

Ethical Policy for Reviewing Manuscripts Submitted to the Official Journals of the Japanese Psychological Association

1. Purpose

This policy, established pursuant to Article 4(2) of the Articles of Incorporation of the Japanese Psychological Association (JPA) and the JPA Code of Ethics and Conduct, defines the criteria for ethical review and evaluation of manuscripts submitted to the Association's official journals, the *Japanese Journal of Psychology* and *Japanese Psychological Research*, when the reported research involves ethical considerations.

2. Scope of Application and Classification of Research

2.1 This policy applies to manuscripts reporting research that falls into one of the following categories (see Appendix for examples). Authors are responsible for obtaining appropriate ethical review and approval from a relevant institutional body in accordance with the nature of the data and procedures involved.

2.1.1 Research Involving New Data Collection from Human Participants

For studies involving the collection of new data from human participants, authors must obtain informed consent and secure approval from a research ethics review committee (Institutional Review Board or equivalent) prior to the initiation of the study.

If the authors' affiliated institution does not maintain such a committee, approval by the head of the institution may be accepted. This requirement does not apply when a competent ethics committee or equivalent body has determined that formal ethical review is unnecessary.

2.1.2 Research Involving Non-Human Animals

For studies involving non-human animals, approval from a research ethics review committee (or equivalent body) must be obtained prior to the initiation of the study.

If the authors' affiliated institution does not maintain such a committee, approval by the head of the institution may be accepted. This requirement does not apply when a competent ethics committee or equivalent body has determined that formal ethical review is unnecessary.

2.1.3 Research Not Involving New Data Collection

Studies that do not involve the collection of new data and that do not fall under Sections 2.1 or 2.2 (e.g., secondary analyses of open datasets, review articles, and meta-analyses etc.) do not, in principle, require approval by a research ethics review committee.

However, even when ethical review is deemed unnecessary for routine clinical practice or standard case reports, authors must obtain participants' consent for research use in a form that leaves a written or otherwise recorded record. Authors must also comply with the Act on the Protection of Personal Information

and all relevant laws and regulations.

In all cases, authors are required to describe in detail the procedures undertaken to ensure ethical compliance in the Methods section or an equivalent section of the manuscript.

2.2 When research involves personal information (e.g., anonymized processed information, pseudonymized processed information, personal-related information, sensitive personal information, or biometric information etc.) authors must ensure that informed consent appropriate to the nature of the research is obtained, and that data management, storage, and use are conducted in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, and ethical standards.

3. Editorial Handling of Manuscripts

3.1 For studies that do not require review by a research ethics review committee, but for which participants' consent for research use has been obtained in a written or otherwise recorded form, the editorial committee shall evaluate each submission on a case-by-case basis to determine whether it is eligible to proceed to peer review.

3.2 For studies that obtained approval from a research ethics review committee or equivalent body after the research was conducted, the editorial committee shall examine and evaluate the submission on a case-by-case basis.

3.3 Manuscripts reporting research that required ethical review and approval but failed to obtain such approval, without a justifiable reason, shall be rejected or desk-rejected.

However, if the reason for the absence of prior approval is deemed justifiable and the study is judged to have been conducted with appropriate ethical safeguards, the manuscript may be considered for peer review.

4. Amendments

Any revision to this policy shall require approval by the Executive Board of the JPA.

5. Effective Date

This policy shall take effect on April 1, 2026.

Appendix: Examples of Research Categories

Category 2.1.1 (Human Participants, New Data Collection)

Intervention and treatment studies, experimental studies, interviews, interview-based research, questionnaire surveys (cross-sectional or longitudinal), observational studies, case studies involving evaluation of intervention effectiveness or invasiveness, studies involving the collection or use of biometric information, and studies handling sensitive personal information or personal data.

Category 2.1.2 (Non-Human Animals)

Research involving non-human animals, conducted in accordance with relevant laws and regulations and the applicable guidelines of the researcher's affiliated institution or organization.

Category 2.1.3 (No New Data Collection)

Meta-analyses, systematic reviews, narrative reviews, case reports conducted within the scope of routine practice (e.g., counseling or psychotherapy), use of open datasets, and other research conducted under special circumstances.