

**Important: OLH Journal Policies Update Form**

As part of our ongoing activities at the OLH we are currently reviewing all journal policies in line with recently upgraded publishing standards. In order to meet the [latest standards in research integrity](https://publicationethics.org/), we need your help to improve the transparency of your journal’s policies – including editorial oversight, the peer review process, organisation and governance of your journal, and the selection process and duration of all editorial positions. These updated policies will be visible on your journal’s site under a clear ‘Journal Policies’ webpage.

**Please complete and return the below form to Rose Harris-Birtill (**[**r.harris-birtill@bbk.ac.uk**](mailto:r.harris-birtill@bbk.ac.uk)**) and Simon Everett (**[**s.everett@bbk.ac.uk**](mailto:s.everett@bbk.ac.uk)**) by Friday 19th May 2023. If you have any questions about completing the form, please do get in touch.**

Thank you!

OLH has two policy levels: 1) [publisher policies](https://www.openlibhums.org/site/publisher-policies/) that are formed and overseen by OLH and followed by all OLH journals; and 2) journal policies which should be established and adhered to by journal editorial teams and monitored by OLH.  
  
Your journal should already have its own policies, either on the journal’s website or noted down and followed separately by your editorial team. However, we would now like for our journals to make important aspects of these processes publicly available online so that the open access publishing process of your journal is more transparent.  
  
Crucially, this means that your journal can be brought into alignment with the standards set by the [Committee on Publication Ethics](https://publicationethics.org) (COPE), the [Open Access Scholarly Publishing Association](https://oaspa.org) (OASPA) and various journal indexing sites.

In order to meet open access best practice, the following headings MUST be populated by your journal’s editorial team using the bullet points as a guide, in line with [COPE’s ‘Principles of Transparency and Best Practice in Scholarly Publishing’](https://publicationethics.org/resources/guidelines/principles-transparency-and-best-practice-scholarly-publishing).

Please note: while filling out the below headings, your journal’s policies should NOT contradict [OLH’s Publisher Policies](https://www.openlibhums.org/site/publisher-policies/). However, where greater clarity is required for specific policy areas for your journal, you may expand on OLH’s Publisher Policies as required. You may find it helpful to refer to or borrow copy from the [*Open Library of Humanities* journal](https://olh.openlibhums.org/site/journal-policies/)'s ‘Journal Policies’ page. The OLH team will check and inform you of any contradictions present in your response below.

**Journal Name: (Please insert your journal’s full name here for reference)**

**Please fill in each of the following sections:**

**Editorial Oversight**

* How the journal selects its own editors and guest editors:
* The remit of these editorial roles, including the journal’s Editor-in-Chief, and how long each role lasts for:
* How editorial decisions are reached. E.g. decisions on article acceptance following peer review, and the process of decisions made by section/guest editors, such as draft decisions (if used by your journal):
* A statement on the geographical composition and diversity of, for instance, nationalities/genders of the editorial board/team and/or the journal’s stance on how it seeks to improve and maintain this. E.g. ‘This journal cultivates a broad and experienced Advisory Board that contains members from across different nations, academic institutions, genders and demographics. Potential board members are approached by the editorial team while keeping this diversity in mind.’:

**Peer Review Process**

This should be supplementary to and more descriptive than the information already provided on your journal’s website about the type of peer review your journal uses. It must include details of:

* What happens to an article from its submission through to review? E.g. editorial scrutiny of submissions; which articles need to pass through peer review and which do not (such as editorial pieces or introductions); who passes the submitted articles to review:
* What is the journal’s double/single blind/open review policy and why is this used:
* Any specific eccentricities or unique variations to the peer review process for the journal should be given. E.g. if you use modified single-blind, how so, and why:
* How your journal’s peer reviewers are selected:

OLH’s publisher policy is that journal editors are responsible for sourcing potential peer reviewers for submitted articles. Although the practice of inviting authors to suggest potential reviewers for their articles is an acceptable scholarly practice [as outlined by COPE](https://publicationethics.org/resources/flowcharts/how-recognise-potential-manipulation-peer-review-process), the OLH believes that inviting authors to contribute to the review process can potentially lead to manipulation and abuse of peer review. The OLH understands, however, that for some disciplines the practice of authors suggesting potential reviewers is accepted best practice and we can make exceptions to this our publisher policy for specific journals in consultation with journal editorial boards.

* Please state (yes/no) whether your journal invites authors to suggest potential peer reviewers for their articles. If the answer is yes, please include a short description of how you oversee this practice and ensure potential malpractice does not occur:
* What materials are supplied to peer reviewers prior to and upon their acceptance to review an article? For example, anonymised (or not, depending on review policy) abstracts/manuscripts and figures, any further helpful documentation:
* Clearly state the guidance that your journal gives to peer reviewers to help them to conduct reviews properly:
* Are peer review reports made publicly available (published) alongside the article or not? An explanation of the rationale should be given. If helpful, please use the template below and adapt it to suit your journal:

‘According to its double-blind peer review policy, the *OLHJ* does not publish peer review reports alongside articles, or the names of the peer reviewers who have undertaken review of the article. Anonymised peer review data is held securely and privately in the journal’s publishing platform for the author to access whenever they choose to.’

* Any other important matters associated with the journal’s peer review process otherwise not covered by [OLH’s publisher policy](https://www.openlibhums.org/site/publisher-policies/#Reviewer%20Responsibilities) or the above points. This may include, for instance, exceptions or modifications to the review process in light of preprints (see ‘Preprint Policy’ below):

**Organisation and Governance**

For this section on journal ownership, we have provided a provisional template. We appreciate that you may already have some ownership information for your journal, but this should be included in an ownership statement that will become a section on your ‘Journal Policies’ webpage. We would kindly ask that you carefully read through and amend the following:

‘[Journal name] is owned and managed by the [society / network / association / research centre name] [insert link to its ‘About’ webpage if possible], a not-for-profit scholarly association established in [add year] funded by membership subscriptions. The society is dedicated to [insert/adapt 1-2 sentences from society mission statement]. [Sentence about who appoints editors and oversees / governs editorial structure].’

Here is an example of an ownership statement:

*‘C21: Journal of 21st-Century Writings* is owned and managed by the British Association for Contemporary Literary Studies (BACLS), a not-for-profit scholarly association established in 2017 and funded by membership subscriptions. The association brings together academics and practitioners from across the UK and beyond to explore literary studies in the current moment. The association’s Executive Committee is responsible for appointing an editorial team, managed by an Editor-in-Chief with a term of 3 years.’

You may find it useful to refer to the below bullet points and to add further information so that the necessary policy points are covered in the above template statement:

* A statement on the ownership of the journal (e.g. by a society or institution, if applicable). This must clearly differentiate from the copyright of any articles published within your journal, which for OLH journals remains with the author:
* A statement on the structure of the journal (e.g. its editorial boards, teams, related societies and other bodies, how they interact, and their roles/remit in relation to the journal):
* How your journal’s advisory boards are selected and maintained, including details about how long members serve for, and how often the board is reviewed by the journal’s editorial team:
* Any further information relating to societies and associations involved in the journal’s funding or editorial structures:
* A statement of the journal’s relationship with the publisher (OLH). E.g., this might entail something like ‘this journal was formerly was published by X until 2018 but is now published by the Open Library of Humanities’:

**Editorial Team/Office Contact Information**

* Please supply a primary editorial office contact email address that will enable the journal’s editorial team to be reached by authors and other relevant parties. This will be made publicly available on the journal’s ‘Contact’ page. This is now a requirement of some indexing organisations, such as Clarivate, and is asked for by COPE. The contact email address is in addition to the contact form that already exists on OLH journal websites:
* In addition, COPE requests that a physical mailing/office address for the editorial office must be given on your journal’s ‘Contact’ page. We recommend that this should be, for example, an office or contact in the primary university institution address at which the journal team or Editor-in-Chief is based. If this is not feasible and there is no viable physical address, OLH’s address (based at Birkbeck, University of London) will be used; please write ‘OLH’ below if this is the case:

**Advertising and Direct Marketing**

Journals need to clearly state whether they do, or do not, accept advertising. Advertising and direct marketing does not include sharing calls for articles, conference announcements, new publications, etc., on behalf of society members affiliated with the journal. Therefore, if your journal **does not** accept advertising of any kind we will require a statement from you to make this clear, such as the following template statement:

‘This journal does not permit any advertising on the journal’s website and will never consider requests of any kind from other parties wishing to advertise in the journal or on its webpages.’

If your journal **does** accept advertising, you will need to supply a statement covering the following:

* What kinds of advertisements does your journal consider?:
* Who makes decisions about advertisements? Who accepts them?:
* Are certain adverts linked to specific content, or are they displayed at random?:
* Any revenue from advertisements should be declared under the below heading ‘Other Revenue’:
* A line must be included to state that advertisements are not linked in any way to, or have no affect on editorial decisions of the journal:

You may find the following Advertising Policy example helpful:

‘This journal only displays advertisements that are of relevance to its scope and will be of interest to the readership (e.g., upcoming conferences). All advertising space is provided free of charge and the editor and publisher have the right to decline or withdraw adverts at any point. Adverts will include a text heading to make it clear that they are adverts. If you wish to propose a potential advert then please contact the editorial team. All advert images will have to be provided to the publisher.’

Does the journal engage in any direct marketing practices? Direct marketing is when either the journal’s own staff or a company is paid to communicate/advertise the journal directly to prospective authors with the intent of gaining submissions. Please state this clearly below. Even if the journal does not engage in direct marketing, then this should still be added as a supplementary declaration to the above points and the statement below should be used. Please indicate by typing yes/no whether you will need to use the following statement:

‘This journal does not engage in any direct marketing practices.’

Please be aware that the OLH will need to insert the following statement for transparency about its own marketing practices:

‘The publisher, the Open Library of Humanities (OLH), employs a Marketing Officer who undertakes general marketing activities for the publisher including the promotion of its journals. The Marketing Officer does not, however, engage in direct marketing for any OLH journals and this does not affect the editorial decisions of OLH journals in any way.’

If direct marketing is undertaken by the journal, should include a statement covering the below points:

* What the purpose of such marketing is, e.g., whether such marketing is done directly to solicit manuscripts for the journal:
* Whether any marketing is conducted on behalf of the journal and, if so, who does this?:
* All marketing should be done in an appropriate, well-targeted and unobtrusive manner. Therefore, a statement declaring this **must** be added in line with COPE’s guidance:
* That all information provided about the journal in such marketing is truthful and not misleading to readers or authors:

**Other Revenue**

Other than the publishing costs covered by the OLH’s [Library Partnership Subsidy Model](https://www.openlibhums.org/site/about/the-olh-model/) for publishing the journal, other forms of revenue that contribute to the journal’s cost of running must be declared under a separate heading in journal policy. Or, if the journal **does not** have any further streams of revenue, the below template should be used:

‘This journal is funded by OLH’s Library Partnership Subsidy Model and does not generate any additional streams of revenue.’

Other sources of revenue **must be declared**. These might include:

* Any revenue from advertisements;
* Any subscriptions, sponsorships or subsidies from another body, society or organisation for the funding of the journal’s activities;
* Any other streams of revenue that otherwise are not covered by the above should be given in full;
* A line must be added to state that the above streams of revenue do not in any way affect the editorial decisions of the journal:

**The following headings MAY be included on your journal’s policies webpage, depending on your journal’s setup and publishing activities. Some of these headings are also covered by OLH’s publisher level policy. If you would rather not include these, please put N/A or leave blank:**

**Special Collections/Issues**

This depends on whether the journal publishes special issues/collections and so may not be needed on your journal policies page. If this applies, please answer the following below:

* How do these special issues differ from the journal’s standard publishing cycle:
* Who proposes these collections/issues and how are they submitted to the journal and selected:
* Who oversees the editorial processes for them? This should be clarified even if the journal’s main editorial team edits the issues/collections:

**Preprint Policy**

As [defined by COPE](https://publicationethics.org/resources/discussion-documents/preprints-march-2018), articles are sometimes made publicly available in advance of their publication by authors on other servers (known as ‘preprint servers’), usually prior to or parallel to the peer review stage, so that an author can obtain broad feedback in addition to peer review reports to make further revisions to their work. This practice directly affects peer review practices, in particular double-blind reviewing, as author anonymity cannot be protected or guaranteed. A statement about whether your journal allows for an article that has been hosted on a preprint server prior to submission to your journal is not strictly necessary and this is a nascent discussion in open access publishing. However, if you choose to adopt a position on article preprints and include a preprint policy, the following should be considered as a matter of best practice and transparency:

* The author’s copyright of material, preprint or published article, must always be made clear;
* The author must declare the preprint’s availability on the submission of the article proper to your journal;
* Double-blind review anonymity cannot guaranteed with the existence of the author’s article/research hosted on a preprint server. It may be that for the article, a modified single-blind or open review process should be used instead and a note explaining the reason for this should be clearly given on the final published article;
* Your journal should request that sufficient notable changes/revisions are made to the preprint version and that these are highlighted at the point of the article’s submission to your journal;
* Should the final article be published in your journal, the journal team should request for the preprint version of the article to be updated with the DOI of published article and that a statement is attached to the preprint version to inform readers of the article’s final published form and location.

You may adapt / use the following example statement, if helpful:

*‘OLHJ* does not publish preprints. The journal may consider articles based on work that has already been made openly available as a preprint, if the research is suitable to a specific Special Collection. The article must successfully pass through the journal’s double-blind peer review process before being published, however. *OLHJ*’s remit is to publish original research that has not been previously published in another journal.’

**Conduct and Expected Behaviour**

OLH already has a comprehensive set of [Publication Malpractice](https://www.openlibhums.org/site/publisher-policies/#Publisher%20Responsibilities) policies that outlines expected behaviour of the editors, authors and reviewers of our journals. If your journal has an additional code for expected behaviour, this may be given. You might consider including the following:

* The expected conduct of editors to authors and reviewers;
* The expected conduct of authors to journal staff;
* A journal statement of zero tolerance of abusive behaviour may be given. See the [*Open Library of Humanities* journal’s statement](https://olh.openlibhums.org/site/journal-policies/#Conduct%20and%20Expected%20Behaviour) as an example.

**Data and Reproducibility**

Further information on this can be given if more subject-specific than OLH’s policy in the publisher’s [Ethics Statement](https://www.openlibhums.org/site/publisher-policies/#Ethics%20Policies). E.g., this may include more info on methodology, open code, etc., and may follow [COPE’s guidance on ‘Data and reproducibility](https://publicationethics.org/data)'.

**Consent and Ethical Considerations**

OLH includes a policy on [ethical oversight](https://www.openlibhums.org/site/publisher-policies/#Ethics%20Policies) in its publisher level policy that applies to all journals. Further journal-specific processes and protocols around consent and the treatment of human or animal subjects that are included in research via studies, etc., that go into more detail than OLH’s ethics statement, should be expanded on in the journal’s policies. [COPE’s guidance on ‘Ethical oversight’](https://publicationethics.org/oversight) may be helpful when considering this section.

**From all of us at OLH, thank you for your time in completing this form.**  
**We appreciate your efforts and look forward to receiving your response so that we can continue our vital work in open access on behalf of your journal.**