



Peer Review Policy, Process and Guidance

1. Introduction

The 17th International Conference on Business and Information (ICBI) 2026, organized by the Faculty of Commerce and Management Studies, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka, serves as a premier academic platform for global scholars, researchers, practitioners, and policymakers to share insights and foster dialogue on evolving business and interdisciplinary issues. In alignment with the conference's commitment to scholarly excellence, academic integrity, and ethical research dissemination, this Peer Review Policy outlines the principles, procedures, and responsibilities that guide the evaluation of all submitted manuscripts.

The objective of this policy is to ensure a rigorous, fair, and transparent review process that upholds the highest standards of academic quality. It provides comprehensive guidelines on the double-blind peer review process, reviewer selection and responsibilities, conflict of interest management, and editorial decision-making.

This policy is applicable to all paper submissions under the main conference tracks and postgraduate colloquium. By adhering to this policy, ICBI 2026 seeks to maintain the credibility of its conference proceedings and foster a culture of constructive scholarly exchange.

2. Peer Review Policy

This conference follows a double-blind peer review policy to uphold academic integrity, fairness, and scholarly excellence. Both author and reviewer identities are concealed throughout the process to eliminate bias and ensure objective evaluations. Two qualified reviewers review each manuscript, selected based on their academic credentials, subject expertise, and proven research track record.

The entire review process is conducted through the Microsoft Conference Management Toolkit (CMT), facilitating secure submission handling, anonymous communication, and transparent decision-making. Reviewers assess submissions based on originality, methodological rigor, and relevance to the conference scope. Reviewers must submit detailed, constructive feedback and clear recommendations for the submissions.

To further strengthen the integrity of the process, all submissions undergo plagiarism detection and AI-generated content screening before peer review. Any paper found to contain plagiarized or unethically generated content will be given a one-time opportunity to revise and resubmit, based on editorial discretion. Final acceptance decisions are made by the Editorial Board based

on reviewer input, author revisions, and the overall contribution of the paper. Only high-quality, ethically sound research will be accepted for presentation and publication.

3. Peer Reviewer Policy

Peer reviewer selection is crucial to the conference's commitment to academic excellence and integrity. Reviewers are chosen carefully based on their subject matter expertise, research background, professional reputation, absence of conflicts of interest, and previous experience as reviewers. Desirable traits in reviewers include:

- **Academic Qualifications:** Possession of completed master's degree, MPhil, or doctoral qualification.
- **Subject Matter Expertise:** Demonstrated expertise through peer-reviewed publications, conference participation, or teaching experience, with a minimum of 150 citations.
- **Prior Review Experience:** Preference is given to individuals with a record of reviewing for reputed journals or conferences.

3.1. Editor's Responsibilities in Reviewer Selection

- Editor(s) are expected to obtain two peer reviewers for manuscripts reporting primary research or secondary analysis of primary research.
- Editor(s) are responsible for verifying the identity and credentials of reviewers. The verification process will use the institutional email addresses and valid ORCID or Scopus ID.
- Potential peer reviewers should inform the Editor in Chief of any possible conflicts of interest before accepting an invitation to review a manuscript. Communications between Editors and peer reviewers contain confidential information that should not be shared with third parties.

3.2. Peer Reviewer Responsibilities

Peer reviewers are entrusted with a critical role in ensuring the conference proceedings' quality, relevance, and academic integrity. By accepting a review assignment, reviewers agree to uphold the following responsibilities:

- **Confidentiality**
 - Reviewers must treat all materials and communications related to the manuscript as confidential.
 - Manuscripts should not be shared or discussed with anyone outside the review process.
- **Objectivity and Fairness**
 - Reviews must be conducted in an unbiased, constructive, and respectful manner.

- Personal criticism of authors is inappropriate. Feedback should focus on the content, quality, and contribution of the work.
- Expert Evaluation
 - Reviewers should only accept assignments for which they have sufficient subject expertise.
 - They must assess the manuscript's originality, methodology, clarity, accuracy, and relevance to the conference scope.
- Timely Review
 - Reviewers are expected to submit their evaluations within the agreed-upon deadline. Delays should be communicated to the editorial team in advance.
- Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest
 - Reviewers must immediately inform the editorial team if they identify any personal, professional, or institutional conflicts of interest with the authors or content.
- No Use of AI for Confidential Content
 - Reviewers must not upload manuscripts or confidential content to generative AI tools. If AI assistance is used (e.g., for grammar support or summaries), this must be declared in the review submission.

3.3. Peer Reviewer Guidance

The primary purpose of peer review is to provide the Editor(s) with the information needed to reach a fair, evidence-based decision that adheres to the conference's editorial criteria. Review reports should also help authors revise their papers to be accepted for publication. Reports accompanied by a recommendation to reject the paper should explain the major weaknesses of the research; this will help the authors prepare their manuscript for future submissions.

Peer reviewers should adhere to the principles of [COPE's Ethical Guidelines for Peer-reviewers](#)

3.4. Peer Reviewer Recognition

The contributions of peer reviewers are essential to the success and credibility of the conference. The time, expertise, and critical insights reviewers provide are deeply valued as they help uphold the academic standards of the proceedings. As a token of appreciation, all reviewers will receive an official letter of recognition, and their names will be acknowledged in the conference proceedings. The conference will also recognize outstanding reviewers with Best Reviewer Awards. ICBI 2026 believes in fostering a culture of academic service and gratitude and aims to support and appreciate the reviewer community continuously.

4. Policy on Dual Roles: Editors, Reviewers, and Program Committee Members as Authors

To maintain transparency, academic integrity, and fairness in the peer review process, the conference allows editors, reviewers, and program committee members to submit their own work for consideration under the following conditions:

- **Strict Separation of Roles:**
 - Individuals holding editorial, reviewer or committee roles may submit papers to the conference; however, they must not be involved in any part of the review or decision-making process related to their own submissions.
 - Manuscripts authored or co-authored by such individuals will be handled independently by other editors with no conflict of interest.
- **Blind Assignment and Oversight:**
 - The paper will be anonymously assigned to reviewers through the CMT system without any involvement or oversight from the author-editor.
 - An independent editor will oversee the review process to ensure impartiality.
- **Disclosure and Transparency:**
 - All individuals with dual roles must declare their authorship at the time of submission.
 - A clear record of editorial independence for those papers will be maintained and may be disclosed in conference documentation for transparency.
- **No Preferential Treatment:**
 - Submissions from editors, reviewers, or committee members will be evaluated using the same criteria and standards applied to all other submissions.
 - Acceptance decisions will be based solely on the quality and merit of the research.
- **Conflict of Interest Handling:**
 - Any potential conflict of interest must be declared by the individual and respected by the organizing committee.
 - Editors or reviewers with conflict regarding any paper (whether personal, institutional, or collaborative) will be recused from the process.

5. Step By Step Peer Review Workflow

- 1) Call for Papers: The public call for paper submissions is circulated via the official conference website, affiliated social media platforms, and established academic community networks.
- 2) Manuscript Submission via CMT: Authors submit their manuscripts through the Microsoft Conference Management Toolkit (CMT) platform.
- 3) Acknowledgement of Submission: An automated acknowledgement email is sent via CMT, confirming the receipt of the manuscript.
- 4) Desk Review by Editorial Board: The editorial board conducts an initial screening to assess the manuscript's:
 - Alignment with the conference scope
 - Adherence to formatting and author guidelines
 - Compliance with ethical standards through plagiarism detection and AI content checks

Submissions are screened using Turnitin for plagiarism and AI-generated content. Authors exceeding the thresholds below will be given a one-time opportunity to revise and resubmit, based on editorial discretion, and authors will be notified via CMT.

Thresholds:

- Plagiarism must not exceed 10%
 - AI-generated content must not exceed 20%
- 5) Forwarding to Peer Review: Manuscripts that pass the desk review and compliance checks proceed to the double-blind peer review stage.
 - 6) Reviewer Identification: Potential reviewers are selected based on defined eligibility criteria (Refer to Peer Reviewer Selection Policy).
 - 7) Reviewer Invitations: Formal invitations are sent to selected reviewers via CMT.
 - 8) Reviewer Response: If a reviewer accepts, they are assigned a maximum of two papers based on keyword matches, expertise tags, and conflict-of-interest checks, and if a reviewer declines, an alternative reviewer is identified and invited.
 - 9) Provision of Review Materials: Once assigned, reviewers receive:
 - The anonymized manuscript
 - Reviewer guidelines
 - Author guidelines (for context)
 - The structured review form (available via CMT)
 - Timeline and deadline notifications

- 10) Review Submission: Reviewers evaluate the manuscript and submit all reviews securely via CMT:
- Detailed qualitative feedback
 - A clear recommendation: Accept, Minor Revision, Major Revision, or Reject
- 11) Revision Request (If Applicable): Authors receiving revision feedback are notified via CMT and asked to:
- Revise the manuscript accordingly
 - Submit a detailed response-to-reviewers document highlighting how comments were addressed
- 12) Re-Evaluation of Revised Submissions: Revised manuscripts are reviewed by the editorial board to ensure that reviewer comments have been appropriately addressed.
- 13) Final Decision: Final decisions are made by the Editorial Board, considering:
- Reviewer recommendations
 - Quality and completeness of revisions
 - Overall academic contribution
- 14) Camera-Ready Submission: Authors whose papers are accepted are required to submit:
- A final camera-ready version of the manuscript
 - A signed confidentiality and conflict-of-interest declaration