# Notes for reviewers

## General

For publication in *Compare* all papers should include a comparative dimension. We consider ‘comparative’ in its widest sense, not just comparison between countries, but also between institutions, regions, or educational philosophies. Papers should be of a consistently high quality and should:

* address issues/questions of significance and interest to a wide international audience even when they focus on the situation in individual countries
* be well-structured, clearly written and develop a cogent argument
* be original and up-to-date
* demonstrate an awareness of relevant literature, including relevant articles that have appeared in *Compare*
* be analytical, theoretically informed and not purely descriptive.

In your review, please:

* estimate the significance of the general area of the article (whether is it currently popular, neglected, passé, etc) and whether it is likely to be cited in future
* comment on the fairness, accuracy and relevance of reviews of previous research, indicating any important omissions
* indicate whether the article addresses a gap in the literature, shows an awareness of relevant literature in the field, and if the study augments this body of knowledge
* assess the extent to which the author’s interpretations and conclusions are warranted by the evidence
* appraise the clarity of the argument and the quality of presentation
* advise whether the Abstract is likely to encourage readers to read the full article.

***Recommendations***

Please indicate which of the four categories below you recommend:

* **Straight acceptance** (very unusual!) – article can be published straight away with only minor editorial amendments (no need for further reviewer input)
* **Accept with minor revisions** – article needs to be revised slightly in form and/or content according to the reviewers’ recommendations (the original reviewers and/or editor will check the article again before publication)
* **Return for major revisions** – this is an invitation to rewrite and resubmit the article and acceptance is conditional on the extent to which the author has addressed the comments of the reviewers, who will carefully assess the paper a second time. Where reviewers do not feel that their comments have been adequately dealt with, this will result in the article being rejected. Where they have been, the article will be accepted (in some cases with minor editorial changes)
* **Reject** – the reviewers do not consider that this article could be revised adequately in order to meet the criteria for publication. The author is not invited to resubmit the paper.

Where there is a significant disagreement between reviewers the Editors can seek the opinion of a third reviewer.

## Turnaround

It is important that you return your comments to the Editors within a specified four-week period. If there is likely to be a delay, please let us know.

Please type your report in an impersonal style suitable for sending directly to the author. An affirmative and positive approach to feedback will be the most encouraging for the recipient. Your overview and textual comments should therefore be constructive and not diminish authors, so that we can send them directly to authors. They should be clearly legible and typed. Given that we have submissions from non-native English speakers, they should be syntactically correct. To preserve anonymity, do not sign your name.

It is particularly useful if you provide detailed comments on those parts of the paper that are to be revised, and the nature and extent of such revision. Most papers will require some revisions, in which case they will be returned to you for further consideration before publication. Please note that we only allow authors one opportunity to rewrite the article so would not encourage detailed comments on a second version if you feel it has still not reached the standard for publication. However, minor editorial suggestions may be made at this point if you are recommending publication.

Although we do not expect referees to give detailed corrections relating to grammar, spelling or punctuation, we would ask you please to indicate where these seem noticeably deficient.

Finally, if necessary, please state clearly why you reject a particular paper. While the publisher assumes responsibility, it would also be helpful if you were to indicate any concerns that the material may be libellous, plagiarised, or an infringement of copyright.