

Review Process

All submitted manuscripts are read by the editorial staff. To save time for authors and peer-reviewers, only those papers that seem most likely to meet our editorial criteria are sent for formal review. Those papers judged by the editors to be of insufficient general interest or otherwise inappropriate are rejected promptly without external review (although these decisions may be based on informal advice from specialists in the field).

Manuscripts judged to be of potential interest to our readership are sent for formal review, typically to two or three reviewers.

The editors then make a decision based on the reviewers' advice, from among several possibilities:

- Advise the authors to **revise their manuscript** to address specific concerns before a final decision is reached
- Reject, but indicate to the authors that **further work might justify a resubmission**
- **Reject outright**, typically on grounds of specialist interest, lack of novelty, insufficient conceptual advance or major technical and/or interpretational problems

Editorial decisions are not a matter of counting votes or numerical rank assessments, and we do not always follow the majority recommendation. We try to evaluate the strength of the arguments raised by each reviewer and by the authors, and we may also consider other information not available to either

party. Our primary responsibilities are to our readers and to the scientific community at large, and in deciding how best to serve them, we must weigh the claims of each paper against the many others also under consideration.

We may return to reviewers for further advice, particularly in cases where they disagree with each other, or where the authors believe they have been misunderstood on points of fact. We therefore ask that reviewers should be willing to provide follow-up advice as requested.

We rarely bring in additional reviewers to resolve disputes, on which we feel a need for further advice.