MIDIRS Midwifery Digest
Guidelines for Reviewer Comments

*MIDIRS Midwifery Digest* aims to help midwives and others involved within maternity care to analyse, evaluate and use research evidence in their work. Your review should be a comprehensive critical appraisal of a piece of research, so that readers can understand both its strengths and weaknesses.

**Abstracts**
If there is a formal abstract for the research you are reviewing, please do not rewrite or paraphrase it in your comments. The author abstract will be reprinted in the *Digest*, followed by your review comments. If you receive a paper without an abstract, and this has not been previously discussed with you, please email the *Digest* Editorial Office.

**General considerations for your review comments**
- keep in mind MIDIRS strong commitment to respecting women as equal partners and individuals with diverse needs
- examine whether or not the research has taken into account the woman’s social, emotional and cultural, as well as her purely physical needs
- consider whether or not the research has been conducted in an ethical manner and whether there are any political or commercial factors, or conflicts of interest, that might have an impact on the findings
- read through the article to get a general feel for it before undertaking a more in-depth review (if, at this point, you are aware of any personal conflict of interests, or have concerns about the suitability of this paper for review, or your own ability to review it, please email the *Digest* Editorial office as soon as possible).

**Structuring and writing your review comments**
- aim for a thought-provoking, lively, and where appropriate, challenging writing style, avoiding jargon and keeping in mind that readers can range from being very familiar with research papers to having little specialist research knowledge
- include an in-depth examination of the rationale, methodology and findings of the research, along with the authors’ conclusions
- comment on the strength and weaknesses of the study, placing the study in the context of current midwifery practice and any other relevant studies with which you are familiar
- evaluate and discuss its overall relevance and usefulness for midwives and others working in the field
- if appropriate, suggest additional questions which were not answered in the study
- for qualitative research, descriptive studies, literature reviews or case studies, consider aspects of authenticity, trustworthiness and the potential for bias, and if appropriate, include headings to help guide readers
- many of the journals covered by MIDIRS take a different perspective, eg anaesthetics, obstetrics, ultrasonography: you might reflect on any implied assumptions and how a midwifery perspective might have altered or enhanced the study.
Length

Reviews should be between 500–1000 words. If you feel the research warrants a longer review, please email the Digest Editorial Office to discuss this before beginning your review. All material accepted for publication may be edited according to space restrictions, but any suggested edits or amendments will be discussed and agreed with you provided that we are able to contact you before publication.

References

If references are required, please use the Harvard style and cite references in alphabetical order at the end of your review. If you would like a copy of the MIDIRS referencing guidelines, please email the Digest Editorial Office.

Submitting your review

Please send your completed review as a word processing document using 1.5 line spacing in Arial font size 12, to the Digest Editorial Office and include the following as you would like it to appear in print: your name and details of your title/role/appointment at the time of writing. Please also include your current address and telephone numbers (including mobile if applicable) in case we need to contact you, but these will of course not be published.

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Deadlines

On agreeing to write a review, you will be given a deadline for submission, and a space in the Digest will be reserved for your contribution. If an unforeseen circumstance means that you are unable to meet the deadline please let us know as soon as possible. Occasionally a review is held over to the next edition because of space restrictions, but you will be informed prior to publication.

Please contact the Digest Editorial Office via the online contact form or on +44 (0) 117 907 7583 with any queries.

Thank you for offering to undertake this work for MIDIRS and happy writing!