

## Definition

*Australian Family Physician (AFP)* acknowledges that peer review and editorial decision making are processes that involve both data and judgment. If you feel that a mistake has been made in rejecting your paper, you may appeal the decision.

## How to appeal

The appeal should be received by the editorial office within 30 days of the decision being made. It should be submitted via the 'author centre' of *AFP* on Manuscript Central at: <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/afp> The appeal should be as detailed as possible. It should specify why the appellant feels the reviewers' comments or editor's decision letter were incorrect. Please note only one appeal per manuscript can be considered. At this stage, a revised manuscript should not be submitted.

## Actions by *AFP* on receipt of an appeal

All appeals will be acknowledged on receipt. An initial panel of the medical editing team will screen appeals. This will occur within 21 days.

There are three possible outcomes from this initial appeal screening process:

- The appeal is accepted without further assessment and the author is asked to submit a revised manuscript, which may be subject to further peer review.
- If the appeal is felt to have the possibility of merit, then the paper will be sent to a panel including the Senior Medical Editor, medical editor involved in the decision, two reviewers (one of whom will be an editorial board member, the other may be a board member or a reviewer with particular relevant expertise to the content of the appeal), and if available, other medical editors. This panel will be provided with the article, initial reviews, reason for the decision, and the appeal details as per the author's appeal. This is more likely to occur with appeals relating to concerns that the scientific content of the paper has been misunderstood or bias in reviews.

- The appeal is rejected as having no valid basis. This outcome is most likely if the initial rejection involved issues about audience interest or journal requirements (such as the absence of ethics approval).

## Outcome

The appellant will be notified of the outcome of the appeal within 60 days. This will be in a written format, either letter or email. Please note that the acceptance of an appeal does not equate with acceptance of the manuscript for publication. The manuscript may be subject to further reviews (as will be detailed in the written outcome of the appeal). These reviews will then be considered when making the final decision about the manuscript's suitability for publication.