

Guidance Note for Book Reviewers

Introduction

This brief note is intended to provide some general guidance to support you as a book reviewer for Practice: Social Work in Action journal. In addition to this guidance note you will receive copies of previously published reviews and a template giving you details of the formatting required.

Content

In writing your review consider that those who read it are unlikely to have had access to the original text before reading your review. Therefore, you need to give an overview or summary of the broad content and aims of the book, highlighting if the book is part of a series or an updated edition of a previous text. You also need to inform your reader about who the book is aimed at or who might find its contents useful. In particular, given the focus of this journal, readers will be interested in whether the book is useful for practice, and if so, how and why. Further to this, there are other possible areas you might explore – for example you could consider whether its contents are applicable across a range of contexts (i.e. geographical and service contexts) or whether the book is very specific to one context. You might also have a view on whether the book fills a particular gap in the current knowledge available, or perhaps supports existing literature in a specific way.

Tone and style

Your review needs to be accurate, fair and clearly written. Whilst you may want to identify limitations, gaps in content or areas where other texts may be necessary to support the text, you should always avoid a disparaging tone. Reviews must not be glib, obtuse, judgmental or ill-mannered. Where you make assertions, it is always helpful to support them with relevant literature.

Declaration of Interests

It is important that book reviews are impartial and without prejudice. You must inform the reviews editors if you have any connections with the author or publisher. Whilst this does will not automatically discount you from reviewing that book, the reviews editors will discuss the situation with you and negotiate an appropriate way forward; most commonly they will offer you an alternative text to review.

Conclusion

This guidance note gives some brief guidance on writing book reviews for Practice: Social Work in Action. For any further questions or support please contact the book reviews editors who will be very happy to help at any stage in your writing. Thank you for your contribution to the journal.