Philosophical Review Editorial Policies for Authors

The Philosophical Review practices a system of triple-blind review (with some qualifications; see below). Manuscript readers are not aware of the identity of a manuscript’s author, and the editors are not informed of the author’s identity until they have reached a decision on the manuscript.

Our in-house editorial board is composed of at least two faculty members of the Sage School of Philosophy at Cornell University. At least two editors evaluate each submission. If a manuscript passes this initial review stage, it is usually sent to an expert referee for further evaluation. Sometimes papers are refereed by other members of the Sage School; more often, they are refereed by philosophers not at Cornell.

Most manuscripts we send out to a referee are read by only one external referee, but we sometimes use more than one for a given manuscript.

Submitted manuscripts are either rejected without comments, rejected with comments (whether from editors or from an outside referee), conditionally accepted, accepted, or receive a verdict of revise and resubmit.

When it comes to resubmissions, the following should be noted. Since an author’s identity is revealed to the editors after a verdict has been reached, the editors will know the identity of the author in the case of a resubmission. Moreover, while the editors will typically aim to send the resubmitted manuscript to the same referee(s) who originally read the paper, there are exceptions to this general rule. The original referee(s) may be unavailable. Also, the editors can decide that it would be useful that a referee whose expertise is somewhat different reads the resubmitted version. Third, the editors who read the revised manuscript may be different from the editors who read the original submission.

Last year, The Philosophical Review received almost six hundred submissions. Less than 3 percent of submitted papers are accepted for publication. It is rare for a manuscript to be accepted outright. Most published papers have undergone at least one round of revision.

There is a great variety of reasons that submissions do not pass the initial review. Among those reasons are that the manuscript may be (a) not sufficiently original, (b) not sufficiently grounded in the relevant literature, (c) too specialized to be of interest to a general readership, or (d) too heavily weighted to history or exegesis and not enough to philosophical content. We hope that authors will understand that their manuscripts may be rejected without comments and that this is somewhat mitigated by the quick turnaround time for the initial review.