

Editorial

Changes to the manuscript review system and page format

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Following the introduction of an online submission and peer review system in 2008, 590 manuscripts were submitted to the *Journal of Orthopaedic Science* in 2009. Of these, 96 were immediately rejected. Inevitably and regrettably, the manuscripts submitted so far have been a mixture of wheat and chaff. After strict and fair blinded peer review, 127 manuscripts (21.5% of the total) were finally accepted for publication. However, the acceptance ratio of case reports was low, at 15.6%. Unfortunately, an appreciable proportion of the immediately rejected manuscripts were judged to be double submissions or redundant publications. With the recent development of online search engines, reviewers are now able to investigate cases of fraudulent submission if they consider manuscripts to be suspect. However, there is still a need to strongly urge scientists to submit manuscripts in strict compliance with publication ethics.

In line with this increase in the number of submitted manuscripts, which may include inappropriate submissions, the members of the editorial board need to review all articles to ensure that they are original submissions, while being alert to redundant publication and plagiarism, but still endeavoring to carry out blinded peer review in an unbiased and precise way with minimum delay. Until recently, the Editor-in-Chief was still involved in overseeing the review process for all submitted articles. However, starting in July 2010, this ineffi-

cient system will be overhauled, with the nomination of 25 active associate editors and an increase in the number of reviewers to 400. As a consequence, it will be necessary to change the page format to avoid the need to keep spare pages for the listing all of the reviewers in each issue, and instead the reviewers will all be acknowledged in the last issue of the year.

As the *Journal of Orthopaedic Science* is the official journal of the Japanese Orthopaedic Association (JOA), the proportion of Japanese reviewers is high, as might be expected. However, it has never been, nor will it be, our policy to offer any priority to JOA members. In the United States, a shortage of clinician–scientists has been pointed out, as the majority of young orthopedic surgeons tend to be interested in clinical care as a primary activity.¹ It is suspected that the situation elsewhere in the world is similar. Therefore we consider it an important priority to offer a forum that gives equal opportunities for the submission of high-quality manuscripts, irrespective of their country of origin.

Reference

1. Ahn J, Donegan DJ, Lawrence JT, Halpern SD, Mehta S. The future of the orthopaedic clinician-scientist: part II: identification of factors that may influence orthopaedic residents' intent to perform research. *J Bone Joint Surg Am* 2010;92:1041–6.