



Guidelines for Writing Commentaries February 2012

The aim of the commentary is to offer a discussion that both situates the paper you are commenting on within a wider field or fields of knowledge and also offers an indirect constructive critique of the key content or messages within the paper including critical questions for others in the field to reflect on and for the author(s) to respond to. The questions for the authors should be focused on expanding their thinking and taking their thinking or work forward.

There is no fixed style for commentaries and we encourage a diverse approach to engage readers. The length of the commentary is not fixed; however 800-1000 words is often the length proposed by other academic journals. You can include a limited number of primary references if you feel this strengthens your commentary.

It is usual to:

- Describe what contribution you feel the paper is making to the development of practice development knowledge and/or practice. A contextual introduction, which may be similar or different to that offered in the paper may be helpful
- State your own 'connection' with the topic of focus of the paper. This may be your own values and beliefs, practice background and expertise and/or research interests
- Provide a brief critique (**not** a summarised description) of the key content or key messages within the paper; for example methodology, methods, results and conclusions and/or how the results or findings fit in with what is currently known in the field (but not all of these within one commentary)
- State how adequately you feel the implications for practice have been identified and presented – is anything over stated or understated and is anything missing?

Because of the importance of receiving commentaries in time to enable the authors to make an informed response that can also be published in the journal, we will set a timescale by which commentaries need to be returned.

The commentary will be reviewed by the academic editor before being sent out to the authors to make a response.

The commentary will be edited in the style of the journal and you will receive a proof copy of the revised version.

Where publication timescales allow, we will aim to send out the commentary and response to all the authors involved ahead of publication, however this may not always be possible.