

Guidelines for evaluation of manuscripts submitted to Aeolian Research

Evaluation criteria

Aeolian Research judges all manuscripts against three primary indicators: (1) the technical quality of the work; (2) its scientific originality and significance with respect to aeolian science; (3) the presentation quality. To ensure that Aeolian Research maintains a high standard of publication, we make a distinction between manuscripts that are of a high scientific quality and which contain original and significant science and those which may be of the same quality but which only advance the discipline incrementally, and/or which have a low quality of presentation. We reserve the right to decline those manuscripts that meet our rigorous standards in terms of science but which have insufficient material of originality and significance to merit publication. In addition, we are interested in receiving manuscripts which [confirm or reproduce the work of studies recognised as being important](#), even though the content of these types of manuscripts may not be original as defined traditionally. Similarly, we are interested in receiving manuscripts which show negative or unexpected results particularly where an established hypothesis was not supported.

Rejection before review

All manuscripts submitted to Aeolian Research are subject to pre-screening for conformity to journal policy regarding submissions (as outlined in these author guidelines) and to establish that the manuscript contains *a priori* aeolian science within the scope of Aeolian Research and which meets the three primary indicators on which submitted manuscripts are judged.

When submitting manuscripts to Aeolian Research, authors are asked to address the following questions about their manuscript:

1. What is the scientific question you are addressing?
2. What is/are the key finding(s) that answers this question?
3. Why is the work important and timely? (That the research has not been done before is not on its own sufficient justification for novelty.)
4. What are the three most recently published papers that are relevant to this manuscript?

Answers to these questions and the manuscript abstract may be used to judge, with respect to the primary indicators, whether manuscripts are sent to Associate Editors (AEs). As a result of this pre-screening, manuscripts may be rejected before review. The pre-screening will be done firstly by the Editors-in-Chief (EIC) to reduce workload on the AEs but may include specialist advice from an AE. The AEs should also consider the above questions and recommend where appropriate that a manuscript is rejected before being sent out to review. Furthermore, whilst we understand the challenge for many non-native English speakers, we require that the manuscript's grammar and syntax is of sufficient quality before it is sent to reviewers.

The review process

Manuscripts that are sent out to review are considered by a minimum of two independent reviewers who we do not believe, to the best of our knowledge, have any serious conflicts of interest between themselves and the authors. This choice of reviewers will reflect: (1) the topic of the manuscript; (2) the methods that have been used; (3) the published work that has been referred to in the manuscript; (4) a potential reviewer's track record of reviewing for the journal, unless they are a new reviewer; and (5) who we have asked to review recently. We may or may not use reviewers nominated by an author. We provide guidelines for our reviewers [below]. Reviewers are expected to return their reviews within 21 days of agreeing to review.

Authors should be aware that the time taken to identify willing reviewers, delays in the return of reviews by reviewers and the time required for Associate Editors and the EIC to make recommendations and to reach a decision add to the time that it takes to get a first decision to authors. If we receive two reviews that cannot be reconciled by an Associate Editor, we may need to seek a third review. If only one review can be obtained for a submission within a reasonable time then, at the discretion of the Editors-in-Chief, a manuscript may be released back to the authors for revision. In this case, the Editors-in-Chief will attempt to send the revised manuscript to the same Associate Editor, request that the original reviewer consider the revised manuscript and that a second review be sought to enable a final decision to be reached.

The recommendation and decision-making process

The reviewers provide us with an evaluation of a manuscript's technical quality, scientific originality and significance, and presentation quality. Reviewers don't make decisions. Rather, the reviewers' reports and manuscript

are considered by an Associate Editor who makes a recommendation to the Editors-in-Chief. The Editors-in-Chief consider the manuscript, reviewers' reports and Associate Editor's recommendation and make a decision.

Possible decisions

All manuscripts will receive one of three decisions:

1. **Accept:** the manuscript does not need any further revision, even minor typographical changes and the manuscript is ready to be passed to production.
2. **Revise:** the manuscript falls short in some way in relation to its rigour, its originality or its potential significance, and/or presentation quality requiring significant additional work. This could be a substantial addition of literature, the re-analysis of data, changes to the representation or interpretation of data, modification of the discussion, a rethink of the Conclusions, or editing is required for syntax and grammar. A revised manuscript may be sent for further external review.
3. **Reject:** there are in essence three types of manuscript that receive this recommendation, those that have: (i) an interesting idea but lack the supporting data and additional data need to be collected before the manuscript is likely to sustain the idea; (ii) interesting data, but the context for the work and the interpretation of the data are some way from being worthy of further consideration even with a major revision; and (iii) poor presentation. Where a revised manuscript has been considered by reviewers for a second time and the manuscript is found to require major revision, the manuscript may be rejected and the authors encouraged to submit a new manuscript. After review, the manuscript may be rejected if the manuscript is found to have little originality or significance and/or has serious flaws in relation to method and to data that mean that these would be difficult to address, or have not been adequately addressed in resubmission.

Revised manuscripts

Revised manuscripts are handled according to consideration of: (a) the first decision made; and (b) the thoroughness of the author response. Where responses are felt to be insufficient, a revised manuscript may be returned to the authors without review with the same decision as was made before; may be sent for external review; or may be rejected. Authors are therefore strongly encouraged to respond to reviewers constructively by making the changes requested, and by providing a full account of the revisions undertaken. Some review comments may be rebutted provided a full justification is provided but even where a rebuttal is appropriate, there may still be matters of modification required to address the concerns raised by the reviewer.

Guidelines for reviewers

Reviewers for *Aeolian Research* should evaluate all manuscripts against three primary indicators:

- the technical quality of the work;
- its scientific originality and significance with respect to aeolian science and
- the presentation quality.

Reviewer reports should be written to address each indicator in turn, providing a general overview of how the manuscript meets or does not meet the indicators, followed by any specific comments identifying relevant questions or concerns about the text.

These guidelines are based on conventions developed by the geomorphology community and the practices described by Lane (2012, 2013).

References

- Lane S.N., 2012. Seeking good peer review in geomorphology. *Earth Surface Processes and Landforms*, 37(1), 3-8.
Lane S.N., 2013. Good practice in authoring manuscripts on geomorphology. *Earth Surface Processes and Landforms*, 39(1), 126-132.