

**Recipient(s):** Employees at the School of Communication and Culture

## **Decision memo on the peer review of research reports at the School of Communication and Culture**

This memo describes the mechanisms for ensuring that all reports published by researchers at CC are subject to peer review before publication. Today, the vast majority of the school's published research undergoes peer review through the relevant publication channels and publishing houses responsible for the peer review process. However, for a number of reports, this is not a default procedure.

Given that the majority of research today is published through established channels that incorporate peer review as an integral part of the publication process, managed by the publication channels, it is anticipated that only a small number of publications will require self-initiated peer review.

We anticipate the following types of research publications in this category:

- Reports to ministries/regions (commissioned or via public tender)
- Reports related to other types of commissioned research or collaborative projects, in which the customer or partner has special requirements for the report

Please note that there is no official requirement to review dissemination reports.

### **AU's policy**

The following is based on AU's policy in the area, as explained here: [The policy for research integrity, freedom of research and responsible conduct of research at Aarhus University](#)

The rules for publication are described in more detail under the different types of collaboration with external parties, for example: [Procedures for responsible conduct of research and freedom of research in collaboration with external parties – co-funded research](#)

The two links above include the following description:

*“Research publications must be subject to peer review in accordance with best practice within the research area in question.”*



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**Memo**

Unni From

*“Definition: Peer review is a process for ensuring the quality of research publications. Peer review of publications involves an evaluation of the publication by qualified researchers within the field as a condition for acceptance for publication in a journal or other media. Peer review may be anonymous or performed by an editorial committee. The type of peer review depends on the field and its traditions. The following requirements also apply to peer review:*

- *Peer review must always take place before publication.*
- *At least one reviewer must be independent of the publisher/institution.*
- *Peer reviewers must have research qualifications.*
- *The review must evaluate the originality and scientific/scholarly quality of the publication.*

### **Co-funded research and income-generating activities**

When engaging in collaborations with external parties that include a research report, the researcher must ensure that the report undergoes a peer review process. When a collaboration agreement is made, the parties must determine whether the project includes the publication of research-based articles, which must then be integrated in the project budget and timeline.

However, the categorisation of research dissemination and popular research communication is not clear-cut, and research reports will fall along a continuum between traditional research articles and popular research communication. In external collaborations, researchers are often obligated to deliver a report within a specific timeframe. Hence, the description of the peer review process below allows for the possibility that a report may be rejected as research but later published as popular research communication.

#### *Appointing a reviewer*

As stated, all research reports published by researchers at the School of Communication and Culture must undergo peer review before publication. If the peer review process is not in an integral part of the publication process, researchers must initiate the peer review process themselves by identifying at least one external, research-qualified peer reviewer within the relevant research area. Please ensure that there are no conflicts of interest.

The researcher contacts the reviewer in question and establishes an agreement for the peer review via email. The agreement must contain information about the expected scope of the task, its timeframe and any remuneration. If the researcher, for valid reasons, prefers a ‘blind review’, they can contact the school’s research consultant, who will then assume responsibility for the peer review process, involving specialists from the relevant department.

#### *Remuneration*

As co-funded research and income-generating activities constitute externally funded research, the peer review process must be remunerated. This means that,

in future, all applications that include the expected publication of reports outside channels with an integrated review process must allocate funds in the application budget for peer review. The standard remuneration for the peer review of reports up to 20 standard pages is DKK 4,000.

*Process, including handling a negative assessment*

Peer review of scientific reports must take place before publication. The main purpose of the peer review is to assess whether the publication meets the requirements for a research-based publication. The review is conducted based on the specific genre of the publication, as there are different requirements for academic articles, reports, catalogue texts etc. However, this does not change the fact that the fundamental task is to assess the research quality of the publication. The review must include a clear quality assessment, any suggestions for improvements and a justification for the assessment.

It is recommended that the review is conducted based on the following grading:

- 1) In its current form, the publication complies with the academic requirements for the genre
- 2) The publication will comply with the academic requirements for the genre if the following aspects are taken into account (must be specified)
- 3) In its current form, the publication does not comply with the academic requirements for the genre

If the text is categorised as option 3, the researcher(s) may assess whether the text can be published as it is or rewritten into a text categorised as non-peer-reviewed communication.

*Filing requirements for external collaborations*

Correspondence regarding peer review is subject to the applicable filing requirements. This means that emails should be filed after the completion of the review process for publications resulting from externally funded projects of the following types, on which the funder has the right to comment (but not make decisions) before publication:

- 1) Commissioned research
- 2) Income-generating activities
- 3) Public-sector consultancy

Peer reviews and associated emails conducted in connection with publications resulting from external funding categorised as 'donations' and other unconditional grants (e.g. IRFD, the Velux Foundation, the Carlsberg Foundation etc.) do not need to be filed.