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Journal Policies



Open Library of Humanities Journal

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Editorial Oversight

Appointment of Editors & Special Collection Editors

The Open Library of Humanities journal's (*OLHJ*) main editorial team comprises dedicated, employed editorial staff working for the Open Library of Humanities (OLH) and Special Collection editors who guest edit curated Special Collections of articles. All OLH editorial staff are academically trained, and undergo a rigorous interview process to ensure that the highest editorial standards are maintained for the journal. Special Collection editors, who function as guest editors, must also undergo a thorough application process set by the OLH editorial team whereby they submit a Special Collection proposal and academic CVs for the proposed Special Collection editors (see the 'Special Collections' section below).

The Remit of *OLHJ* Editorial Roles

The journal's Editor-in-Chief is a member of the OLH team and has overall responsibility for the publishing activity of *OLHJ*. The Managing Editor, also employed by OLH, is responsible for ensuring that all articles and Special Collections are published in a timely fashion and meet the academic standards fit for publication. The Managing Editor is further assisted by OLH-employed Editorial Officers, who oversee each article's individual progress through the journal's submission system and are responsible for liaising with Special Collection editors, authors, passing article manuscripts to typesetting and for publishing articles when they are ready to be published.

Occasionally, OLH editorial staff will be required to facilitate the peer review process for articles where the editor(s) of the Special Collection have competing or conflicting interests with the article that would otherwise prevent them from facilitating the peer review process. OLH editorial staff also perform a minimum of one copyediting round for each article to ensure they are ready for production; where non-English language articles are to be published, OLH editorial staff source external copyeditors for these articles.

Editorial Decisions

The *OLHJ* editorial team may desk reject articles that have been submitted to the journal provided that there is adequate, justifiable reason as to why, such as an article that does not

fit with the specified active Special Collection or is unrelated to the journal's focus and scope. The *OLHJ* accepts articles for Special Collections only; the journal is not currently open to general submissions. Therefore, the Special Collection editor(s) will in most cases oversee the incoming articles designated for their Special Collection, the peer review process for each article, and will produce a draft decision based on two double blind peer review reports (see the 'Peer Review Process' section below). A member of the *OLHJ* editorial team must approve or suggest changes to any Special Collection editor's draft decision for an article before the article's necessary revisions can be sent to the author, or before the article can be accepted into the journal, or rejected.

If a more complex situation arises, such as an article containing problematic content that may not be suitable for publication in *OLHJ* has been identified at the review stage, the *OLHJ* editorial team will meet and reach a decision on the appropriate course of action to be taken for the article. The Special Collection editor(s) and, if necessary, the author, will be informed of the outcome of the meeting and subsequent actions.

Composition of the Editorial Team

OLHJ cultivates a broad and experienced Academic Steering and Advisory Committee that contains members from across different nations, academic institutions, genders and demographics. Full consent must be obtained by the *OLHJ* editorial team from potential committee members before they are included on the committee itself. The *OLHJ* editorial team may consult these academics whenever there is a subject-specific issue that needs expert input from someone with knowledge of that field of research.

OLHJ is committed to ensuring that the journal's articles, Special Collections, editors and advisors are international, with a wide range of expertise in various subject areas within the humanities. Potential committee members are approached by the *OLHJ* editorial team while keeping this diversity in mind.

Peer Review Process

Assessing Articles for Peer Review

Article submissions to *OLHJ* are made by the author to active Special Collections. Editorial pieces, such as introductions to Special Collections, generally do not need to be peer reviewed for *OLHJ* but all research articles must pass the peer review process.

Upon submission, the article is assigned to the corresponding Special Collection editor(s) and *OLHJ* editorial staff members. It is assessed to make sure that it is an expected submission to the Special Collection and that it is of sufficient academic quality to be sent out for peer review. Upon passing these checks, either a member of the *OLHJ* editorial team or the Special Collection editor(s) will progress the article to peer review.

OLHJ's Peer Review Practice

OLHJ uses the double-blind peer review process for all research articles. This means that the peer reviewer is not sent any identifying information about the author on the manuscript that they review. Similarly, the author cannot see any identifying information about the peer reviewer. All manuscripts are screened by the Special Collection editors and identifying information is removed prior to the manuscript being sent to peer review. Special Collection editors and *OLHJ* editorial team members also ensure that any returned peer review reports do not contain any information that could identify the peer reviewer. If such information is present, the peer review reports may be modified as sparingly as possible to remove this information in order to protect the integrity of the peer review process.

All research articles must pass the peer review process with at least two double-blind peer review reports of 'Accept Without Revisions' or 'Minor Revisions', with all necessary revisions made. Articles with a decision of 'Major Revisions' must be sent for another round of peer review once revisions have been completed, and two further peer review reports must be returned before another editorial judgement can be made.

Special Collection editors facilitate the majority of the peer review process for *OLHJ*'s Special Collections, unless there is a competing or conflicting interest that would prevent them from doing so. An example of this might be if the article is authored by a Special Collection editor,

which would mean that the *OLHJ* editorial team would facilitate the peer review process. *OLHJ* editorial team members do, however, approve any draft decisions that a Special Collection editor makes for article acceptance or further revisions following the receipt of two peer review reports. This is to ensure that the best standards of peer review and editorial judgement are being maintained.

Selection of Peer Reviewers

Peer reviewers are identified and approached to review *OLHJ* articles by Special Collection editors, whose specialism will enable them to source the most fitting researchers to provide informed and thorough peer review reports. The *OLHJ* editorial team advises Special Collection editors on how best to approach academics and researchers for peer review: primarily that all potential peer reviewers must consent to the use of *OLHJ*'s electronic publishing platform, Janeway, for undertaking their review; with their agreement, their contact details will also be entered into and held on the system. These details may be removed from Janeway's database at their request at any time. It is also advised that potential peer reviewers must have a recent publishing record of research that is relevant to the article that is to be reviewed, and that they work for or are affiliated with a verifiable academic institution or professional organisation that is relevant to the field of research, or have sufficient academic experience.

Peer reviewers must declare on the acceptance of their review task if they have any association with, or can identify the author of, the supplied manuscript in line with the OLH's policy '[Responsibilities of Reviewers](#)' (*Publisher Policies*, pp. 11-12). If this is the case, another peer reviewer must be sought by the Special Collection editors. If the Special Collection's editors struggle to find suitable peer reviewers, the *OLHJ* editorial team may assist by suggesting other relevant reviewers, for example, consulting the journal's Advisory Committee for potential reviewers.

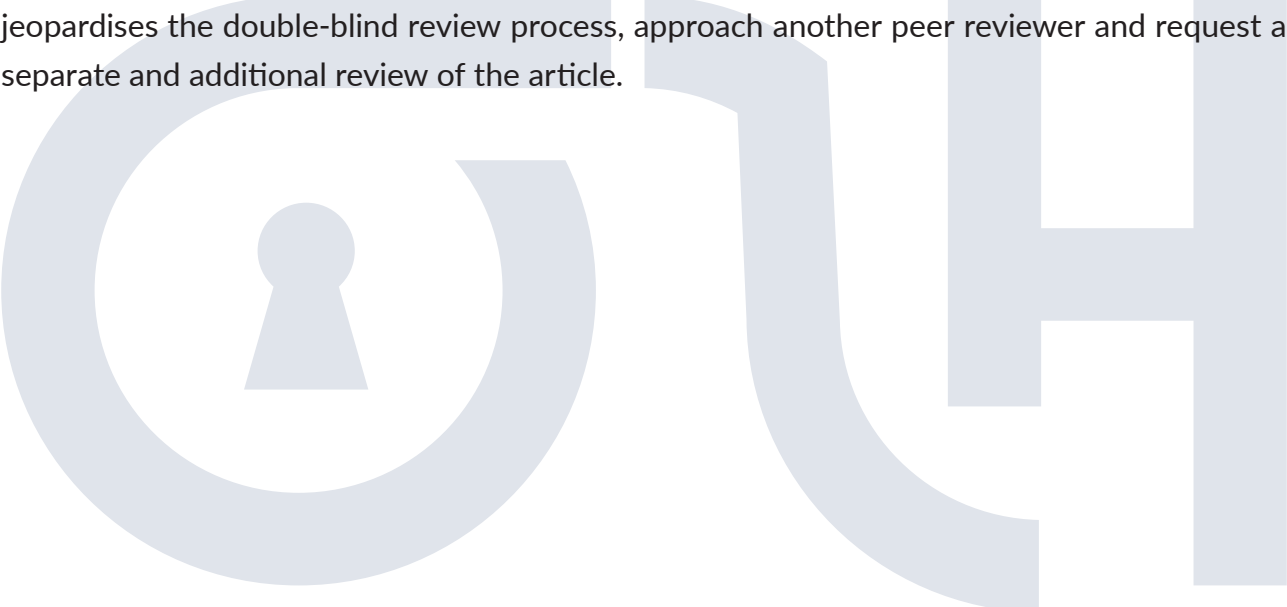
Guidance for Peer Reviewers

It is not in the remit of Special Collection editors or *OLHJ* editorial staff to train peer reviewers in how to offer constructive and fair feedback on articles. However, it is important to ensure that reports made by peer reviewers are helpful to the author. Special Collection editors will assess whether the peer review reports they receive can provide an adequate base on which to make their decisions. OLH has a comprehensive '[Publication Ethics and Malpractice](#)

[Statement](#)' (*Publisher Policies*, pp. 11–12) that contains more detail of best practice for peer reviewers, under the section 'Responsibilities of Reviewers'.

Peer review reports for *OLHJ* can give one of the following judgements: 'Reject' the article, request 'Minor Revisions' or 'Major Revisions' to be made to the article, or to 'Accept Without Revisions'. In the case of each review judgement, the rationale of the decision should be noted clearly, with examples to show, for instance, fundamental problems that cannot be resolved through major revisions, suggested minor adjustments to parts of the author's argument, or further relevant research that the author should engage with and cite.

While Special Collection editors can amend the peer review reports to remove identifying information, the peer review report judgements themselves are immutable. Special Collection editors and the *OLHJ* editorial team will, if they feel a peer review report is inadequate or jeopardises the double-blind review process, approach another peer reviewer and request a separate and additional review of the article.



Governance

The Structure of *OLHJ*

OLHJ is the flagship journal of OLH, which means that its editorial and operational structures are, aside from Special Collection editors and advisory committee members, drawn from the publisher's own resources. The *OLHJ*'s main editorial team members are employed by OLH; the journal's publishing platform [Janeway](#) is also actively developed and supported by OLH's dedicated technical team. Consequently, *OLHJ* is well supported and championed by OLH.

OLHJ's journal structure consists of: i) a team of dedicated journal staff employed by OLH (the *OLHJ* editorial team); ii) Special Collection editors/editorial teams (guest editors who apply to curate Special Collections); and iii) *OLHJ*'s Academic Steering and Advisory Committee, which features a roster of respected and knowledgeable academics and researchers in the humanities. The journal's editorial board can be found on the *OLHJ* website; however, Special Collection editors are not listed on the journal's masthead and are instead credited in the front matter of their own Special Collection.

Academic Steering & Advisory Committee Membership

The *OLHJ* editorial team approaches all prospective members of the Academic Steering and Advisory Committee to ask whether they would be willing to be a part of the committee. On selection, special attention is paid to their research activity, contribution to the field, and standing in their academic institution. If the prospective committee member agrees to sit on the *OLHJ*'s committee, they will be listed on *OLHJ*'s editorial team page and may be asked to assist with their academic expertise, for example, they might be called upon for advice on complex editorial decisions, sourcing peer reviewers, checking the soundness of argument of specific articles should a problem be identified, or advocating for *OLHJ*.

OLHJ's Funding Model

OLHJ is funded by OLH's Library Partnership Subsidy model, which shares financial resources for article processing charges and editorial staff costs between all OLH published journals. There are no author or reader facing charges for publishing or accessing articles published in *OLHJ*. Further information on the journal's funding model can be found on the journal's ['About'](#) page.

Preprint Policy

OLHJ publishes original research that has not been previously published in another journal. If you would like to submit an article based on work that has already been made openly available as a preprint, please inform your Special Collection editor(s) as soon as possible and [make contact with the OLHJ editorial team](#) prior to submission for further guidance.

Conduct & Expected Behaviour

OLHJ operates a zero tolerance policy of abusive or inappropriate behaviour. Anyone participating in the publishing workflow of OLHJ should not, under any circumstances, be abusive or behave inappropriately towards peer reviewers, authors, or other members of the OLHJ editorial team. The publisher's '[Publication Ethics and Malpractice Statement](#)' (*Publisher Policies*, pp. 4–14) contains further information on the expected responsibilities and conduct of all participants in the journal's workflow.

If you have any concerns about the conduct of Special Collection editors at OLHJ, please contact the OLHJ editorial team via the journal's '[Contact](#)' page form. Complaints regarding members of the OLHJ editorial team should be raised [directly with the publisher](#), OLH.

OLHJ Special Collections

OLHJ solely publishes Special Collections and is not currently open to general submissions. All articles in OLHJ Special Collections are published on a rolling basis, which means that they are published as and when they have passed through the publishing workflow. OLHJ articles also sit within the journal's current Volume/Issue at the time of publication. The journal's Issue number changes twice a year and its Volume number increments annually.

Editors must apply to edit an OLHJ Special Collection by submitting a collection proposal to the OLHJ editorial team. This proposal is assessed by the OLHJ editorial team and a decision will be reached as to whether the collection will be published pending further revisions, or

whether it will not be published. If accepted, the Special Collection's editor(s) will be onboarded to the journal by the *OLHJ* editorial team and the collection may begin the publishing process according to the agreed timeframes.

For further information on *OLHJ* Special Collections, including the application form, please see the journal's dedicated '[Special Collections](#)' information page.

