



***Shakespeare Bulletin* peer review guidelines**

Thank you for agreeing to undertake a peer review for *Shakespeare Bulletin*. *Shakespeare Bulletin* publishes articles at the cutting edge of early modern performance studies and theater history, and our expert readers ensure the quality and rigor of the journal's scholarship.

Shakespeare Bulletin aspires to a generous, supportive, rigorous, and communicative peer review process that will contribute to best professional practice and help develop scholarship of the highest quality. These guidelines are designed to support new and experienced readers through the process, and to outline the core principles that we ask reviewers to abide by.

Reviewers may not share submitted articles with anyone else, and must delete the submission following completion of the peer review process. As per the journal's [Scholarly Integrity policy](#), reviewers may not use artificial intelligence/large language models at any stage in the peer review process, either in analyzing the article or in writing reports.

Review process and timelines

The general editor will contact prospective readers to share the abstract and word count of the submission. Upon acceptance of the role, the general editor will share the full anonymized submission and a report form.

We usually ask readers to write and return their report within **four to five weeks** of receiving the full anonymized submission, but we will negotiate this around individual circumstances.

Shakespeare Bulletin is committed to timely communication with authors, in recognition of the impact on careers that delayed responses can have. If at any point you find yourself unable to complete the review, please contact the general editor as soon as possible so that a new reader can be appointed promptly.

Principles for review

Shakespeare Bulletin is committed to being an inclusive, constructive home for new work. As a journal that considers early modern performance across disciplines, media, periods, and languages, we are keen to ensure that the journal's published output encompasses a range of voices and approaches to the field.

The general editor will conduct an initial review to ensure that the content of the article is an appropriate fit to the journal, before sending the submission to at least two expert readers. Peer reviewers are drawn both from the editorial and advisory boards, and from the wider community of scholars working in the appropriate fields.

Peer reviewers are invited to assess the quality and originality of the article according to the following principles.

1. We ask you to **assess the article on its own terms**. While reports should assess the scope, originality, and quality of the research, the primary aim should be on helping the work achieve the highest standard it can, rather than turn it into something else.
2. Please consider the **originality, rigor, and clarity** of the submission. All work published in *Shakespeare Bulletin* should offer a fresh contribution to its field/subfield, be accurate and thorough in its claims, and be written clearly in a style appropriate to the content.
3. Reports should offer **constructive criticism**. If a report identifies problems with a submission, we encourage the reader to offer potential solutions.
4. Please be **specific** in your comments. E.g. if you feel that an article uses confusing terminology, please offer examples of the kinds of terminology that are confusing.
5. Please **do not impose personal stylistic preferences**. *Shakespeare Bulletin* welcomes scholarship in a range of voices. Please do offer comments on the clarity of expression where this hinders the essay's argument and achievement. The general editor will work with the author on the final expression of the article if accepted.
6. Reports which are dismissive, aggressive, prejudicial, or otherwise inappropriate towards the author or their field of research will not be used, and the reader will not be approached again.

Reviewers are asked to recommend one of four decisions to the editor:

- a) Accept
- b) Provisionally accept with revisions
- c) Not accept but invite resubmission following revisions (with or without another round of peer review)
- d) Decline the submission

You may be invited to review a resubmitted version of the same article if recommending (c).

If you have any questions while preparing your report, please do not hesitate to get in touch with the general editor.

Communication of decision

Following receipt of the recommendations of both readers (and additional readers if deemed necessary), the general editor will communicate the journal's decision to the author. The general editor will use the reports as guidance and will incorporate them partially or in full into the decision letter sent to the author.

To help develop best practice in peer review, the general editor will report the final decision back to you, allow you to view the decision letter to the author, and let you know when accepted articles are due for publication.

Anonymity

As a default, reports will be anonymized, and the general editor will respect anonymity and take named responsibility for the final report to the author. However, we encourage readers to consider identifying themselves where they feel safe to do so. As part of the journal's approach to transparency, *Shakespeare Bulletin* produces an end-of-year report thanking readers who have contributed to the journal's peer review process over the previous year. Reviewers may opt out of inclusion.