

**MEANING OF PEER-REVIEW**

***The peer-review process is an important aspect of any scholarly publication e.g. journal article, conference proceeding or chapter in a book. It is one of the main reasons why many submissions to DHET are turned down. What is required under the term “peer-review”?***

1. Peer-review refers to a double-blind review process which is executed by more than one person who are specialists in their field and independent of the claiming author.
2. The peer-review process may only be applied to complete manuscripts (article or chapter or proceeding article).
3. The peer-review process must be applied before the publication appears.
4. The peer-review process may only be applied to full articles/manuscripts and not on abstracts.
5. Evidence of the peer-review process must be available in the form of reviewer reports. These reports must be kept by the researcher for submission to Ms Van Wyk when the capturing system opens. It is not sufficient to only submit an email from the journal or editor which simply states that the article was accepted after review.
6. The process that was followed for the peer-review of the articles/manuscripts, by the journal editor, editor of a book to which you made a chapter contribution or article in a conference proceeding, must be clear and unambiguous.
7. The peer-review process must preferable be explained in the front matter of the book, in the journal guidelines or in the proceedings. If it is not available in the published journal, book or conference proceeding the publisher is required to provide explain how the process was executed in a letter on an official letterhead. This will be used as evidence of the peer-review process. The process must be clearly explained and detailed.
8. A review conducted by the editor of a book or journal of conference proceeding alone is not regarded as a peer-review. If two editors reviewed all the submissions, it is also not considered a peer-review.
9. If the editor did review a submission, then there must be a second review by an independent specialist.
10. Emails from authors confirming the peer-review process are not considered “sufficient” evidence of peer-review.

**Comments by DHET on peer review and the reason for rejection due to “no evidence of a peer review process”:**

* 1. *Peer reviews are provided by the book editor, and while they are extensive and thorough, there is not letter from the publisher certifying that the peer review process was undertaken, as required by DHET;*
  2. *There is no peer-review letter from the publisher;*
  3. *Emails from the editor in relation to changes required. No written confirmation from the publisher detailing then peer review process as required;*
  4. *Letter from the editor is not signed or on an official letterhead;*
  5. *No confirmation of independent peer review process;*
  6. *The submission does not contain a letter from the publisher about the peer-review process. Rather, it has a letter from the book editor, which is not acceptable;*
  7. *Book editors indicate peer review process in acknowledgements but no confirmation from the publisher of the independent peer review process;*
  8. *The letter regarding the peer-review process is written by the book’s editor and not the publisher;*
  9. *An official letter from the publisher detailing external, independent peer review has not been submitted.*