

# Peer Review and Quality Assurance Procedures

Consolidated version, 15 July 2025

## 1. Original Articles / Review Articles

### 1.1 General Procedure

(1) The author submits the manuscript.

(2) The editor-in-chief assesses the manuscript regarding formal aspects (anonymisation, compliance with style sheet, length, completeness of meta-data, etc.), pertinence to the journal's scope, originality (Has the majority of the manuscript not been published before, at least not in English?), and matters of research ethics and research integrity.

(3a) The editor-in-chief clears the manuscript for peer review. The author is informed about the decision.

(3b) The editor-in-chief refers the manuscript back to the author with the request for formal revisions (repeat steps 1 and 2).

(3c) The editor-in-chief rejects, in consultation with the editorial board and the review editor, the manuscript due to lack of pertinence to the journal's scope, lack of originality, breaches of research ethics or research integrity, or any other serious and irremediable defect.

(4) The editor-in-chief invites at least two referees to review the manuscript.

(5) The referees send their reports and comments to the editor-in-chief.

(6) The editor-in-chief reviews the reports and comments.

(7a) The editor-in-chief clears the manuscript for a digital check for text identities. If

(7b) The editor-in-chief refers the manuscript back to the author, asking for minor corrections. The author is

(7c) The editor-in-chief refers the manuscript back to the author, asking for major revisions and resubmission

(7d) The editor-in-chief rejects, in consultation with the editorial board and the review editor, the manuscript

<p>necessary, information that was omitted due to anonymisation is now added to the manuscript.</p>	<p>provided with the referees' comments as well as further feedback, if deemed appropriate (after receiving the revised manuscript, either repeat step 7b or proceed to step 8).</p>	<p>of the revised manuscript. The author is provided with the referees' comments as well as further feedback, if deemed appropriate (go back to step 1).</p>	<p>due to serious and irreparable defects (e.g., breaches of research ethics or research integrity). The author is provided with the referees' comments as well as further feedback, if deemed appropriate.</p>
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(8) The work is subjected to a digital check for text identities, e.g., plagiarism.

(9) The editor-in-chief reviews the results of the digital check for text identities.

(10a) The editor-in-chief clears the manuscript for publication.

(10b) The editor-in-chief refers the manuscript back to the author, asking for necessary corrections (after receiving the revised manuscript, either repeat step 10b or proceed to step 11).

(10c) The editor-in-chief rejects, in consultation with the editorial board and the review editor, the manuscript due to serious and irreparable defects. The author is provided with a justification of this decision.

(11) Optional: English language editing of the manuscript. Changes and requests are sent by the editor-in-chief to the author for clearance/revision.

(12) The manuscript is submitted to the typesetting and proofreading phase.

(13) The article is published.

#### *Comments on the general procedure:*

- In case of co-authorship “author” refers to the author who submitted the manuscript. All co-authors should be in CC of all communication between the journal and the submitting author.
- If the editor-in-chief submits a manuscript, or in case of any other type of conflict of interest, they delegate handling of the manuscript to either the managing editor or the review editor. The editor-in-chief and the managing or review editor may also decide, either jointly or individually, to involve a member of the editorial board to oversee the publication process if they deem it appropriate to ensure a fair and unbiased process. The editor-in-chief is exempt from any function in the procedure they would usually have.

- If the review editor, the managing editor, or a member of the editorial board submits a manuscript, the person is exempt from any function in the procedure they would usually have.

## ***1.2 Articles in Guest-Edited Special Collections***

The guest editor submits to the editor-in-chief a concept for the planned special collection, including abstracts of invited contributions and/or a draft of a call for papers as well as an anticipated schedule.

The editor-in-chief decides whether the special collection can be included in the journal or not. The editor-in-chief may request modifications and clarifications of the concept before making this decision.

If the special collection is accepted, the guest editor invites the authors to submit their manuscripts, communicating all necessary information regarding the planned timeline, feedback on specific abstracts etc., or, alternatively, disseminates the call for papers.

The managing editor monitors the publication process and is continuously updated by the guest editor in this regard.

(1) The author submits the manuscript.

(2) The guest editor, aided by the managing editor, assesses the manuscript regarding formal aspects (anonymisation, compliance with style sheet, length, completeness of meta-data, etc.), pertinence to the journal's and the special collection's scope, originality (Has the majority of the manuscript not been published before, at least not in English?), and matters of research ethics and research integrity.

(3a) The guest editor clears the manuscript for peer review. The author is informed about the decision.

(3b) The guest editor refers the manuscript back to the author with the request for formal revisions (repeat steps 1 and 2).

(3c) The guest editor excludes the manuscript from the special collection because of irrelevance to the specific topic, while it falls within the general scope of M&M. The manuscript will be treated according to the general procedure (section 1.1).

(3d) The guest editor rejects, in consultation with the editor-in-chief and in turn with the editorial board and the review editor, the manuscript due to lack of pertinence to the journal's scope, lack of originality, breaches of research ethics or research integrity, or any other serious and irremediable defect.

(4) The guest editor invites, in consultation with the editor-in-chief, at least two referees to review the manuscript.

(5) The referees send their reports and comments to the guest editor. The guest editor forwards the reports and comments to the editor-in-chief and the managing editor for informational purposes.

(6) The guest editor reviews the reports and comments.

(7a) The guest editor clears the manuscript for a digital check for text identities. If necessary, information that was omitted due to anonymisation is now added to the manuscript. The editor-in-chief is informed about the decision.

(7b) The guest editor refers the manuscript back to the author, asking for minor corrections. The author is provided with the referees' comments as well as further feedback, if deemed appropriate (after receiving the revised manuscript, either repeat step 7b or proceed to step 8). The editor-in-chief is informed about the decision.

(7c) The guest editor refers the manuscript back to the author, asking for major revisions and resubmission of the revised manuscript. The author is provided with the referees' comments as well as further feedback, if deemed appropriate (go back to step 1). The editor-in-chief is informed about the decision.

(7d) The guest editor rejects, in consultation with the editor-in-chief and in turn with the editorial board and the review editor, the manuscript due to serious and irreparable defects (e.g., breaches of research ethics or research integrity). The author is provided with the referees' comments as well as further feedback, if deemed appropriate.

(8) The manuscript is checked by the managing editor regarding completeness and consistency of citations and references. After necessary revisions are applied by the author, the manuscript is subjected to a digital check for text identities, e.g., plagiarism.

(9) The guest editor reviews the results of the digital check for text identities. The editor-in-chief and the managing editor receive the results for informational purposes.

(10a) The guest editor clears the manuscript for publication. The editor-in-chief is informed about the decision.

(10b) The guest editor refers the manuscript back to the author, asking for necessary corrections (after receiving the revised manuscript, either repeat step 10b or proceed to step 11). The editor-in-chief is

(10c) The guest editor rejects, in consultation with the editor-in-chief and in turn with the editorial board and the review editor, the manuscript due to serious and irreparable

informed about the decision. defects. The author is provided with a justification of this decision.

(11) The manuscript is submitted to the editor-in-chief for clearance (steps 10a-c are to be applied analogously).

(12) Optional: English language editing of the manuscript. Changes and requests are sent by the managing editor to the author for clearance/revision.

(13) The manuscript is submitted to the typesetting and proofreading phase. The managing editor is responsible for the necessary tasks. The guest editor is continuously informed about the progress.

(14) The article is published.

#### *Comments on the procedure:*

- The comments in section 1.1 apply by analogy.
- If a guest editor submits a manuscript, the manuscript is handled by the editor-in-chief in their place and according to the general procedure (section 1.1). The guest editor is exempt from any function in the procedure they would usually have.
- If a special collection has multiple guest editors, they must agree in advance with the editor-in-chief on an appropriate decision-making process among them, including but not limited to: assignment of each submission to an individual guest editor who acts independently from the others; joint handling of submissions and consensus decisions by the guest editors; joint handling and majority decisions, with the editor-in-chief having a casting vote in case of equality of votes.

### ***1.3 Criteria for the Selection of Referees***

Referees are selected by the responsible editor in line with the following principles:

- Referees have relevant expertise in the field of the manuscript.
- At least two referees are assigned to a manuscript. The complementary expertise of referees should be adequate to the manuscript's topic and theoretical/methodical approach. If necessary, additional referees may be assigned to a manuscript.
- Referees have no conflicts of interest with regard to the author/s (conflicts of interest are constituted by, but are not limited to the following circumstances: co-worker at the same institution; collaborator on a research project or co-authorship/co-editorship within the last three years; former PhD student or PhD supervisor; partner/spouse or any close family relationship, up to the second degree). In addition to pre-screening by the editor-in-chief, experts approached as referees are asked to disclose any potential conflicts of interest (in case they believe to know who the author is) or other likely reasons for not being an appropriate

referee (COPE Council 2017:3). The editor-in-chief may in turn decide to select a different referee.

- Manuscripts submitted to peer review after resubmission (see step 7c) should be reviewed by at least one of the original referees.
- Members of the editorial board may serve as referees. All referees of a manuscript may be members of the editorial board. If a manuscript is (co-)authored by the editor-in-chief, the review editor, or a member of the editorial board, none of the referees should be members of the editorial board.
- M&M strives for an overall proportion of female/non-binary referees of at least 50 %. In general, M&M attempts to challenge academic power imbalances by preferentially inviting referees from structurally disadvantaged groups, such as scholars from BIPOC communities.

### 1.4 Peer Review Model and Criteria

M&M uses a pre-publication peer review model. The peer review process should ideally be double blind, though exceptions may apply when the anonymity of the author cannot be sustained effectively, e.g., because the research topic is well-known to be connected to a specific scholar. In line with the *Ethical Guidelines for Peer Reviewers* (COPE Council 2017), referees are asked to disclose potential conflicts of interests that might exist with regards to suspected authors. The responsible editor decides in consultation with the referees whether a fair review process can still be guaranteed in such cases. Referees should in all cases remain anonymous. All interactions between referees and authors are mediated by the journal's editorship. Reviews are not published and are owned by the author of the review.

Manuscripts are judged according to the following criteria:

- **Originality:** Does the article provide original insights, present new data, develop and/or employ new theories, approaches, or methods?
- **Relevance:** Is the article relevant to current discourses in the field of music and minorities research?
- **Quality of research and argument:** Is the argument void of any flaws? Are methods or theories explained sufficiently and consistently employed? Is all relevant earlier literature sufficiently acknowledged and discussed?
- **Organisation and presentation:** Is the argument of the article clearly structured and easy to follow? Is the material effectively presented and are sources clearly identified?
- **Language:** Are language and style appropriate to the subject of the article, bearing in mind that authors might not be native speakers of English?
- **Research ethics and research integrity:** Does the research presented in the article raise ethical issues and are these properly addressed? Are there possible breaches of research integrity (e.g., plagiarism)?
- **Other relevant aspects that speak in favour of (or against) a manuscript, if applicable:** Does the article provide space for marginalised voices and are these

properly acknowledged? Is the research on which the article is based informed by an engaged concern for the interests of the minorities under study? Does the article actively challenge societal power imbalances or stereotypes? Any other aspect the referee considers worth mentioning with regards to its scholarly quality.

Additional criteria or questions may be added to this standard list to ensure the most relevant feedback for submissions to a special collection or for specific individual submissions.

The referees are asked to observe the *Ethical Guidelines for Peer Reviewers* (COPE Council 2017) by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) in addition to M&M's own policies on research ethics and research integrity and will receive guidelines/templates for preparing their report to the responsible editor (not made available to the authors) and their comments on the manuscript that will be forwarded also to the authors.

The responsible editor decides on the further treatment of the manuscript based on the referees' reports and comments. The decision should be informed by the reviews, but the responsible editor is not bound by any recommendations of the referees.

## 2. Reviews

(1) The author submits the manuscript.

(2) The review editor assesses the manuscript regarding formal aspects (compliance with style sheet, length, completeness of meta-data, etc.), plausibility of content, and matters of research ethics and research integrity.

(3a) The review editor sends the manuscript to the editor-in-chief.

(3b) The review editor asks the author for necessary revisions (repeat steps 1 and 2).

(3c) The review editor rejects, in consultation with the editor-in-chief, the manuscript due to serious and irremediable defects (e.g., breaches of research ethics or research integrity). If review editor and editor-in-chief are in disagreement over the rejection, they may ask the editorial board for advice. The editor-in-chief then makes the final decision.

(4) The editor-in-chief assesses the latest version of the manuscript regarding formal aspects (compliance with style sheet, length, completeness of meta-data, etc.), originality (Has the majority of the manuscript not been published before, at least not in

English?), plausibility of content, and matters of research ethics and research integrity.

(5a) The editor-in-chief clears the manuscript for publication.

(5b) The editor-in-chief refers the manuscript back to the review editor due to necessary revisions (repeat step 3b).

(5c) The review editor rejects, in consultation with the editor-in-chief, the manuscript due to serious and irremediable defects (e.g., breaches of research ethics or research integrity). If review editor and editor-in-chief are in disagreement over the rejection, they may ask the editorial board for advice. The editor-in-chief then makes the final decision.

(6) Optional: English language editing of the manuscript. Changes and requests are sent by the review editor to the author for clearance/revision.

(7) The manuscript is submitted to the typesetting and proofreading phase.

(8) The review is published.

### 3. Editorials

(1) The editor-in-chief sends the manuscript to the editorial board and the review editor.

(2) The members of the editorial board and the review editor send any comments on the manuscript to everyone involved.

(3) The editor-in-chief revises the manuscript at their own discretion.

(4) Optional: English language editing of the manuscript, if the editor-in-chief is a non-native speaker of English.

(5) The manuscript is submitted to the typesetting and proofreading phase.

(6) The editorial is published.

### 4. Contributions to the Section "Forum"

The "Forum" section of the journal provides a space for contributions that do not fall into the established categories of peer-reviewed articles or reviews, but are of lasting

value to the field of study covered by the scope of the journal. Although such submissions will not be subject to the standard peer-review process, feedback from at least two advisors should be obtained to enable the editor-in-chief to make an informed decision about whether to publish the contribution or not, and to advise the author(s) on how to improve their submission. The procedure for peer-reviewed articles outlined in section 1.1 of this policy and the selection criteria in section 1.2 apply by analogy. The Editor-in-Chief will ask the advisors questions tailored to the format and content of a particular submission, which may include, but are not limited to, questions from the standard peer-review form.

## 5. Correction and Retraction

In order to ensure the integrity of the scholarly literature, M&M may correct or retract published contributions. M&M follows the guidelines and workflows published by COPE for handling such cases (COPE Council 2019). Notes of retraction/correction or expressions of concern (in cases like pending institutional investigations whose outcome might affect the assessment of a contribution) are always issued by and based on the judgement of the editor-in-chief, in consultation with the editorial board and the review editor. Retractions/corrections may also be requested by members of the editorial board, authors, institutions, readers, or any other interested party. Such notes are clearly linked to their respective journal contributions and the contributions are marked accordingly. Consensus should be reached regarding content and wording between the editor-in-chief and the authors of the contribution in question though this may not always be achieved.

### 5.1 Correction

Notes of correction may be issued if only a small part of a contribution reports flawed data or content without affecting the overall conclusions. Also, minor cases of plagiarism concerning only brief passages and where there is no reason to suspect malice may be corrected via such a note.

### 5.2 Retraction

Following the COPE *Retraction Guidelines*, retraction may be justified in cases of contributions “that contain such seriously flawed or erroneous content or data that their findings and conclusions cannot be relied upon” (COPE Council 2019:4). Redundant publication of previously published texts or major parts of texts without any substantial and original additions may also be a reason for retraction. Whether retracted contributions are removed from the journal’s platform (except for their meta-data) or remain online marked as retracted is a matter of weighing legal issues and commitment to the transparency of the retraction process and historical accuracy of the archive of scholarship.

### ***5.3 Expression of Concern***

Expressions of concern may be issued as interim solutions in cases of contributions that might be in need of retraction or correction, but where evidence is substantial but inconclusive, or where a final decision may be delayed.

## **6. References**

- COPE Council. 2017. *Ethical Guidelines for Peer Reviewers*. Version 2. <https://doi.org/10.24318/cope.2019.1.9>
- . 2019. *COPE Guidelines: Retraction Guidelines*. Version 2. <https://doi.org/10.24318/cope.2019.1.4>