Reviewer Guidelines

Thank you for agreeing to review for *Politics*, we recognise that this is time-consuming but it is an important professional service. The purpose of peer review is both to provide the editors with the information needed to reach a decision and to help the author improve their paper.

The reviewer's feedback, if requesting a revision, should guide the authors to strengthen their paper to the point where it may be acceptable for publication. If the reviewer writes a negative review, they should explain to the authors the weaknesses of their manuscript, so that authors can understand the basis for a reject decision and see in broad terms what needs to be done to improve the manuscript. If you are invited to review for *Politics*, the Editors encourage you to consider the quality and originality of the argument, the clarity of presented concepts, the theoretical embeddedness of the material, the methodological rigour and the appeal of the paper to the journal's readership. Please familiarise yourself with the journal's Aims and Scope, as detailed here: https://journals.sagepub.com/aims-scope/POL.

The greater the detail in the report, the more it helps both Editor and author. Use the 'Confidential comments for the Editor' section on the reviewer scoresheet to give feedback about the quality of the contribution, and to indicate matters where you are uncertain about aspects of the paper or your own judgment. When writing comments for the author please bear in mind that criticism should be made in appropriate, respectful language. Overall, the tone of the referee report should be supportive, making constructive proposals for modification and improvement. If there are any problematic claims, you are encouraged to challenge them. Please indicate whether there are any parts of the paper that you do not have sufficient expertise to evaluate. You are encouraged to address the following points in your assessment of whether an article may be suitable for publication in the journal:

- Originality and the paper's contribution to knowledge and/or to relevant debates within politics (and its directly related fields). Reviewers should describe the nature and significance of the advance for the field.
- Identify any issues with the theoretical framework, empirical material and analysis, and methods/methodology.
- Structure and style of the paper; consider whether the paper's argument is expressed with clarity and coherence, and suggest improvements where these are needed.
- English language usage; if you think the paper needs a considerable amount of copyediting intervention, please state this in your comments to the Editor and not to the Author – e.g. please avoid references to 'native speaker'.
- The author's grasp of, and reference to relevant literature.
- Appeal to the journal's readership; given that *Politics* is a generalist journal, consider whether the article speaks to the whole discipline.
- End you report with any small points such as formatting of tables or figures or typos.

  We ask referees to select one of the following recommendation categories:
  1. acceptable for publication
  2. minor revision is required before the paper can be considered for publication
  3. major revision is required before the paper can be considered for publication
  4. reject – unsuitable for publication. Please note that a rejection decision may include a recommendation to resubmit a substantially revised version.

For further guidance on reviewing, please consult https://us.sagepub.com/en-us/nam/how-to-review-articles.

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Whenever a conflict arises, it should be declared immediately. To find out more about your duties and responsibilities as a peer reviewer please consult the website of the Committee on Publication Ethics.

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