

Unpacking Decisions Rendered by the *Hypothesis* Editor

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This editorial breaks down the logic used by the *Hypothesis* Editor when selecting a verdict for each submission:

Verdict 1: Rejection without Peer Review (aka Desk Reject)

Within 3-7 business days, the Editor notifies the Author(s), because the submission does not meet the Aim or Scope of the journal.¹ *Hypothesis* “Failure” submissions, perhaps because few journals offer this category, attract the most out of scope articles. A well-written manuscript that is poorly organized, utilizes an incorrect study design, or contains a flawed data analysis could also be rejected at this stage.²

Hypothesis is a community journal committed to working with first time authors and emerging researchers. Unless a manuscript is completely out of scope, the Editor will contact the Author(s) instead of using the desk reject option.

Verdict 2: Rejection

Outright rejection occurs rarely with *Hypothesis*, but this Editor may render this verdict for the following reasons:

1. Out of Scope

- As written, the manuscript would not appeal to readers of *Hypothesis* and the Author(s) choose not to revise the manuscript.

2. Not Innovative

- Before making this decision, the Editor will make Author(s) aware of other studies related to their research topic, encourage them to read the article(s), and revise the manuscript to reflect these findings. If the Author(s) remain unwilling to incorporate the new articles or adjust the manuscript, the Editor could suggest changing the manuscript to a different submission category and sending it out for a second round of peer review. If none of these options are successful, the Editor must reject the manuscript.

3. Author Decision(s), which is registered as a rejection in the system, usually fall into two categories:

- Author(s) choose to withdraw the manuscript from the journal.
- Author(s) view the requested revisions as unacceptable, or feel that they completely change the focus of the manuscript so they decide not to move forward with revising the manuscript.

When reviewing Author Decision requests, this Editor will usually suggest scheduling a meeting to discuss the submission, the requested revisions, and determine a workaround so that the author might consider submitting a revised manuscript.

If the Author(s) is not amenable to these suggestions, the Editor will respect their decision and decline the submission.

Verdict 3: Request Revisions

A request for revisions is a common occurrence and should not discourage the Author(s) – this Editor renders this verdict 90% of the time. Instead, they should read Peer Reviewer, Associate Editor, and Editor suggestions and seize the opportunity to expand upon or clarify parts of your manuscript.

Before making changes that do not directly respond to comments from Peer Reviewers, the Associate Editor, or the Editor, Author(s) should consult with the Editor or Associate Editor. If Peer Reviewer comments disagree with journal submission guidelines, check with the Editor before putting substantial time into making revisions.

The Editor's deadline for revised submissions varies, but the goal is to give the Author(s) a minimum of four-to-six weeks to make the requested edits. Author(s) who do not complete revisions by the next issue consideration deadline are given one additional chance to submit to the following issue. If, after 12 months, the Author(s) do not provide a revised manuscript or communicate an intent to continue, this Editor will decline the submission.^{2,3}

If the author(s) have questions or serious disagreements with the review comments, they may choose to not submit a revised manuscript. Before making this decision, the Editor hopes the Author(s) would share their concerns and meet with the Editor to see if they can reach an agreement regarding the requested revisions.

Verdict 4: Revisions Requested, Manuscript will undergo a second round of Peer Review

At times, the Editor might read peer reviewer comments, consult with an Associate Editor, and decide the manuscript is a better fit for a different submission category. In these cases, the manuscript will undergo a second round of peer review.

The Editor or Associate Editor might read the comments and recognize that the requested changes will substantially change the manuscript. In such cases, the revised manuscript would benefit from an additional round of peer review. This Editor prefers to send the revised manuscript back to peer reviewers of the original manuscript under these circumstances. While this decision will frustrate Authors and delay the publication of a manuscript, this Editor can attest that undergoing two rounds of peer review does improve the quality of a manuscript.⁴

Verdict 5: Accepted with Minor Revisions

A request for minor revisions means that the Editor, Associate Editor, and Peer Reviewers suggest minimal adjustments to terminology, phrasing, additional citations, or an updated literature review. A request for minor revisions is a common response in scholarly publishing. When the Author(s) receive this verdict from *Hypothesis*, they do not need to submit a response to reviewer comments in addition to a revised and unblinded manuscript.

Verdict 6: Accepted without Revisions

Author(s) should be ecstatic to receive such a determination for a peer reviewed article! If the

Author(s) chooses to make revisions, the Editor will review and usually accept the proposed changes before moving the manuscript to Copy Editing.

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