# Peer Review

PIH Cross-site COVID-19 Writing Workshop

Peer Review

- Submitted manuscripts will undergo a "peer review" process
  - *More details on the entire paper submission and review process tomorrow*

- Typically, 2-3 peer reviewers (typically, postdocs or faculty) will assess your paper on the following:
  - Is this research question interesting to the journal's audience?
  - Is the research question novel and relevant?
  - Is the method of analysis (and data!) well-suited for the research question?
  - Are the conclusions consistent with the evidence and arguments presented?

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How do peer reviewers assess papers?
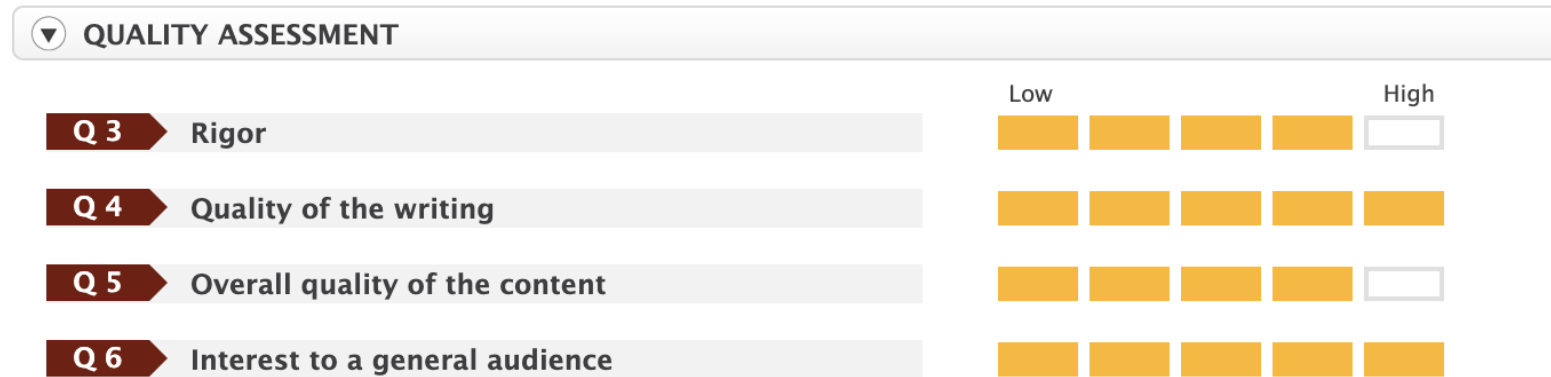
- Is the quality of the figures and tables satisfactory?
- Does the reference list cover the relevant literature adequately and in an unbiased manner?
- Are the statistical methods valid and correctly applied? (e.g. sample size, choice of test)
- Are the methods sufficiently documented to allow replication studies?

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When you are reviewing the manuscript

- Do a first read-through to assess:
  - What is the main question being addressed by the research?
  - Is the text clear and easy to read?
  - Do you spot any "major flaws"?
    - Major flaws include drawing conclusions that are contradicted by the data, incorrect (or missing) literature for key claims, invalid analytical methods, major issues with data sources

- Do a second read-through to assess:
  - Passages where the meaning is unclear or ambiguous
  - Any factual errors or invalid/unsupported arguments
  - If figures/tables can be made clearer

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When you are writing comments

- Number your comments and separate them into major and minor issues

- Refer to specific sections and page numbers

- Do not focus on spelling and grammar

- Be professional and respectful

- Focus on <u>improvement.</u> Criticism is more beneficial when it comes with suggestions for improvement.

- Include positive feedback too!

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How to be a good peer reviewer

"Offer clear suggestions for how the authors can address the concerns raised. In other words, if you're going to raise a problem, provide a solution."

- Jonathon Halbesleben, Editor of Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology

❌ "This is unclear"	✅ "This statement can be made clearer by…"
❌ "The section needs to be reordered"	✅ "I recommend reordering this section so that you discuss X first and Y last."
❌ "The Chi-squared test was not the correct statistical test."	✅ "I believe a Fisher's exact test would be more appropriate for this data because…"

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Peer Review Guide: <u>Introduction</u>

- Was the following clear, convincing, and well-supported:
  - The "So What" of the research
  - What is already known about the topic
  - What is <u>not known</u> about the topic
  - Why it is important to learn new information
- Was the research objective/question clearly stated?
  - Did the authors justify why they were doing research in the specific population or location?
- Did the introduction provide enough background?
- Did the introduction focus on information <u>relevant</u> to the research question?

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Peer Review Guide: <u>Methods</u>

- How well were the following described and justified:
    - Setting
    - Population
    - Study design
    - Recruitment
    - Sample and sample size

- Is there sufficient information about the data and variables?
    - How were the data collected?
    - How were variables defined and measured? Are the exposure, outcome, and covariates clear?

- Are the statistical methods well described? Do they connect to the research question?

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Peer Review Guide: <u>Results</u>

- For each table and figure:
    - Clear message? Does it stand on its own?
    - Is the "N" (sample size) consistent with methods?
    - Is it informative with a clear labels (columns, rows, legends, axis)?
- Are the figures and tables referenced and described in the text?
- Do the results highlight information in the tables and figures?
- Do the results include data addressing all research questions posed in introduction?
- Are methods or discussions points inappropriately included?
- Are results organized logically?

Peer Review Guide: <u>Discussion</u>

- Was the following clear, convincing, and well-supported:
  - Recap main findings (without repeating the Results section)
  - Discuss significance of results and interpret meaning
  - Impact and applications of research
  - Strengths
  - Limitations

- Did the authors discuss how their results compare with other research? Were the citations appropriate?

- Is the discussion well organized?

- Does the discussion connect to the main research questions posed in the Introduction?

Peer Review Activity

- Provide comments in a Word document to share with team
    - Read-through once by yourself and then write final comments as a team
    - Divide into "Major" and "Minor" comments
    - Reference the relevant portions of the manuscript

- We will have **one hour for peer review**

- After the activity, be prepared to share 3 things you learned during the peer review process
    - *How did this provide perspective for your own manuscript?*

Peer Review Activity

Methods sections:

Mexico –

Liberia –

Sierra Leone –

Haiti –

Rwanda –

Malawi –

Methods sections:

Mexico –

Liberia –

Sierra Leone –

Haiti –

Rwanda –

Malawi –

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Haiti –

Rwanda –

Malawi –

Share the relevant section of your manuscript via Dropbox with your peer reviewers.
(If email preferred, please state that and put your team member emails in the chat.)

Please include title, reference list, and tables/figures (if results section)!

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