Brief notes of guidance

Thank you for offering to review papers for *Groupwork*. *Groupwork* uses the PKP online system for submission and managing the progress of articles. You will receive an email asking you to review an article with a link to the relevant article on PKP.

About *Groupwork*

*Groupwork* has a diverse and international readership of people involved and interested in groupwork in a wide range of settings.

Because of the variety of contexts in which groupwork happens, there is no one format of a ‘good’ article for *Groupwork*. However, there are some pointers to the sort of papers that we like to publish:

- Whilst we do of course publish articles with a scientific basis, this is not a requirement and we also welcome case studies and community based groupwork and practitioner and groupmember accounts.
- Articles should have a clear structure, a good summary, with themes clearly identified and developed.
- Articles should integrate theory and practice.
- Articles be accessible to an international audience and so any jargon or professional terms should be clearly explain (or avoided).

Undertaking the review

The Comments for Authors section of the form is a particularly valuable opportunity for the authors to receive detailed feedback. There are no particular headings, but your feedback will normally cover aspects of style of writing, specific issues concerning content and structure of the article, referencing, etc. The Editors of *Groupwork* have always tried to ensure a good balance between rigorous quality control and ensuring supportive and encouraging feedback to authors. The feedback needs to be made constructively, and do point out what you consider the papers strengths to be. Advice for revision needs to be clear with specific suggestions for improvements.

We see the review process as an opportunity to develop groupwork and aim to be supportive of authors – be kind. You are not ‘marking’ or ‘grading’ the article, rather you are assessing its suitability for publication in our journal. If the article is clearly not suitable at all, the reasons need to be made clear for the author, with specific examples to illustrate your comments (feel free to paste relevant text from the article into your comments if this is helpful).

The Harvard system of referencing is used.

*Groupwork in Practice*

In addition to more academic papers, we encourage articles from practitioners and group members. For these papers, the journal has an open mind about the extent and depth of referencing. Although we would not expect an article to be wholly descriptive, it may be that the main value of some articles is the light thrown on a specific example of a group and groupwork, and this will compensate for relatively lighter referencing.
Authors should provide rich descriptions of examples of groupwork and reflection on them and what happened. Submissions could be case studies. The practice papers must of course have a clear structure, a good summary, and clearly identified and developed themes. These papers could be written by group members, groupwork practitioners or students of groupwork. They will provide an opportunity to hear the voices of those who are seldom heard in academic journals. We welcome contributions that raise issues and challenges and which will stimulate discussion and debate.

Reviewers will be notified if the paper they are being asked to review has been submitted specifically for the Groupwork in Practice section, or they can make this suggestion. In these cases the guidance in this section should be used as the basis of the review.

The Review Process

All would-be contributors to Groupwork are asked to submit their articles electronically via PKP, unless there are clear reasons why this is not possible.

The link to the article and the review form will be contained in an email to you from the Editor. There is an online form to complete. The first section (Comments for the Editor) is seen by the editors alone and will not be shared with the author. It will guide the Editor in terms of the next stage of the review process. The second section (Comments for the author) is emailed direct to the author(s), by the editors. The authors do not know of the identity of the peer reviewers.

Please note that reviewers are asked not to use ‘track changes’ on the manuscript file to annotate text. Reviewers should prepare a separate file with text commentary for the authors.

The link to the article and the review form will be contained in an email to you from one of the two editors. We have a relatively quick turn-around of 4 weeks, so if you are not able to review the article within that time, please send a return email to that editor by return, so that a new reviewer can be sought. If the article requires substantial revisions, you will be asked if you are prepared to review the re-submission.

All articles are reviewed by two people. Your review and that of the other reviewer are considered by the editors in order to make a decision about the next stage. If you have requested to see any resubmitted article, the editors will ensure that this happens. Your review is indispensable to the editors in making the final decisions about whether an article should be accepted for publication. As a thank you for undertaking reviews for us, your name will be included in the list of reviewers in Groupwork and you will be entitled to a one-year free subscription to Groupwork online.

Ethical issues

You have been asked to undertake a review because the Editors consider that you have relevant professional expertise to assess the paper, provide an unbiased and objective view of its strengths and weaknesses, and, if the paper is in principle worth publishing, to suggest how the it might be improved.

Before agreeing to undertake a review, you should assure yourself that there are no conflicts of interest or other matters which might make it difficult or impossible for you to undertake this review. If you are unsure about any such questions, or if you feel in any way uneasy about reviewing the paper, you should discuss with the Editor before undertaking the review.

It goes without saying that the paper which you have been asked to review should not be quoted, or otherwise used prior to publication. You should not retain copies of papers which you have been asked to review.

More material on publication ethics can be found the website of the Committee on Publications Ethics offers an extensive (http://publicationethics.org/resources).

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