


# Editors' tools guide

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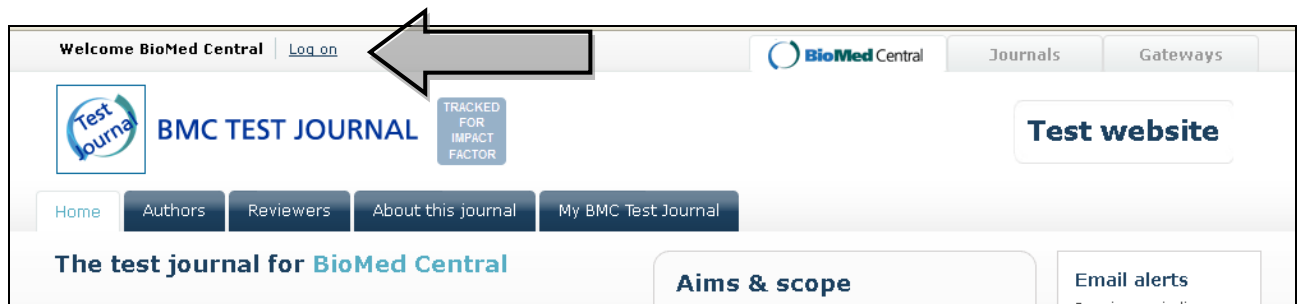
## Key

- Underlined terms indicate clickable links on a menu bar or webpage
- [Actions] carried out through clicking a button are shown in square brackets
- *Words in italics* indicate the name of a webpage
- 'Words or phrases' in inverted commas refer to text labels on a webpage

The blue  symbol next to a button links to information about the action.

## 1. Accessing the Editors' tools

To access the Editors' tools, you will need to log on to the journal website, which can be done using the "Log on" options at the top of the webpage.



If you are already registered you will be asked to provide your email address and password. Alternatively you can select to register and validate your email address. If you have any problems logging on, please contact [info@biomedcentral.com](mailto:info@biomedcentral.com).

If you are working on a private computer, you may wish to select the "Remember me" tick-box so you don't need to login again next time you visit the website. For security reasons, we recommend that you do not use the "Remember me" option if you are using a shared computer.

The Editors' Tools can then be accessed using the button on the right hand side of the journal homepage or via the button the top left hand side of the My {Journal Name} page.



## 2. Levels of access to the Editors' Tools

Access to the Editors' tools is only available to those who have editorial access rights granted on the journal. If you need to enable/alter editorial access rights for a member of your editorial team, please contact your Journal Development Editor or [journals@biomedcentral.com](mailto:journals@biomedcentral.com).

You may wish to grant access to the Editors' Tools to multiple members of the editorial team/Editorial Board to assist you in managing peer review. The following levels of access are available:

## Level 1 – for Editors-in-Chief and Managing Editors

This permission level provides the highest level of access to the system. Editors with this level of permission have full access to the online tools and every manuscript, and are able to assign manuscripts to Handling Editors. All Editors-in-Chief are set at this level as default.

## Level 2 – for Senior Handling Editors

Editors assigned with this permission level are only able to view and process manuscripts that have been assigned to them. They are able to make final decisions, such as accepting or rejecting a manuscript.

## Level 3 – for Junior Handling Editors

Editors assigned with this permission level are only able to view and process manuscripts that have been assigned to them. They cannot make final decisions (i.e. accept or reject a manuscript), but they are able to request revisions.

## Level 4 – for Junior Handling Editors

Editors assigned with this permission level are only able to view and process manuscripts that have been assigned to them but are not able to request revisions or make any decisions on a manuscript.

## 3. Editors' tools navigation overview

### 3.1 Manuscripts

When entering the Editors' tools via the buttons within the website you will initially be in the 'Manuscripts' section of the tools, with your 'Manuscripts with tasks' process report displayed as the default view, which lists all manuscripts assigned to you that have tasks pending (see Appendix A for further information).

Welcome Test User | Log off

BioMed Central Journals Gateways

Test website

Home Authors Reviewers About this journal My BMC Test Journal

Manuscripts  
[Content](#)  
[Comments](#)  
[Development package](#)  
[Editor's tools guide](#)

Process reports  
Categories  
• [Fast track](#)  
• [RCT](#)  
• [Manuscript PDF not made](#)  
To do/overdue  
• [Manuscripts to assign](#)  
• Manuscripts with tasks  
• [Older than 3 months, no first decision](#)  
Peer review  
• [New manuscripts](#)  
• [Pre-review problems](#)  
• [Finding referees](#)  
• [Invite late](#)  
• [Out with agreed referees](#)  
• [Reviews late](#)  
• [Reviews in](#)  
• [Authors revising](#)  
• [Revision late](#)  
• [Revision in](#)  
• [In re-review](#)  
• [Re-reviews late](#)  
• [Re-reviews in](#)  
• [Post review problems](#)  
Decision  
[All Unsubmitted](#)  
[All Submitted](#)  
[All Re-accepted](#)

Journal section: All journal sections  
Editor: Ignore assignment  
Go

Manuscripts with tasks  
Items 1 - 9

ID	Contact	Title	Entry date	Due date	Notes
<b>Referee invite overdue by more than 2 weeks</b>					
1175897236551695	DADAMO	<a href="#">Editor's Tool Guide</a>	27 Dec 2011	27 Dec 2011	<a href="#">Edit notes</a>
1118576002644360		<a href="#">dfhdfhgzdqh zfqjzfqinfa zfqjzfqj</a>	25 Jan 2012	25 Jan 2012	<a href="#">Edit notes</a>
<b>Manuscript submitted over 6 weeks ago, still finding referees</b>					
7813269406393247	Hansen	<a href="#">Training manuscript 2</a>	22 Nov 2011	22 Nov 2011	<a href="#">Edit notes</a>
1175897236551695	DADAMO	<a href="#">Editor's Tool Guide</a>	27 Dec 2011	27 Dec 2011	<a href="#">Edit notes</a>
1118576002644360		<a href="#">dfhdfhgzdqh zfqjzfqinfa zfqjzfqj</a>	25 Jan 2012	25 Jan 2012	<a href="#">Edit notes</a>
<b>Reviews Late</b>					
1626124951631105	Ward	<a href="#">title</a>	22 Dec 2011	29 Dec 2011	<a href="#">Edit notes</a>
1175897236551695	DADAMO	<a href="#">Editor's Tool Guide</a>	27 Dec 2011	13 Jan 2012	<a href="#">Edit notes</a>
2101892910588991	Raybould	<a href="#">Test paper 1</a>	28 Dec 2011	14 Jan 2012	<a href="#">Edit notes</a>
2127796674632386	Bassols	<a href="#">Test</a>	25 Jan 2012	1 Feb 2012	<a href="#">Test</a>

Items 1 - 9

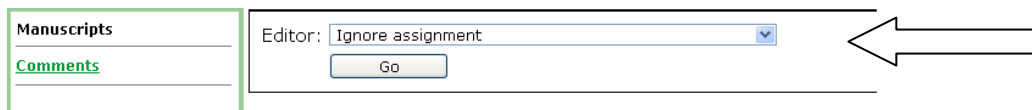
### 3.1.1 Process reports

The Process reports listed down the left hand side provide an overview of the manuscripts at different stages of the peer review process. The process report enable you to focus on a particular subset of manuscripts within the journal to help you manage manuscripts at different stages. For a full list of the process reports see Appendix A.

The manuscript system is set up to automatically move articles through the Process reports. However, you can manually assign a manuscript to select editorial statuses on the *Assignment* page of the manuscript record.

At the top of each page of the Process reports there is a section allowing you to filter the manuscripts in the process report:

- If the journal operates sections there will be an option to filter by section.
- For those with level one and level two access there is an option to filter by Editor



Select the option you wish to view from the drop-down menu and click [Go] to update the manuscripts in the report. To view all manuscripts select 'Ignore assignment'/'All journal sections'.

### 3.1.2 The manuscript record

The manuscript record allows you to access details about each individual manuscript.

There are several ways to navigate to a manuscript record:

- Click on the manuscript title displayed in any of the process reports.
- Click the manuscript record link in the email alerts you receive from the system
- Search for the manuscript as in 3.1.3.

Journal management  
[Back to Process reports](#)

Manuscript management  
[Details](#)  
[Assignment](#)  
[Peer reviewers](#)  
[History](#)  
**Associated Information**

Search

**Quick manuscript search**  
 Enter MAN\_ID below

**Quick contact search**  
  
  
[Advanced contact search](#)

MS: 7813269406393247  
 Review  
 Training manuscript 2  
 Rebecca Hansen  
 BMC Test Journal  
[Submission system](#) | [View abstract](#) | [View latest MS PDF](#) | Current Status: invite late

**History**  
 View documents associated with the history of this manuscript.  
 Show  |

Click on any name to see more information about that user.

Date	Event	From	To	Material	DetailsPublic?
22 Nov 2011	Original submission	Miss Rebecca Hansen		<a href="#">Manuscript (PDF version)</a> <a href="#">Confidential comment</a>	<a href="#">View</a> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
22 Nov 2011	E-mail	A Jones	<a href="#">Mr Sam Woodbridge</a>	<a href="#">Invitation to review a manuscript for BMC Test Journal</a>	<a href="#">View</a>
22 Nov 2011	E-mail	A Jones	<a href="#">Miss Nicola Collingwood</a>	<a href="#">Invitation to review a manuscript for BMC Test Journal</a>	<a href="#">View</a>
22 Nov 2011	E-mail	A Jones	<a href="#">Mr Sam Beattie</a>	<a href="#">Invitation to review a manuscript for BMC Test Journal</a>	<a href="#">View</a>
22 Nov 2011	E-mail	A Jones	<a href="#">Mr Eddy Baker</a>	<a href="#">Invitation to review a manuscript for BMC Test Journal</a>	<a href="#">View</a>
21 Dec 2011	E-mail	A Jones	<a href="#">Mr Eddy Baker</a>	<a href="#">Review for BMC Test Journal</a>	<a href="#">View</a>
25 Jan 2012	Reviewer 1 report	<a href="#">Mr Eddy Baker</a>		<a href="#">Reviewer's report</a> <a href="#">Confidential comment</a>	<a href="#">View</a> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
29 Feb 2012	Manuscript	Miss Rebecca Hansen	Dr Test User		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

The top box on each page of the manuscript record provides you with the key manuscript details along with a link to the submission system, abstract and latest PDF. The links on the left hand side allow you to access and action different areas in relation to the manuscript as follows:

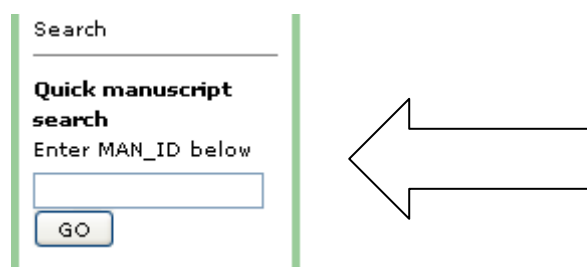
- Details - displays the manuscript article type, section (if applicable), related subject areas (as chosen by the authors) and if relevant, details about clinical trial registration. Depending on the level of access this information can be updated here if required.
- Assignment – allows you to assign an Editorial contact to act as Handling Editor, exclude access for Editors with competing interests, change the editorial status of a manuscript or make notes on the status, and select a manuscript for fast track.
- Peer reviewers – allows you to manage peer reviewer suggestions and invites as well as view all returned reports.
- History - records manuscript submissions, reviewer reports and all editable correspondence sent and received via the online system. Emails sent or received offline can be added manually (see Appendix B). Using 'Add Editors' comment' will bring up a box for you to type or paste your own comment to add to the manuscript's history. These comment will be made available to reviewers and authors.
- Figures - shows the figures uploaded with the manuscript displayed as thumbnail images. Click on the filename to see a full-page view of the figure.
- Associated information – allows you to upload an image and/or short title and summary to be displayed with the article in the 'Latest' articles or for selected 'Editor's Picks' on the homepage if these options are enabled for the journal.

### 3.1.3 Manuscript Search

This option on the navigation bar allows you to search for a manuscript using either the:

- MS-ID (the unique 16 digit number assigned to the manuscript upon submission)
- UI (the Unique Identifying number given to each published article, which is found just after the DOI number, e.g. the numbers underlined here: doi:10.1186/1465-9921-7-84)

Simply paste the search term into the search box and click [Go].



The image shows a search interface with a text box and a 'GO' button. The text 'Quick manuscript search' and 'Enter MAN\_ID below' is visible. A large white arrow points from the text box towards the left.

### 3.1.4 Contact search

The contact search feature within the Editors' tools provides you with the ability to search a database of journal specific contacts, which consists of:

- All members of the journal's Editorial Board
- Anybody previously invited to review a manuscript for the journal including where they are invited awaiting a response, have returned a report, or declined/ignored an invitation.
- All authors and co-authors of any previously submitted manuscripts including: submitted; published; rejected and withdrawn manuscripts.

The **Quick contact search** and **Advanced contact search** can be used for general purposes such as a search on a contact name to identify related manuscripts, or an advanced keyword search to identify possible contacts to solicit or commission articles from. For further details view the contact search guide available at <http://www.biomedcentral.com/editors/editorstools>.

### **3.2 Comments**

Readers have the option to 'post a comment' on published articles, if the Editors approve the comment it will display as a link from the full text version of the relevant article. You will receive email notification if a comment is submitted in relation to a published article. Click [Comments](#) to moderate new comments (accept, reject or delete them). For more information on Comment moderation, please see Appendix C

### **3.3 Development package**

This links you to the 'For Editors' page (<http://www.biomedcentral.com/editors>), which contains information and resources to support you with running and developing the journal.

### **3.4 Editors' tools guide**

A copy of this Editors' tools guide will be available here for your reference.

## **4. Overview of steps for a new manuscript submission**

### **4.1 What happens when a new manuscript is submitted?**

When a new manuscript is submitted two email alerts are sent to the journal's editorial email address. The first email alerts the editorial team to the submission. The second email is sent once the manuscript PDF has been generated and contains all the key information about the manuscript, including the Manuscript ID – a unique number that is used to identify the manuscript, and a link to the history page, cover letter and manuscript files within the system.

Alternatively if you prefer to simply work off the online system new manuscripts will appear in the

### **4.2 Assessing and assigning the manuscript**

Depending on the editorial model for the journal who completes these steps and the order in which they are done may vary.

#### **4.2.1 Assessing the manuscript submission and dealing with problems**

Access the cover letter and manuscript PDF from either the links in the submission email or the manuscript's *History* page.

For all journals the content of the manuscript should be checked before it is sent out for peer-review to check that the manuscript fits within the journals' scope and conforms with the journals policies and all information is contained within the manuscript file.

Common problems to check for are:

- Generally poor state of presentation/language that would hinder peer review.
- Missing info e.g. Title/Author/Abstract/Figures/tables/additional files
- Case reports not including statement on patient consent.
- Studies involving animals or patients not detailing ethical approval from the authors' institutional body.
- Controlled trials not including a trial registration number
- Data sets not deposited in appropriate databases.

If there are problems, contact the authors and ask them to address the points required. We recommend you place the manuscript into the 'pre-review problems' list until these problems are resolved by selecting this status on the *Assignment* page and add an editorial note on the reason.

If your policy is to screen manuscripts before sending them for review, ensure that you're doing it in a systematic way; if you decide to reject at this stage, the standard email should be edited to indicate that the manuscript has not been peer reviewed and it is important to explain your reasons to the author.

#### **4.2.2 Assigning a manuscript to a Handling Editor**

The manuscript should be assigned either to yourself or a member of the editorial team/Editorial Board to handle peer review which can be done on the *Assignment* page.

Using the dropdown box entitled '*Editorial contact*' select the name of the person you wish to assign the manuscript to.

Once you have selected an Editor, click [Notify new Editor] and an editable email will be generated informing that person that they have been assigned the manuscript to handle and invite peer reviewers as necessary. to ensure reports such as 'manuscripts with tasks' work correctly. Please note unassigned

manuscripts will not appear in various reports which help you monitor the progress of manuscripts, for example the 'Manuscripts with tasks' menu so if you are handling the manuscript, you should assign the manuscript to yourself.

**Assignment**

<b>Journal:</b> BMC Test Journal
<b>Type:</b> Review
<b>Primary subject:</b> Cell biology
<b>Other subjects:</b> Cell biology, Genetics, Genomics
<b>Editorial Contact:</b> User, Test <input type="button" value="Notify new editor"/>
<b>Monitoring Editorial Contact:</b> unassigned...
<b>Current editorial status:</b> Finding referees   <b>Change to:</b> Finding referees
<b>Fast Track:</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Editorial Notes:</b>

#### 4.2.3 Excluding a Handling Editor from a manuscript record

If you are aware that a member of the editorial team with Level 1 or Level 2 access has competing interests in relation to a particular manuscript you should exclude them from the manuscript record via the '*Editors with conflicts of interest regarding this manuscript*' section of the *Assignment* page. Simply click on the name of the person you wish to exclude, click [Add] and then click [Submit].

### 5. Managing peer reviewers

Once the manuscript has been approved for peer review and assigned to a Handling Editor, the Handling Editor needs to choose, invite and manage the reviewers.

The *Peer reviewers* page displays details of:

- Potential reviewers suggested by the author (if any)
- Potential reviewers suggested by an automated PubMed search based on keywords in the manuscript title and abstract. Note we cannot guarantee that they are the most appropriate.
- Excluded reviewers (if any) - authors, for a variety of reasons, may sometimes ask you to exclude certain people as reviewers. You can, however, override such a request, and invite an 'excluded' reviewer.

It also allows you to enter a suggestion, invite a member of the Editorial Board, or use the Quick or Advanced reviewer search to search the journals' database to identify potential reviewers and directly invite them, or save and invite later.

For further information see the guide available at

<http://www.biomedcentral.com/editors/editorstools>.

**Peer reviewers**

Peer reviewers | [Related articles from PubMed](#)

Expand all ▾

**1) Click on peer reviewer's name for tools to perform next action.**

**Suggested - by editors / other reviewers** [Hide](#)

Name	E-mail address	Affiliation
<a href="#">Prof Joseph Bloggs</a>	joseph.bloggs@biomedcentral.com	BMC

Suggested by Dr Test User

**Suggested - by Author** [Hide](#)

Name	E-mail address	Affiliation
<a href="#">Genevieve Horne</a>	genevieve.horne@biomedcentral.com	BioMed Central
<a href="#">firstname.lastname</a>	suggested@reviewer.com	affiliation

**Suggested - by PubMed** [find more peer reviewers from PubMed](#) [Hide](#)

Name	E-mail address	Affiliation
<a href="#">Joseph Chimera</a>	3 possible matches	
<a href="#">Sharon Glave Frazee</a>	2 possible matches	
<a href="#">K H Ng</a>	161 possible matches	
<a href="#">W C G Pei</a>	4 possible matches	
<a href="#">Yoshihiro Kobashi</a>	1 possible matches	

**2) Enter details to suggest a peer reviewer.**

Title: ▾ First name:  Last name:  E-mail address:  Affiliation:   ⓘ

Quick reviewer search:   [Advanced reviewer search](#)

or

**Invite an Editorial Board member**

Please select... ▾  [\[List of advisers' interests\]](#)

**3) People not appropriate to review manuscript.**

[Check for co-authorship on PubMed](#)

Next to each suggested reviewer will be some images that will help you to assess at a glance certain information about the reviewer, including whether they have agreed to review manuscripts before, how quickly they have returned previous reports that they have agreed to review, and whether they are currently reviewing many other manuscripts across all BioMed Central journals. For details of the symbols and their meanings, please see (Appendix D).

## 5.1 Inviting reviewers

Clicking on a name will take you to the *Peer reviewer details* page for each reviewer.

**Peer reviewer details - Josephine Blogs**

Title	First name	Middle initials	Last name	E-mail address	Affiliation
▾	Josephine		Blogs	J.Blogs@XXX.com	childrensware

To make changes to peer reviewer's details, amend information then hit  ⓘ

**Reviewer status** Suggested

**Reviewer suggested by** Submitting author

**Actions on behalf of peer reviewer**

**Actions**

ⓘ

ⓘ

ⓘ

From here you can [Invite] a review.

The [Send] button can be used to send the manuscript directly to a reviewer if they have agreed to review offline.

The [Exclude] button allows you to exclude suggested reviewers, or where a reviewer has already been excluded you can [Unexclude].

When the [Invite] button is clicked, you will be asked to set a deadline for the reviewer to respond to the invitation. The default deadline is as specified in the journal settings, which we can update for you, but is normally set to 3 days. However, you have the option to change the deadline date on an individual basis by selecting a deadline from the drop-down list, and then clicking the [Confirm] button. An editable invitation email will then be displayed for you to send.

**Invite reviewer**

Please check that the contents of the e-mail below are suitable, and press 'Send e-mail' to send the e-mail. Separate multiple addresses with commas, i.e. : Someone <someone@example.com>, Someone Else <someoneelse@example.com>

To: Josephine Blogs (JBlogs@XXX.com)

Cc:

Bcc:

Subject: Invitation to review a manuscript for Journal Name

Dear Dr Blogs

This letter is to ask if you would be willing to review a manuscript that has been submitted for peer review to Journal Name by Author. The title, authors and abstract of the manuscript are at the foot of this e-mail. We ask reviewers to return their reports within X days.

You will then return to the *Peer reviewer details* page where the date the reviewer is required to respond by is shown. On the *Peer reviewers* summary page the reviewer will now be displayed in a section called 'Invited – awaiting response', and the date the response is expected is displayed:

**Peer reviewers**

Peer reviewers | [Related articles from PubMed](#)

1) Click on peer reviewer's name for tools to perform next action.

**Invited - awaiting response**

Name	E-mail address	Affiliation	
<a href="#">Josephine Blogs</a>	J.Blogs@XXX.com	childernsware	13 Apr 2006

In addition, the *History* page for this manuscript displays a record of the invitation email.

## 5.2 Responses to invitations to review

Reviewers are encouraged to reviewer submits their response to your invitation online. When a response is submitted an email will be sent to the editorial email address, and if chosen in your journal settings, the email address of the assigned Handling Editor will be cc'd into the message, letting you know if they have agreed or declined. If a reviewer agrees, they are automatically sent an email detailing how to access the manuscript and report form and the deadline for their review. Reviewers who decline online may suggest alternative potential peer reviewers – these will appear on the peer reviewers page under 'Suggested – by editors/other reviewers'.

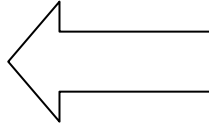
Some reviewers may reply to your invitation by email rather than responding online. In such cases you should record their decision on the online system by clicking the relevant option in the 'Actions on behalf of peer reviewer' section on their *Peer reviewer details* page for the manuscript.

When selecting [Decline] you can input the reviewer's reasons for declining the invitation if known. Choose the reason 'Not known' if no reason has been given.

### 5.3 Monitoring/chasing reviewers responses to invitation to review

To see a summary of invited reviewers that need chasing for a response, go to the Peer review section of the Process reports and click [Invite late](#).

- [Pre-review problems](#)
- [Finding referees](#)
- Invite late
- [Out with agreed referees](#)



Overdue review invites will also be listed in the [Manuscripts with task](#) report under the headings 'Referee invites overdue by more than 2 weeks' and 'Referee invites overdue by 1 - 2 weeks.'

If you have not selected to have automatic chasing for reviewer reports, manual emails chasing a response can be sent in one of two ways:

1. On the *Peer reviewers* page, go to 'Invited - awaiting response'. For the reviewer you want to chase, click on the link [send reminder](#):

Invited - awaiting response			
Name	E-mail address	Affiliation	
<a href="#">Joseph Blogs</a>	Josephblogs@XXX.com	mensware	9 Apr 2006 [ <a href="#">send reminder</a> ]

**OR**

2. On the *Peer reviewers* page, click the reviewer's name to access their *Peer reviewer details* page. Go to 'Actions' and click the [Chase] button.

In both cases, a standard chase email will appear, which you can edit if you wish and then click [Send email].

The *Peer reviewer details* page and *History* page will keep a record of your communication with reviewers, so you can check the last time you chased an invited reviewer for a response.

### 5.4 Disregarding reviewers

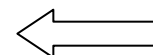
If you have chased a reviewer several times with no response, we recommend you 'disregard' or 'ignore' them. Also, if you initially invited more reviewers than you need and have received acceptances from a sufficient number you can "disregard" the extra reviewers so that they can't accept later on.

To ignore a reviewer, click on the reviewer's name on the *Peer reviewers* page in 'Invited - awaiting response', and then click the [Ignore] button, where you will have the option to edit and send an automatic email.

The [Ignore] option will block the reviewer's access to the system for this manuscript. The purpose of this function is to prevent reviewers (who might belatedly see the invite), agreeing to review, or submitting their review when you no longer need them. Note that reviewers can be un-ignored via an un-ignore button that will appear on their details page, should you change your mind.

This action will move the reviewer's name to a section entitled 'Disregarded' on the *Peer reviewers* page:

Agreed - awaiting report		
1 reviewer in this status. To see full details please <a href="#">click</a>		
Declined		
1 reviewer in this status. To see full details please <a href="#">click</a>		
Disregarded		
Name	E-mail address	Affiliation
<a href="#">Joseph Blogs</a>	Josephblogs@XXX.com	mensware



## 5.5 Extending review deadlines

Reviewers may request an extension to their agreed deadline. If you agree to their request, go to the *Peer reviewer details* page and edit the 'Agreed to review by' date via the drop-down list:

Peer reviewer details - Joe blogs

Title	First name	Middle initials	Last name	E-mail address	Affiliation
-	Joe		blogs	Joe.blogs@XXX.com	womensware

To make changes to peer reviewer's details, amend information then hit

**Reviewer status**      Agreed to review by

To record a new deadline for the reviewer's report, change the date

**Reviewer suggested by**      Submitting author

**Actions on behalf of peer reviewer**     

Agreed to review by dropdown menu:

- Mon Apr 17 2006
- Tue Apr 18 2006
- Wed Apr 19 2006
- Thu Apr 20 2006
- Fri Apr 21 2006
- Sat Apr 22 2006
- Sun Apr 23 2006
- Mon Apr 24 2006
- Tue Apr 25 2006

Once you have changed the date click the [Postpone] button and an editable email will be generated, click [Send]. The deadline information will be updated.

## 5.6 Report submissions

When a reviewer submits their report online an email will be sent to the editorial email address summarising the manuscript details and the report. A PDF version of the report will be available on the manuscript's *History* page and on the individual *Peer reviewer details* page as separate files covering:

1. 'Reviewer's report' which contains the referee's comments to the authors
2. 'Confidential comment' to the Editors.
3. Additional files the reviewer uploads to support their review (where applicable)

Reviewers will receive by email a thank you note and copy of their report.

If a reviewer returns their report offline, you can upload the report on behalf of the reviewer, by clicking the [Upload report] button on their *Peer reviewer details* page. Enter all details of the report and once you have filled in all the required details, click [submit].

## 5.7 Monitoring/chasing late reports

To see a summary of overdue reports, go to the Process reports peer review menu (see [section 3.8](#)) and click [Report overdue](#). This will show you a list of all the manuscripts that have one or more overdue reports, and the date the report was due.

If you click on the manuscript for which you would like to chase reviewers, you will see **OVERDUE!** next to the reviewer's details:

Agreed - awaiting report			
Name	E-mail address	Affiliation	
<a href="#">Joe blogs</a>	Joe.blogs@XXX.com	womensware	10 Apr 2006 <b>OVERDUE!</b>


The journal can be set to send automatic chases at set times when a report is overdue. To enable this option for the journal please contact your Journal Development Editor or [journals@biomedcentral.com](mailto:journals@biomedcentral.com).


If you have not selected to have automatic chasing for reviewer reports, manual emails chasing a response can be sent.


Click on the reviewer's name to see their details:

Peer reviewer details - Joe blogs



Title	First name	Middle initials	Last name	E-mail address	Affiliation
-	Joe		blogs	Joe.blogs@XXX.com	womensware



To make changes to peer reviewer's details, amend information then hit  

**Reviewer status** Agreed to review by Mon Apr 10 2006    
**OVERDUE!**

To record a new deadline for the reviewer's report, change the date and then hit  

**Reviewer suggested by** Submitting author

**Actions on behalf of peer reviewer**    
 

**Actions**    
 

Click the [Chase] button to generate an editable email to send to the authors. Check the email, edit if required and click [Send].

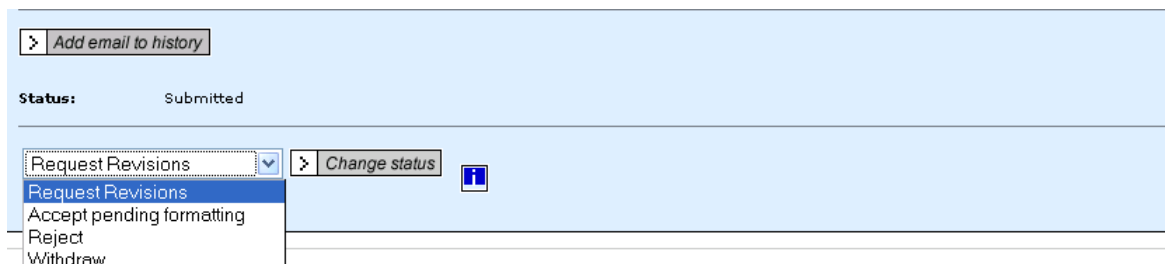
### 5.8 Disregarding reviewer reports

There may be occasions where you do not wish to send reviewer reports to an author, or in the case of open peer review journals, not publish the report online with the accompanying article. This may be because you disagree with the content of the reviewer's report, or the report is inflammatory or defamatory. If you wish to disregard a referee report, navigate to the *History* page for that manuscript. On the right hand side of the page, next to the referee report form, there is a tick-box in a column labelled 'Public?'. If you uncheck the tick-box, the report will be disregarded.

## 6. Rounds of revision

### 6.1 Requesting revisions

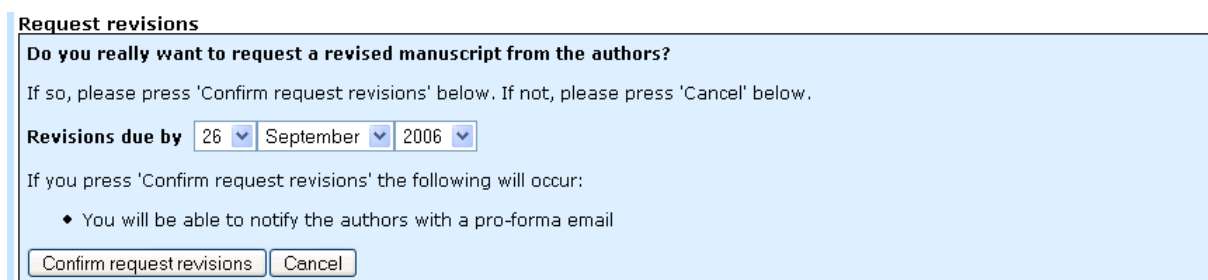
Frequently, the reviewers' reports will suggest that the manuscript needs revisions. To request revisions go to the bottom of the *History* page where you will see the following drop-down menu:



The screenshot shows a web interface with a light blue background. At the top left, there is a button labeled 'Add email to history'. Below it, the status is 'Submitted'. A dropdown menu is open, showing options: 'Request Revisions' (highlighted), 'Accept pending formatting', 'Reject', and 'Withdraw'. To the right of the dropdown is a 'Change status' button and an information icon.

Select the option '**Request Revisions**' and click [Change status]. You will now be asked to set a deadline for the author to respond to this request.

The default deadline is set to 3 months but you may wish to shorten the deadline if you think the revisions are minor, or lengthen it if you know the reviewer will be out of the country at the time or is very busy. Change the deadline date via the drop-down list, and click the [Confirm request revisions] button:



The dialog box is titled 'Request revisions'. It asks 'Do you really want to request a revised manuscript from the authors?'. Below this, it says 'If so, please press 'Confirm request revisions' below. If not, please press 'Cancel' below.' There is a 'Revisions due by' field with three dropdown menus: '26', 'September', and '2006'. Below this, it says 'If you press 'Confirm request revisions' the following will occur:' followed by a bullet point: 'You will be able to notify the authors with a pro-forma email'. At the bottom are two buttons: 'Confirm request revisions' and 'Cancel'.

An editable email will be generated, check the email, edit if required and then click [send email] to notify the author of your request for revisions. The article's *History* page now includes a record of the request for revisions.

You can re-send the request revisions email, if required for any reason.

### 6.2 Monitoring/chasing late revisions

Revision due dates are automatically monitored and the journal can be set so that automatic chase emails are sent out. Please contact your Journal Development Editor to change the journal settings.

If an author requests an extension you can alter the deadline for revisions by going to the *History* page and next to the event marked 'Round of revision' clicking on the [Modify revision due date] and using the drop-down menu supplied.

Where automatic chases are enabled chases one day after a revision due date is passed an automatic extension of 2 weeks is granted.

If the second deadline is exceeded, a second automatic chase email is sent granting an extra week. This email suggests that any further delay might lead to the manuscript file being closed and the manuscript being rejected.

If you do not receive a response to the second chase email you may wish to close the manuscript file.

### **6.3 Revised manuscript submissions**

Authors should submit their revised manuscript via the online submission system with a point-by-point response to the reviewers' comments.

When a revised manuscript is submitted to the journal an email alert is sent to the editorial address (in a similar way to when a manuscript is first submitted, see [section 4.1](#)).

Alternatively to see a list of manuscripts that are in revision, go to the Peer review menu of the Process reports and click [Authors revising](#).

Once the PDF has been generated you will receive a second email, which includes links to the revised manuscript PDF and the authors' responses to the reviewers' comments. You will notice in the subject line that the manuscript is now labelled with the corresponding number of the version uploaded, for example 'Ver: 2' for version 2, 'Ver: 3' for version 3 etc.

An entry will appear on the *History* page labelled 'Revised submission' from which you can also access the links to the revised version.

### **6.4 Checking the revised manuscript**

When you receive the revised manuscript you will need to check the following:

- The point-by-point response to the reviewers has been submitted as a cover letter, not as an additional file.
- The additional files are actually additional files and not extra copies of the revised manuscript or the cover letter.
- The figures have been submitted correctly.

### **6.5 Re-review stage**

If you decide that the revised manuscript should be re-reviewed, go to the *Peer reviewers* page and click on the name of the reviewer in the 'Reports returned' section. In the section 'Actions', click [Request re-review]. The next screen will give you the opportunity to amend the deadline for re-review. Click [Invite to re-review]. An editable email will be generated. Check the details, edit if necessary and then click [Send email].

The reviewer's details will move into a section called 'Awaiting re-reviews' where the date the review is expected is shown.

If the reviewer requests an extension to their deadline you can do this by clicking on their name on the *Peer reviewers* page, changing the 'Agreed to review by' date and then clicking [Postpone]. Late reviews will need to be chased with an offline email.

Reports should be delivered online, but again you can upload the report for the reviewer if required.

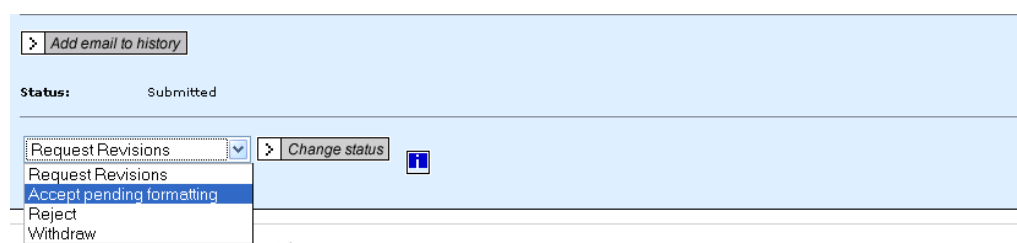
If you do want to ask for further revisions, please remember that most journals normally allow authors a maximum of two rounds of revisions.

## 7. Manuscript decisions

Please note only Handling Editors with access levels 1 and 2 can make final decisions on manuscripts. Handling Editors with access level 3 can request revisions themselves, but if they wish to accept or reject a manuscript should email their recommended decision to the Editor who assigned them the manuscript so that they can make the final decision.

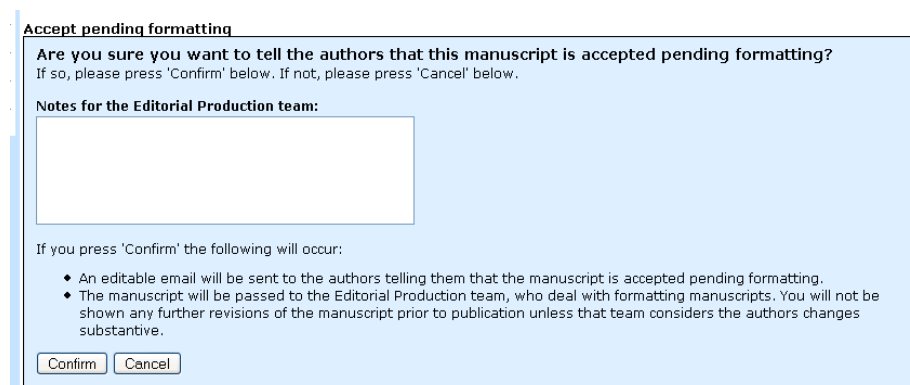
### 7.1 Accepting manuscripts

Although it is uncommon after the first round of peer review, you may wish to accept the manuscript at this stage. Navigate to the manuscript management system for the appropriate manuscript. Go to the bottom of the *History* page where you will see the following drop-down menu:



The screenshot shows a user interface for manuscript management. At the top, there is a button labeled 'Add email to history'. Below it, the status is indicated as 'Submitted'. A drop-down menu is open, showing four options: 'Request Revisions', 'Accept pending formatting' (which is highlighted in blue), 'Reject', and 'Withdraw'. To the right of the drop-down menu is a button labeled 'Change status' and a small blue square icon.

Select the option: **Accept pending formatting**, and click [Change status]. You will be taken to the following page:



The screenshot shows a confirmation page titled 'Accept pending formatting'. The main heading is 'Are you sure you want to tell the authors that this manuscript is accepted pending formatting?'. Below this, it says 'If so, please press 'Confirm' below. If not, please press 'Cancel' below.' There is a text area labeled 'Notes for the Editorial Production team:'. Below the text area, it says 'If you press 'Confirm' the following will occur:' followed by a bulleted list: 'An editable email will be sent to the authors telling them that the manuscript is accepted pending formatting.' and 'The manuscript will be passed to the Editorial Production team, who deal with formatting manuscripts. You will not be shown any further revisions of the manuscript prior to publication unless that team considers the authors changes substantive.' At the bottom, there are two buttons: 'Confirm' and 'Cancel'.

On this page there is a box where you can include notes to the BMC Editorial Production team such as requests regarding formatting. If you think the manuscript should be press released, please email your Journal Development Editor or contact [journals@biomedcentral.com](mailto:journals@biomedcentral.com) with your press-release suggestions. For more information, see the '[Enhancing the journal's reputation through the media](#)' section of the [For Editors](#) page.. If you have copyedited the manuscript prior to acceptance, please state this in the notes field.

Clicking [Confirm] will open an editable email to send to the author informing them that their manuscript has been accepted, and the Editorial Production team will be prompted to begin processing the manuscript. Please refer to [section 8](#) for further details on the publication process.

### 7.2 Rejecting manuscripts

When rejecting a manuscript navigate to the bottom of the *History* page where you will see a drop-down menu:

**Status:** Submitted

---

- Request Revisions
- Accept pending formatting
- Reject**
- Withdraw

Select the option '**Reject**' and click [Change status]. You will be taken to the following page:

**Peer reviewers**  
[History](#)  
[Figures](#)  
[Payment](#)

**Reject manuscript**  
**Do you really want to reject this paper?**  
 If so, please press 'Confirm Reject' below. If not, please press 'Cancel' below.  
 If you press 'Confirm reject':

- You will be able to notify the authors of the manuscript of your decision
- The reviewers will be notified automatically of rejection

If you are sure this is the manuscript you wish to reject, click the [Confirm Reject] button. An editable email will be generated.

Although there is only one rejection email template on the online system, it can be edited to fit the following rejection options. Once the email has been edited click [Send email]. The manuscript will no longer be listed on the *All Submitted* webpage, but instead on the *All Rejected* page.

**Reject prior to peer review** – you should remove mention of peer review and explain reason for pre-review reject

**Reject with optional resubmission** ('open reject') - applies to manuscripts where you feel that the authors may be able to make the revisions suggested by the reviewers, but not within a reasonable period of time, or the revisions are very substantial and you think the authors may not believe it is worth making those revisions. Authors should be informed that if they wish to make the extensive revisions they may submit the work as a new manuscript along with a point-by-point response to the reviewers' comments.

**Reject with no option for resubmission** ('closed reject') - applies to manuscripts that are scientifically unsound/of insufficient priority for publication in the journal or where the findings are not significant enough to warrant publication. A revised version of the manuscript is not invited. You should remove the following paragraph from the editable email:

*"If at some stage you are able to fully address all the referees' concerns, you may wish to consider submitting a new manuscript to Journal name. If you are able to do this, a full covering letter, explaining the revisions made should accompany the submission."*

### **Transferring a rejected manuscript to a different journal**

There are two occasions you may wish to suggest to the authors transfer of a rejected manuscript to a different journal in the [BioMed Central portfolio](#):

1. If you receive a manuscript that is either out of scope or of too low priority and you decide to reject before peer review. At this stage you may wish

to direct the authors to a more suitable journal. For example, all of the [BMC-series titles](#) have a policy to accept any sound manuscript so their priority level may fall below yours, and an article that falls outside of your scope may be more suited to a related [independent journal](#). In particular [BMC Research Notes](#) provides a home for short publications, case series, incremental updates to previous work, results of individual experiments and similar material, and [Journal of Medical Case Reports](#) considers any original case report that expands the field of general medical knowledge, and may provide a home for case reports that would not meet your priority level.

2. If you reject a manuscript after peer review, not because it is unsound, but because it is of insufficient interest to your journal, it may be more appropriate for a less selective journal.

Only scientifically sound manuscripts should be considered for transfer.

We have put together an email template, which can be edited to suit either of these scenarios see [Appendix VII](#).

If a manuscript is transferred to your journal, it will come through as a standard new submission, although the History page will indicate that it is a transfer at the top of the page. You may wish to contact the Editorial Team of the original journal to ask if they will provide you with the peer-review history.

If a manuscript is transferred from your journal to a title in the *BMC-series*, it is done under the tacit understanding that you are willing for the *BMC-series* editorial team to access the peer-review history. The *BMC-series* editorial team are willing to make available the peer-review history of any manuscripts transferred to the independent journals.

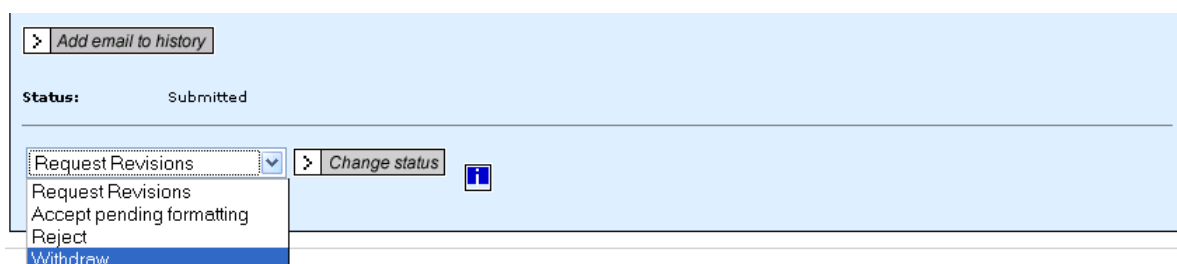
A list of related journals, which may help you suggest a suitable journal for the authors is available at, <http://www.biomedcentral.com/browse/bysubject/>.

### 7.3 Withdrawing manuscripts

Manuscripts are usually withdrawn for two main reasons:

- Authors may withdraw their manuscript for personal reasons.
- You may decide to withdraw a manuscript because of a lack of response from an author.

To withdraw a manuscript, navigate to the manuscript management system for the appropriate manuscript. Go to the bottom of the *History* page where you will see a drop-down menu:



Select the option '**Withdraw**' and click [Change status] the [Confirm Withdrawal] and the manuscript will be removed from the '*All Submitted*' section of the system, and listed under '*All Withdrawn*'.

An email will not be sent to the authors when the manuscript is withdrawn, so they should be informed of this action.

### **8. Preacceptance, acceptance and publication**

Once the manuscript has been accepted pending formatting, the BMC Editorial Production team will contact the authors and ask for any formatting changes that are required.

Once the formatting checks are complete and the author has carried out any necessary changes, the author is informed that no additional corrections can be submitted after formal acceptance. The author is then asked to make the final figure and citation checks, provide APC payment details (if applicable) and then click a link to formally accept and publish the provisional version of the article PDF on the website. The full text and formatted PDF versions will be prepared over the next few weeks by the BMC Editorial Production team.

If you have selected to display images and/or short title and summary alongside articles in the 'Latest' article's or to select 'Editor's Picks' on the journal homepage you should ensure you enter this information on the *Associated information* page at this point. Further information can be found in Appendix G.

# Appendices

## A. Process reports:

### Categories

- Fast track - By selecting the Fast track link in this section of the process reports you can view a list of manuscripts you would like to treat as urgent and aim to fast track through the peer review process. Manuscripts can be placed in the 'fast track' category by checking the fast track tick box on the assignment page of a manuscript record. See section [5.3.2](#) for more details.
- RCT - This option selects any manuscripts with registered clinical trials.
- Manuscript PDF not made - This link will draw attention to manuscripts where the PDF was not generated. If you see any manuscripts without an available PDF, please notify [journals@biomedcentral.com](mailto:journals@biomedcentral.com) and provide the manuscript ID.

### To do/over due

The reports in this section aim to help you efficiently manage manuscripts through peer review by highlighting manuscripts that require an action.

- Manuscripts to assign - This menu lists all manuscripts not yet assigned to a Handling Editor for peer review. Information on assigning manuscripts and viewing which manuscripts are assigned to a particular Editor is available in sections [5.1](#) and [2.2](#).
- Manuscripts with tasks - the default view when you log in to the Editor's Tools. This menu helps Editors to manage the peer review process by providing prompts for the next action on a manuscript. Manuscripts are grouped according to the actions required and actions are listed in priority order. Manuscripts must be assigned to a Handling Editor to be correctly listed in this menu, please refer to [section 5.1](#) for more details. For a full list of tasks that appear in this section, please refer to [Appendix IV](#).
- Older than 3 months, no first decision - Articles appear in this menu if they were submitted over 3 months ago and are still awaiting a first decision. This list can help identify delayed manuscripts.

### Peer review

The reports in this section show which manuscripts are at each stage of the peer review process. These reports can be used as a prompt for the next action on a manuscript, and can therefore help manage manuscripts efficiently as they move through the peer review process. For example, any manuscripts listed in 'Invite late' or 'Reviews late' will require chasing.

- New manuscripts – Manuscripts that are newly submitted and have been assigned to a Handling Editor.
- Pre-review problems – New manuscripts that should not yet enter the peer review process. Manuscripts have to be put in this stage manually (see [Section 5.3.1](#)). You may wish to put manuscripts in this stage if they are incorrectly formatted or you wish to raise a query with the authors before it is approved for peer review.
- Finding referees – Manuscripts for which reviewers have been invited but have yet to receive sufficient number of agreements to review.
- Invite late - Reviewers have not responded to the invitation within the deadline given.
- Out with agreed reviewers – Manuscripts being peer-reviewed.

- Reviews late - Manuscripts with at least one overdue reviewer report.
- Reviews in - Manuscripts with sufficient number of reviewer reports received.
- Authors revising – Manuscripts with authors for revision.
- Revision late – Manuscripts for which the requested revision period has expired.
- Revision in – Revised manuscript received.
- In re-review – Revised manuscripts in second review.
- Re-reviews late – Revised manuscripts with at least one overdue re-review.
- Re-reviews in - Manuscripts with all re-reviews received.
- Post review problems - Manuscripts that have been fully peer-reviewed, but should not yet be accepted. Manuscripts have to be put in this stage manually (see [Section 5.3.1](#)).

### **Decision**

The reports in this section show manuscripts by decision status.

- All Unsubmitted – Manuscripts that are in the process of being submitted or that have been abandoned during the submission process.
- All Submitted – Manuscripts currently in submission and have yet to be accepted, rejected or withdrawn.
- All Preaccepted – Manuscripts that have been accepted pending formatting checks.
- All Accepted – Manuscripts that have been accepted and published.
- All Rejected – Manuscripts that have been rejected.
- All Withdrawn – Manuscripts that have been withdrawn from the journal.

## **B. Manuscripts with tasks – summary**

The following tasks are regarded as high priority:

### **Manuscript submitted over 5 days ago, no referees invited**

- Meaning: The manuscripts were submitted over five days ago, but are still awaiting referees to be invited.
- Action required: The Handling Editor should invite referees.

### **Reviews submitted over 1 week ago**

- Meaning: All the invited reviews were received over a week ago, and no editorial decision has been made.
- Action required: The Handling Editor should make an editorial decision to accept, reject, or request revisions. Junior Editors, who are unable to accept or reject manuscripts via the system, should email the Editor-in-Chief or Managing Editor at this stage, requesting a final decision to be made.

### **Revision submitted over 1 week ago**

- Meaning: A revised submission was received over a week ago.
- Action required: The Handling Editor should make an editorial decision or request further reviews. Junior Editors, who are unable to accept or reject manuscripts via the system, should email the Editor-in-Chief or Managing Editor at this stage, requesting a final decision to be made.

### **Re-review submitted over 1 week ago**

- Meaning: All the invited re-reviews were received over 1 week ago.
- Action required: The Handling Editor should make an editorial decision to accept, reject, or request revisions. Junior Editors, who are unable to accept or reject manuscripts via the system, should email the Editor-in-Chief or Managing Editor at this stage, requesting a final decision to be made.

### **Referee invites overdue by more than 2 weeks**

- Meaning: A response has not been received from the invited referees.
- Action required: The Handling Editor should chase the referees or invite new referees.

### **Manuscript submitted over 6 weeks ago, still finding referees**

- Meaning: The manuscript was submitted over 6 weeks ago, and less than two referees have accepted invitations.
- Action required: The Handling Editor should find and invite referees.

The following tasks are regarded as lower priority:

### **Manuscript submitted over 2 days ago, no referees invited**

- Meaning: The manuscripts were submitted over two days ago, but are still awaiting referees to be invited.
- Action required: The Handling Editor should invite referees.

### **Reviews submitted within the last week**

- Meaning: All the invited reviews were received within the last week, and no editorial decision has been made.
- Action required: The Handling Editor should make an editorial decision to accept, reject, or request revisions.

**Revision submitted within the last week**

- Meaning: A revised submission has been received within the last week.
- Action required: The Handling Editor should make an editorial decision or request further reviews.

**Re-review submitted within the last week**

- Meaning: All the invited re-reviews have been received within the last week.
- Action required: The Handling Editor should make an editorial decision to accept, reject, or request revisions.

**Referee invites overdue by 1 - 2 weeks**

- Meaning: A response has not been received from the invited referees.
- Action required: The Handling Editor should chase the referees or invite new referees.

**Manuscript submitted 4 - 6 weeks ago, still finding referees**

- Meaning: The manuscript was submitted 4 to 6 weeks ago, and less than two referees have accepted invitations.
- Action required: The Handling Editor should find and invite referees.

**Manuscript listed as 'pre-review problems' for over 3 weeks, with no recent contact**

- Meaning: The manuscript has been highlighted as having 'pre-review problems' and no recent correspondence has been made with the authors.
- Action required: The Handling Editor should take the necessary action to resolve the pre-review problems.

## C. Comment moderation

The post a comment system allows readers to respond to any article in the journal, and accepted comments are appended to the article for all to view. To submit a comment, a reader has to click on the 'post a comment' link found in the top left box of the fulltext version of any article. You will be notified of new comments by email. Please follow the steps below to moderate a comment.

The comment can be accessed via the link in the email or by selecting the 'Comments' link after logging in to the Editor's tools. Most recently submitted comments will be listed under the 'Awaiting moderation' menu:

Click on the comment link to access the text:

<b>Comments</b> <a href="#">Development package</a>  <b>Respiratory Research</b> All Comments <a href="#">Awaiting moderation (5)</a> <a href="#">All Accepted</a> <a href="#">All Rejected</a> <a href="#">All Deleted</a>	<b>COMMENT DETAILS</b> <b>Title</b> Test comment <b>Author</b> Charlotte Hubbard ✉ <b>Email</b> charlotte.hubbard@biomedcentral.com <b>Posting Date</b> 15/02/2007 12:33:43 <b>Organization</b> BioMed Central <b>Comment</b> This is a test comment to illustrate the comments system.  <b>Competing interests</b> I have no competing interests
---	---

From here you will be able to check the comment, and change the status of the comment from submitted to either approved, rejected or deleted. An automated email will be generated to send to the authors informing them of your decision. If you wish to supply additional notes on the decision (for example why it is being rejected) this can be done so in the text box marked 'editorial decision'.

<b>History</b> <a href="#">15-FEB-07 - SUBMITTED</a>	<b>MODERATE</b> Send decisions to posting author To send a new decision, you may type in notes to the author. Select the type of decision and then press 'Submit'. This will send a standard email including your comments, unless you have changed the status back to Submitted, where no letter will be sent. <b>Editorial decision</b> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 80px; width: 100%;"></div> <b>Current Status</b> SUBMITTED <b>New Status</b> Submitted: <input type="radio"/> Approved: <input type="radio"/> Rejected: <input checked="" type="radio"/> Deleted: <input type="radio"/> <input type="button" value="submit"/>  <small>An automatic email will be sent to the author if you accept or reject this comment. The author will <b>not be alerted</b> if you change the status to "submitted" or "deleted". You may wish to contact the author directly.</small>
---	--

A copy of the BioMed Central comments policy is available at <http://www.biomedcentral.com/info/about/commentpolicy>, and may be of use in helping you to decide which comments should be approved/declined.

## D. Adding emails to the manuscript *History* page


Emails generated by the peer review system are automatically added to the *History* page for that manuscript. Emails sent or received offline can be added manually to the *History* page. This is recommended to create a complete history for the manuscript and aid tracking.


To upload an email to the *History* page, scroll down past the last recorded entry and click the button [Add email to history]. A blank email form is revealed: cut and paste the details from the email you wish to record into the relevant fields and then click [Upload].


**Upload e-mail record**


**Relevant manuscript**  
MS: 3389381351404746  
Test manuscript  
Charlotte Hubbard  
Journal of Medical Case Reports


**Upload e-mail**  
Please provide details of the email you wish to archive. You can move this email to another manuscript or edit users later. You cannot edit 'sent' or 'text' later.


**From:** \*  (e-mail) 

**Reply to:**  (e-mail) 

**To:** \*  (e-mail,e-mail...) 

**Cc:**  (e-mail,e-mail...) 

**Sent:** \*  (dd/mm/yyyy HH:MM:SS) 

**Subject:** \*  






**Text:** \*

You are then given the opportunity to amend various details or move the email to another manuscript. This tool allows you to highlight emails that require a response, and to specify a deadline for that response. Click [Confirm] to record the details.






Return to the *History* page, scroll down to the bottom of the record and click [Update]. The email will now be added to the history. If you click View in the 'Details' column the message will be revealed with options to [Edit] the details or [Reply] to the message.

## E. Reviewer Metrics





### How quick?

-  Previous reports returned before the deadline.
-  Previous reports returned on deadline.
-  Previous reports under 1 week overdue, chases begun
-  Previous reports over 1 week overdue, final chase sent
-  No response received from the reviewer on previous occasions

### How helpful?

-  - Frequently agrees
-  - Often agrees
-  - Sometimes agrees
-  - Occasionally agrees
-  - Never/rarely agrees

### How busy?

-  Available: no deadlines and no recent reports returned
-  Used recently: no deadlines and one report returned in the last month
-  Busy: one deadline and up to one report returned in the last month
-  Overused: more than one deadline OR more than one report returned in the last month

## F. Transfer offer email template

Sections in red require completing/editing.  
Choose to include one of the green sections depending on whether the manuscript is being rejected before or after peer-review.

Subject: MS: ID – Title

MS:  
Title  
Author  
Journal

Dear XXXX,

Thank you for considering Journal X for your manuscript above.

### Reject before peer review option

We have carefully considered your submission, but unfortunately on this occasion our consensus is that your manuscript is not suitable for publication in Journal X, as it does not meet the standards required by the journal/does not fall within the journal scope.

### Reject after peer review option

Peer review of your manuscript is now complete and in light of the reports we have received, I am sorry to say that we cannot consider the manuscript for publication in Journal X. We are consequently closing your file and the reviewers' comments are accessible in PDF format via the links at the bottom of this email.

However, as you may be aware, our publisher, BioMed Central publishes a number of other journals that you may want to consider transferring your submission to. For a full list of all BioMed Central titles, please see <http://www.biomedcentral.com/browse/bysubject/>. They all offer open access to research and may consider a wider variety of manuscripts than us; the Editorial Boards of these journals will have responsibility for whether or not to consider your manuscript. If you would like to transfer your manuscript please contact [journals@biomedcentral.com](mailto:journals@biomedcentral.com) with your manuscript ID number and confirming which title you would like to transfer to.

We wish you every success in submitting your manuscript elsewhere.

The Journal X Editorial Team

PDF links to referee reports if reject after peer review option selected

## G. Journal homepage article display options

On the journal's homepage you can display an image and/or short title and summary for articles to be associated with the 'Latest' articles or for selected 'Editor's Picks'. (Editor's picks with short titles, summaries and images shown below for *Plant Methods*.) If you would like to enable any of these options for your journal or would like more information, please contact your Journal Development Editor.

The screenshot shows the journal homepage with a navigation bar (Home, Articles, Authors, Reviewers, About this journal, My Plant Methods) and several content sections:

- Editor-in-Chief:** Brian Forde, Lancaster University. Editorial board.
- Articles:** A section with tabs for 'Editor's picks', 'Latest', and 'Most viewed'. It features three article previews:
  - High-throughput phenotyping of shoot biomass:** Includes an image of a plant shoot and a summary of the method.
  - Inkjet micropatterning to study leaf expansion:** Includes an image of a leaf with a color-coded pattern and a summary of the technology.
  - An intracellular indicator for programmed cell death in plants:** Includes an image of plant tissue and a summary of the fluorescent probe.
- Aims & scope:** A brief description of the journal as an open access, peer-reviewed online journal.
- Editor's profile:** A profile for Brian G. Forde, Professor of Environmental Plant Biotechnology, with a photo and a quote about technological innovation.
- Submit a manuscript** and **Sign up for article alerts** buttons.
- Email alerts:** A section for receiving periodic news and updates, with an email address input field and a 'Sign up' button.
- Related Journals (4):** A section for related journals.
- Indexed by:** A list of indexing services including CAB International, CAS, Copernicus, PubMed, Scopus, and Thomson Reuters.

If you have opted to utilise one of these display options you will see an 'Associated information' page listed in the manuscript management system. This page enables you to enter the relevant information for display.

The screenshot shows the 'Associated information' page in the manuscript management system. It includes a sidebar with navigation links (Back to Process reports, Manuscript management, Details, Assignment, Peer reviewers, History, Figures, Associated information, Search, Quick manuscript search) and a main content area with the following fields and options:

- MS:** 1002100210021002
- Title:** Methodology
- Author:** Journal
- Journal:** [Submission system](#) | [View abstract](#) | [View latest MS PDF](#) | Current Status: Preaccept
- Associated information:**
  - Short title:** [Text input field]
  - Blurb:** [Text input field]
  - Quality rating:** Display on journal homepage only (dropdown menu)
  - Clinically relevant:**  Article must have short title and blurb
  - Image:** Please choose the image you want to upload using the 'Browse' button below. Allowable formats - PNG, JPEG, BMP, GIF. [Browse...] [Remove]
  - (will be automatically cropped and scaled to standard dimensions)
  - [Update]

- Short title – enter text for the short title. We recommend 6-8 words.
- Blurb – enter text for your short summary for the article.
- Quality rating – select 'Display in journal homepage only' to make an article appear in the 'Editor's picks'.
- Image - select the image using the browse button. You may wish to use an image from the article for this purpose. If using another image please ensure you have obtained permission from the copyright holder for use.

Once you have entered the information required select 'Update'.