

**Selection process: How abstracts are reviewed and papers chosen for publication?**

**Andre Van Steirteghem**

Professor-Emeritus Vrije Universiteit Brussel  
Honorary Consultant Centre for Reproductive  
Medicine  
Editor-in-Chief Human Reproduction

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Review abstracts for annual ESHRE meeting**

- Abstract must be submitted before deadline (1 February 2010)
- English
- You can be the first author for only one abstract
- Unpublished material
- Original, not yet presented at another meeting
- Review will be done in the absence of the names and addresses of the authors

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Review abstracts for annual ESHRE meeting**

- Select preferred form of presentation: oral and/or poster
- Decision of the selection committee is final
- Select the topic of your abstract from the 17 different topics
- Abstracts should be structured and include Introduction, Material & Methods, Results, Conclusion
- Title of abstract should reflect the content and should be no longer than 150 characters
- Body text should have a maximum of 600 words
- You submit abstract on-line

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Review abstracts for annual ESHRE meeting**

- Abstract review assesses the quality of the work presented
- All abstracts are first reviewed by Pre-screening Committee
  - Abstracts of obvious poor quality are eliminated
  - Abstracts on topics or subject matters unrelated to the meeting are eliminated
  - Assignment of abstracts to the correct topic category is examined and eventually adapted
- Remaining abstracts are distributed among a large group of appointed reviewers
- Reviewers are selected for all topics and their selection is based on their expertise

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Review abstracts for annual ESHRE meeting**

- Reviewers will not score abstracts from his/her country
- Abstracts are blinded for the review process (no names of authors or institutions)
- Reviewers score on-line each abstract following scoring system from 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent) for originality, design, quality of the data, presentation and significance
- Originality: How novel is the study?  
5 = very novel; 1 = not novel
- Design: Is the experimental design appropriate for the aim(s) of the study?  
5 = very appropriate; 1 = not appropriate

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Review abstracts for annual ESHRE meeting**

- Quality of the data: What is the achievement of the study in terms of quality of the data?  
5 = very high; 1 = very low
- Presentation: How easy is it to understand the study?  
5 = very easy; 1 = very difficult
- Significance: What impact is the study likely to have?  
5 = very high; 1 = very low
- Some categories are considered of higher importance than others
  - Significance score x 4
  - Originality, design and quality of data scores x 2
  - Presentation score unchanged

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Review abstracts for annual ESHRE meeting**

- Scores are collected by ESHRE Central Office and subsequently computer-weighted to ensure that possible discrepancies between the scores given by each of the referees are outweighed
- If requested the procedure can be fully explained on the basis of final-weighted scores the program is then put together by the Programme Committee
- Abstracts not selected for either poster or oral presentation will be rejected

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Review abstracts for annual ESHRE meeting**

- Some data from Amsterdam 2009 meeting
  - 1154 abstracts submitted
  - From 60 countries
  - 225 selected for oral presentation
  - 294 selected for electronic or paper poster presentation
  - 45% of submitted abstracts were accepted

---

---

---

---

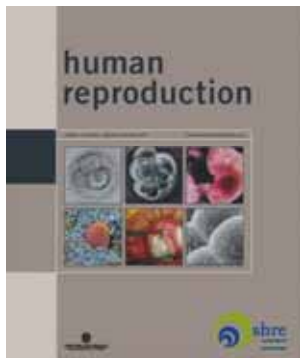
---

---

---

---

**Selection of papers for Human Reproduction**



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Selection of papers for Human Reproduction**

---

- Editorial Office
  - Managing Editor ESHRE Journals (PhD)
  - Managing Editor Human Reproduction (PhD)
  - Secretary
  - Data analyst
- Publisher: Oxford University Press
  - Phil Bishop
  - Production
  - Advertising
  - ...

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Selection of papers for Human Reproduction**

---

- ESHRE Journals
  - Publication Committee
  - Executive Committee
- Editors Meeting
  - Human Reproduction Update
  - MHR
  - Human Reproduction
  - Managing Editors

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Selection of papers for Human Reproduction**

---

- Editorial Team Human Reproduction
  - Meets regularly, also outside Editors' meetings and Publication Committee meetings
  - Deputy Editors: Prof. Crosignani and Prof. Evers
  - Managing Editors of Editorial Office
  - Editor-in-Chief
  - Support for certain expertise from Oxford University Press

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**What happens to submitted manuscript at Human Reproduction?**

---

1. Check in Editorial Office (1 day)
  - Format
  - Submission requirements
  - References, tables and figures
  - Trial registration number
2. Is the submitted manuscript within scope of HR?
  - Checked by EO, EIC decides

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**What happens to submitted manuscript at Human Reproduction?**

---

3. Case Reports: EIC decides whether review will be carried out; exceptional, original, not just another case report
4. Assignment of Associate Editor by EO/EIC (1 day); Team of AEs, specialists in different areas covered by HR, selected by EIC/EO based on track record as reviewer (quality of review, time of review); term 2 years, once renewable

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**What happens to submitted manuscript at Human Reproduction?**

---

5. AE is assigned and accepts
  - Is manuscript worth full review? If any doubt than prereview panel (former Associate Editors) makes recommendation – yes or no (less than 1 week)
6. AE selects and invites reviewers. Manuscript Central has data on large number of reviewers (track record, key words, ...); Selection 4-5; invitation 2; After acceptance reviewer has 14 days to submit review – if deadline passed reminder is send

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### What happens to submitted manuscript at Human Reproduction?

- 7. If RCT additional review is requested by EO to CAMS team (Cambridge Applied Medical Statistics)
- 8. Required number of reviews is received, AE receives email requesting to make recommendation (one week)

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### What happens to submitted manuscript at Human Reproduction?

- 9. Reviews by reviewers
  - Confidential comments to EIC
  - Comments to author
  - Priority for publication: high, average, low
  - Accept as is, minor revisions, major revisions, reject
- 10. Recommendation by AE to EIC
  - Comments to EIC and Authors
  - Recommendation: accept as is, minor revisions, major revisions, reject
  - Priority, regarding originality, scientific quality, priority for publication
  - Time: One week
- 11. Scoring of reviewers M and R scores

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### The 'R-score' - explained

- **R (review) score** relates to the **Associate Editor's rating of the reviewer's report**. Average of the four score categories with a x3 weighting on category 4 (overall quality). Minimum score is 1.5 and the maximum 7.5. Highest R scores will be awarded to reviewers whose reports are judged as excellent, based on the following criteria:
  - 1. discussed the importance and originality of the paper
  - 2. identified strengths & weaknesses in methods, presentation & interpretation
  - 3. were constructive, with evidence to substantiate their comments
  - 4. overall quality of report
- **We would expect to be using reviewers with R scores > 5.5**

1.	Did the reviewer discuss the importance of the research question and the originality of the paper?				
	1	2	3	4	5
	Near all				Discussed extensively
2.	Did the reviewer clearly identify the strengths and weaknesses of the method (study design, data collection) and the analysis and comment on the presentation and interpretation of the results?				
	1	2	3	4	5
	Near all				Discussed extensively
3.	Were the reviewer's comments constructive and did they apply appropriate evidence using examples from the paper to do so - 'cite' their comments?				
	1	2	3	4	5
	Near all constructive and substantive				Very constructive and all comments substantiated
4.	How would you rate the quality of this review overall?				
	1	2	3	4	5
	Poor				Excellent

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**What happens to submitted manuscript at Human Reproduction?**

---

12. EIC decision

- Reading ms abstract, tables and figures, M&M, results, discussion, bibliography
- Reading reviews, AE recommendation
- Reasons for declining ms: major shortcomings, lack of high enough priority after ms has been revised
- Decisions: accept as is, minor revisions, major revisions, reject
- Additional EIC comments to authors

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**What happens to submitted manuscript at Human Reproduction?**

---

13. Decision letter

- Decision category
- Comments to authors from reviewers, associate editors and editor-in-chief

14. Submission of revised manuscript

- Answers to recommendations for change
- Highlight changes in revised manuscript

15. Evaluation of revised ms by AE and one or two reviewers and decision by EIC

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**What happens to submitted manuscript at Human Reproduction?**

---

16. Appeals to rejection

- Arguments for appeal need to be spelled out clearly
- Appeal is send to AE and editorial team (Deputy-Editors)
- Based on recommendations EIC takes decision to accept or decline appeal

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Committee on Publication Ethics - COPE**

---

- [www.publicationethics.org](http://www.publicationethics.org)
- UK based charity concerned with integrity of peer-reviewed publications in Science, particularly biomedicine
- 5200 members from all continents, mostly Editors-in-Chiefs of scientific journals
- Some publishers signed up their entire catalogue of journals (Elsevier, Wiley-Blackwell, Taylor and Francis, BMJ Publishing Group)
- Issues related to the integrity of work submitted or published including conflict of interest, falsification and fabrication of data plagiarism, unethical experimentation, inadequate subject consent and authorship disputes

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Committee on Publication Ethics - COPE**

---

- Encourages members to seek investigation into suggested misconduct by the employing universities, hospitals or other funders of prima facie cases
- COPE Forum – quarterly meetings - discusses cases and puts advice on how to handle matter on website
- COPE Council, Ombudsman, Code of Conduct, flowcharts on how to handle the more common publication misconduct problems
- Funding of research, annual seminar, auditing tool for journals

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---