Each article is reviewed by at least two reviewers.

Peer review process

Under normal circumstances, the review process takes up to 12 weeks. The total period from the submission of a manuscript until its publication takes up to 24 weeks.

Review is free, ie. reviewers do not receive royalties.

The choice of reviewers is at the Editors' discretion. The reviewers must be knowledgeable about the subject area of the manuscript; they must not be from the authors' own institution and they should not have recent joint publications with any of the authors.

In the main review phase, the Editor-in-Chief sends submitted papers to at least two experts in the field. The reviewers' evaluation form contains a checklist in order to help referees cover all aspects that can decide the fate of a submission. In the final section of the evaluation form, the reviewers can include observations and suggestions aimed at improving the submitted manuscript; these are sent to authors, without the names of the reviewers. All of the reviewers of a paper remain anonymous to the authors before, during and after the evaluation process. Authors are required to remove all personal information and other data that might reveal their identity from manuscript.

All of the reviewers of a paper act independently and they are not aware of each other's identities. If the decisions of the two reviewers are not the same (accept/reject), the Editor may assign additional reviewers.

During the review process Editor may require authors to provide additional information (including raw data) if they are necessary for the evaluation of the scholarly merit of the

manuscript. These materials shall be kept confidential and must not be used for personal gain.

Resolving inconsistences

The Editorial team shall ensure reasonable quality control for the reviews. With respect to reviewers whose reviews are convincingly questioned by authors, special attention will be paid to ensure that the reviews are objective and high in academic standard. When there is any doubt with regard to the objectivity of the reviews or quality of the review, additional reviewers will be assigned.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Authors' responsibilities

Authors warrant that their manuscript is their original work, that it has not been published before and is not under consideration for publication elsewhere. Parallel submission of the same paper to another journal constitutes a misconduct and eliminates the manuscript from consideration by *Physical Culture*.

In case a submitted manuscript is a result of a research project, or its previous version has been presented at a conference in the form of an oral presentation (under the same or similar title), detailed information about the project, the conference, etc. shall be provided in Acknowledgements and notes section. It is the responsibility of the authors to specify the title and code label of the research project within which the work was created, as well as the full title of the funding institution.

A paper that has already been published in another journal cannot be reprinted in *Physical Culture* .

It is the responsibility of each author to ensure that papers submitted to *Physical Culture* are written in compliance with the ethical principles of WMA Declaration of Helsinki. Authors affirm that the article contains no unfounded or unlawful statements and does not violate the rights of third parties. The Publisher will not be held legally responsible should there be any claims for

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A submitted manuscript should contain sufficient data and references to permit reviewers and, subsequently, readers to verify the claims presented in it. The deliberate presentation of false claims is a violation of ethical standards.

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Authors should disclose in their manuscript any financial or other substantive conflict of interest that might have influenced the presented results or their interpretation.

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When an author discovers a significant error or inaccuracy in his/her own published work, it is the author's obligation to promptly notify the journal Editor or publisher and cooperate with the Editor to retract or correct the paper.

By submitting a manuscript the authors agree to abide by the *Physical Culture's* Editorial Policies.

Editorial responsibilities

The Editor-in-Chief is responsible for deciding which articles submitted to *Physical Culture* will be published. The Editor-in-Chief is guided by the Editorial Policy and constrained by legal requirements in force regarding libel, copyright infringement and plagiarism.

The Editor-in-Chief reserves the right to decide not to publish submitted manuscripts in case it is found that they do not meet relevant standards concerning the content and formal aspects. The Editorial Staff will inform the authors whether the manuscript is accepted for publication within 24 weeks from the date of the manuscript submission.

Editor-in-Chief must hold no conflict of interest with regard to the articles they consider for publication. If an Editor feels that there is likely to be a perception of a conflict of interest in relation to their handling of a submission, the selection of reviewers and all decisions on the paper shall be made by the members of the Editorial Staff.

Editor-in-Chief shall evaluate manuscripts for their intellectual content free from any racial, gender, sexual, religious, ethnic, or political bias.

The Editor and the Editorial Staff must not use unpublished materials disclosed in submitted manuscripts without the express written consent of the authors. The information and ideas presented in submitted manuscripts shall be kept confidential and must not be used for personal gain.

Editors and the Editorial Staff shall take all reasonable measures to ensure that the reviewers remain anonymous to the authors before, during and after the evaluation process and the authors remain anonymous to reviewers until the end of the review procedure.

Reviewers' responsibilities

Reviewers are required to provide written, competent and unbiased feedback in a timely manner on the scholarly merits and the scientific value of the manuscript.

The reviewers assess manuscript for the compliance with the profile of the journal, the relevance of the investigated topic and applied methods, the originality and scientific relevance of information presented in the manuscript, the presentation style and scholarly apparatus.

Reviewers should alert the Editor to any well-founded suspicions or the knowledge of possible violations of ethical standards by the authors. Reviewers should recognize relevant published works that have not been cited by the authors and alert the Editor to substantial similarities between a reviewed manuscript and any manuscript published or under consideration for publication elsewhere, in the event they are aware of such. Reviewers should also alert the Editor to a parallel submission of the same paper to another journal, in the event they are aware of such.

Reviewers must not have conflict of interest with respect to the research, the authors and/or the funding sources for the research. If such conflicts exist, the reviewers must report them to the Editor without delay.

Any selected referee who feels unqualified to review the research reported in a manuscript or knows that its prompt review will be impossible should notify the Editor without delay.

Reviews must be conducted objectively. Personal criticism of the author is inappropriate. Reviewers should express their views clearly with supporting arguments.

Any manuscripts received for review must be treated as confidential documents. Reviewers must not use unpublished materials disclosed in submitted manuscripts without the express written consent of the authors. The information and ideas presented in submitted manuscripts shall be kept confidential and must not be used for personal gain.

ETHICAL PUBLISHING

Dealing with unethical behaviour

Anyone may inform the editors and/or Editorial Staff at any time of suspected unethical behaviour or any type of misconduct by giving the necessary information/evidence to start an investigation.

Investigation

- Editor-in-Chief will consult with the Editorial Board on decisions regarding the initiation of an investigation.
- During an investigation, any evidence should be treated as strictly confidential and only made available to those strictly involved in investigating.
- The accused will always be given the chance to respond to any charges made against them.
- If it is judged at the end of the investigation that misconduct has occurred, then it will be classified as either minor or serious.

Minor misconduct

Minor misconduct will be dealt directly with those involved without involving any other parties, e.g.:

- Communicating to authors/reviewers whenever a minor issue involving misunderstanding or misapplication of academic standards has occurred.
- A warning letter to an author or reviewer regarding fairly minor misconduct.

Major misconduct

The Editor-in-Chief, in consultation with the Editorial Board, and, when appropriate, further consultation with a small group of experts should make any decision regarding the course of action to be taken using the evidence available. The possible outcomes are as follows (these can be used separately or jointly):

- Publication of a formal announcement or editorial describing the misconduct.
- Informing the author's (or reviewer's) head of department or employer of any misconduct by means of a formal letter.
- The formal, announced retraction of publications from the journal in accordance with the Retraction Policy (see below).
- A ban on submissions from an individual for a defined period.
- Referring a case to a professional organization or legal authority for further investigation and action.

When dealing with unethical behaviour, the Editorial Staff will rely on the guidelines and recommendations provided by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) .

Plagiarism prevention

Physical Culture does not publish plagiarised papers. The Editorial Board has adopted the stance that plagiarism, where someone assumes another's ideas, words, or other creative expression as one's own, is a clear violation of scientific ethics. Plagiarism may also involve a violation of copyright law, punishable by legal action.

Plagiarism includes the following:

- Verbatim (word for word), or almost verbatim copying, or purposely paraphrasing portions of another author's work without clearly indicating the source or marking the copied fragment (for example, using quotation marks) in a way described under Authors’ responsibilities ;
- Copying equations, figures or tables from someone else's paper without properly citing the source and/or without permission from the original author or the copyright holder.

Any manuscript which shows obvious signs of plagiarism will be automatically rejected. In case plagiarism is discovered in a paper that has already been published by the journal, it will be retracted in accordance with the procedure described under Retraction policy .

To prevent plagiarism the manuscripts are submitted to a plagiarism detection process using iThenticate/CrossRef
within SCIndeks Assistant. The results obtained are verified by the Editorial Board in accordance with the guidelines and recommendations of the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE).

Retraction policy

Legal limitations of the publisher, copyright holder or author(s), infringements of professional ethical codes, such as multiple submissions, bogus claims of authorship, plagiarism, fraudulent use of data or any major misconduct require retraction of an article.

Occasionally a retraction can be used to correct numerous serious errors, which cannot be covered by publishing corrections. A retraction may be published by the Editor-in-Chief, the author(s), or both parties consensually.

The retraction takes the form of a separate item listed in the contents and labeled as "Retraction". In SCIndeks, as the journals' primary full-text database, a two-way communication (HTML link) between the original work and the retraction is established. The original article is retained unchanged, except for a watermark on the PDF indicating on each page that it is “retracted”.

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