COURSE GUIDE

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OAPA grew in response to uncertainty in open access publishing

The Open Access Publishing Association was founded in 2023 to challenge the current model of publishing.

Founding members of OAPA established the association in defiance of a pay-to-publish and pay-to-read model in favour of open science.

Foundations of

Academic Peer Review

Why learn peer review?

Peer review is a safeguard

Academic disciplines and communities rely on a pool of capable reviewers with disciplinary and methodological expertise, who can provide high quality, timely reviews and advice to editors, that allows effective communication of information and decisions to authors.

Effective academic peer reviewing requires a specific set of skills and knowledge, beyond those that are developed through academic research and teaching in a disciplinary context. An academic peer reviewer's role can be described as disciplinary and scholarship custodian. The academic peer review function is responsible for ensuring accurate and ethical dissemination of knowledge, communicating assessment of research to ensure publication of research that is scholarly, ethical and contributes to knowledge.

This course is designed to provide foundational theoretical knowledge and practical skills to develop effective academic peer reviewing practices. Understanding quality markers that can be used to evaluate a manuscript and make recommendations will support academics to design research projects and ensure author submissions meet journal expectations.

Learning Objectives

On completion of this course, you will be able to...

1. Explain the purpose and role of academic peer reviewing.
2. Analyse manuscript elements for quality.
3. Construct actionable feedback for authors to improve their research and communication
4. Recommend an evidence-based decision on a manuscript

Course

Curriculum

The Foundations of Academic Peer Reviewing comprises three modules spaced out over a three-month period, with a final month for completing an optional credential assessment, or approximately 50 hours AQF level 8 volume of learning.

Each module requires 8-12 hours self-paced core learning, with optional supplementary extension readings and activities. A three-hour active learning online workshop is scheduled at the end of each module, with the optional assessment period commencing after.

Curriculum

Module 1. Foundations of Academic Peer Review

Participants are introduced to each of the foundation activities of the academic peer review role and their purpose in assuring quality research. Activities include considering individual expertise against an invitation to review, evaluating a manuscript against criteria, identifying critical elements for revision, writing the review, communicating feedback to authors and editors. The module includes a historical perspective to identify and discuss the purpose of each activity and its contribution to reliable knowledge dissemination.

Module 2. Quality Systems and Criteria for Peer Review

Participants are introduced to common systems of peer review, including methods for ensuring integrity of decision-making on whether a manuscript is ready to be published. This includes quality considerations related to understanding the limits and extent of your expertise, following specific guidance provided to reviewers, identifying appropriate critical appraisal tools, and self-evaluating your peer review comments. The module includes common areas of conflict, ethical issues, and concerns that may arise during the peer review process.

Module 3. Feedback Principles and Writing a Peer Review

Participants will learn strategies for writing constructive peer review comments against provided criteria. Participants will apply knowledge and skills from Modules 1 and 2. They will critically examine a sample manuscript submission and identify the relevant expertise required to evaluate the quality of the research and the quality of the paper. They will write feedback against example criteria designed to support authors to revise and resubmit a manuscript.

Assessment Credential Process

This short course provides the opportunity for participants to complete an assessment where participants will be provided a mock manuscript for constructing an initial review letter alongside commentary on the appropriateness of their reviewer capacity and limitations.

Satisfactory completion of the final assessment, and engagement in at least two of three workshops, will enable participants to receive a digital badge credential and Certificate of Completion from the Open Access Publishing Association.

Instructors

Dr Alisa Percy was an Editor of JUTLP, initially as Associate Editor, and joint-leadership role as Senior Editor in 2017. She set up planning and quality systems and training for associate editors, initiating the process of ensuring JUTLP participated in journal metrics. In 2020, she led the journal through significant change, including identifying an Editor in Chief, and provided critical knowledge and advice to support a smooth transition of leadership and direction. She continued as Senior Editor (Special Issues), leaving the journal in 2021. She was inaugural recipient of JULTP's "Outstanding Achievement 2022" award, recognising her consistent and supportive leadership, ethical approach to editor decisions, and broad disciplinary knowledge, generously shared.

Dr Victoria (Vic) Nicholas is Associate Dean (Faculty & Strategy) in STEM at the Open University and Principal Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (PFHEA). Previous research was in the area of Plant Biochemistry, particularly focussed on post harvest degradation of root crops. She has conducted a variety of eSTEeM funded research projects on Student Perceptions of online Practical Science and Students in Secure Environments. Vic is an Associate Editor of the Journal of University Teaching and Learning Practice.

Foundations of
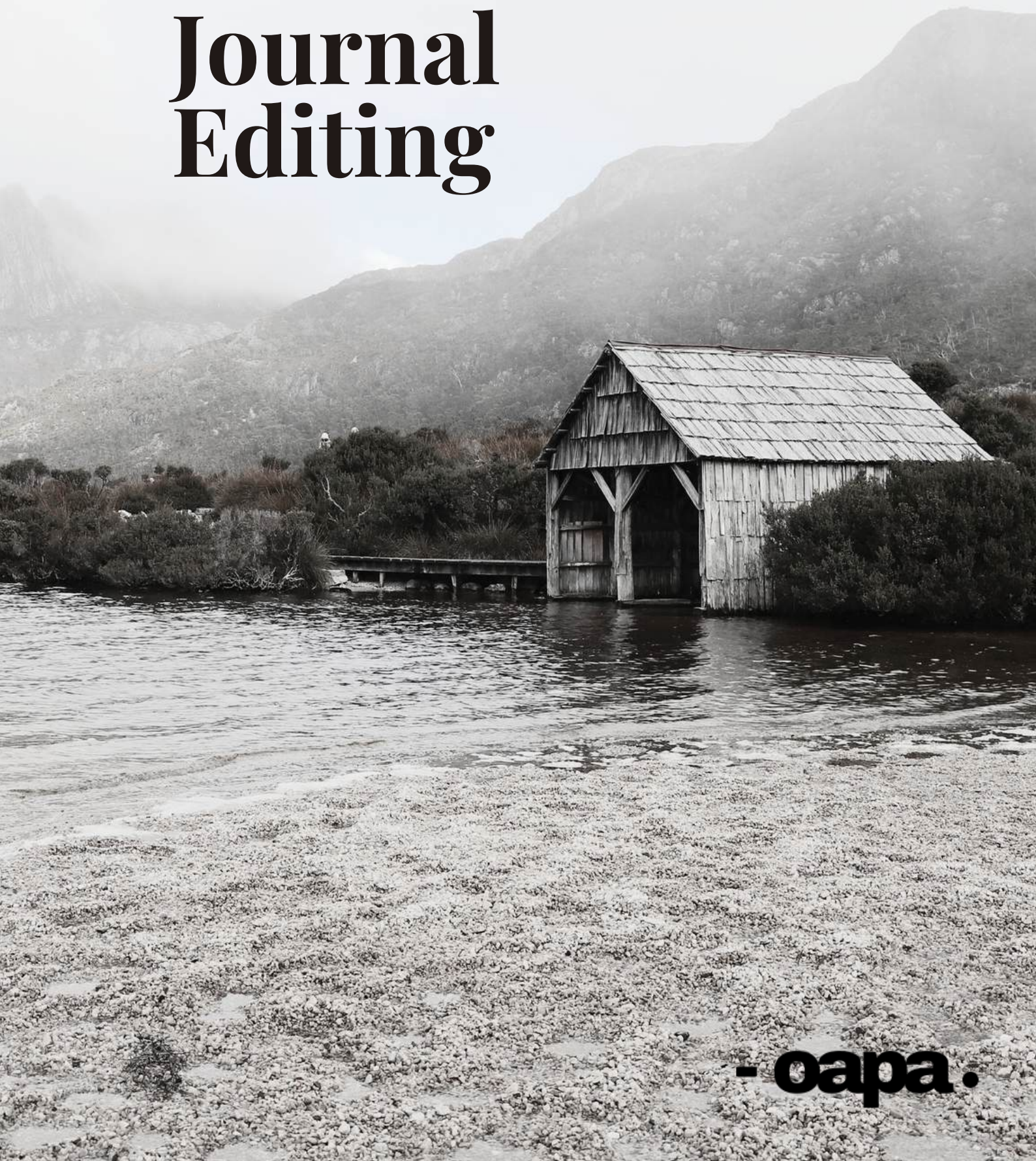
Academic Journal Editing

Why learn about journal editing?

Academic editing is essential

Academic disciplines and communities rely on prepared, experienced, and capable editors who can manage a publication process that compasses an initial (desktop) review, managing a peer review process and communicating information and decisions to authors.

Effective academic journal editing requires a specific set of skills and knowledge, beyond those that are developed through academic research and teaching in a disciplinary context. An academic journal editor's role can be described as process manager and scholarship custodian. The academic editor function is responsible for ensuring a system of peer review and communicating results to ensure publication of research that is scholarly, ethical and contributes to knowledge.

This course is designed to provide foundational theoretical knowledge and practical skills to develop effective academic journal editing practices. Understanding quality markers used to evaluate a manuscript from an editor perspective will support academics to design research projects and ensure author submissions meet journal expectations.

Learning Objectives

On completion of this course, you will be able to...

1. Explain the purpose and role of an academic editor.
2. Explain the process of managing a manuscript from submission to publication.
3. Apply critical analysis of aims and scope against a manuscript.
4. Evaluate peer reviewer comments to ensure actionable feedback to authors of a manuscript.

Curriculum

The Foundations of Academic Journal Editing comprises three modules spaced out over a three month period, with a final month for completing an optional credential assessment, or approximately 50 hours AQF level 8 volume of learning.

Each module requires 8-12 hours self-paced core learning, with optional supplementary extension readings and activities. A three-hour active learning online workshop is scheduled at the end of each module, with the optional assessment period commencing after.

Curriculum

Module 1. Foundations of Academic Journal Editing Roles

Participants are introduced to each of the foundation activities of the academic journal editor role: review, peer reviewer management, communicating feedback and decisions to authors. The module includes a historical perspective to identify and discuss the purpose of each activity and its contribution to reliable knowledge dissemination.

Module 2. Managing Quality Peer Review

Participants are introduced to common systems of peer review, including methods for ensuring integrity of decision-making on whether a manuscript is ready to be published. This includes quality considerations related to recruiting reviewers, providing training and guidance to reviewers, and evaluating peer review reports.

Module 3. Communicating Decisions Through Letters

Participants will learn strategies for writing constructive editor decision letters. Participants will apply knowledge and skills from Modules 1 and 2. They will critically examine a sample manuscript submission and associated peer review reports. They will write additional editorial feedback designed to support authors to revise and resubmit a manuscript that effectively responds to reviewer feedback.

Assessment Credential Process

This short course provides the opportunity for participants to complete an assessment where participants will be provided a mock manuscript, reviewer details and letters, and write an initial decision letter alongside commentary on the appropriateness of the reviewers and their comments.

Satisfactory completion of the final assessment, and engagement in at least two of three workshops, will enable participants to receive a digital badge credential and Certificate of Completion from the Open Access Publishing Association.

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Louise Taylor, PhD, CPsychol, is a Professor of Education and Student Experience at Oxford Brookes University and National Teaching Fellow. She is a Senior Editor for Journal of University Teaching and Learning Practice, Educational Psychology Section, having previously been an Associate Editor. Louise has published in leading journals including Studies in Higher Education and British Journal of Educational Psychology, and she has acted as a peer reviewer for several international higher education journals. For 4 years, she was also co-editor of Psychology Teaching Review, published by the British Psychological Society.

To find out key dates and enrol:
https://open-publishing.org/learning