

Je-S Peer Review - Frequently Asked Questions

1) Why is STFC using the Je-S system for peer review?

STFC is committed to full participation in the UK Research Council's on-line Je-S system, in order to provide a common interface to all Councils for applicants, research organisations, and reviewers. STFC currently provides for proposal submission, grant reporting (both academic and financial) and status reporting via the Je-S system, and this is now being extended to peer review. We hope to realise specific advantages for both applicants and reviewers in doing this:

- Applications are no longer posted, which means that confidential proposals are more securely handled since the chosen reviewer receives these direct in their personal Je-S account
- There are no time delays due to postage, particularly for non-UK based reviewers
- The system will, in time, be used across the UK Research Councils, so reviewers will no longer have to deal with different systems, processes and forms when reviewing for more than one Council

2) I've never used Je-S before and don't have an account. How do I get one?

An account will be created for you prior to a review being requested. You will also be able to activate this account by following the link in the email sent notifying you of the review request.

3) When I first tried to access the peer review documents I've been sent, I got to a screen called 'Reviewer Protocols' and couldn't get any further. What is this?

The "Reviewer Protocols" outline the Research Councils' expectations regarding issues such as confidentiality of the material contained in the review documents and conflicts of interest. Reviewers must agree to abide by these protocols before being presented with any review material. Once you have indicated your agreement to these protocols, you will not be asked to do this for further reviews. You will, however, be asked to reaffirm your agreement once a year.

4) I'd like to see the proposal before I decide whether to do the review or not. How can I do this?

You may view the full proposal prior to making a decision about whether to complete the review.

You will need to agree to the Reviewer Protocols prior to accessing the review materials. Once you have done this, you will be presented with the Document Menu screen and you should select 'View Documents to Review' from the Document Data menu. The proposal documents may then be found by following the 'Attachments' link under Documents to Review.

5) Can I get a printed copy of the review form, so that I can see all the questions I need to answer before I begin making any responses in the system?

It is possible to print a blank copy of the review form.

In the Document Menu screen, you should select 'Create Document for Printing' from the Document Import/Export menu. If you then choose to 'include blank sections' under the print options, you can create a printout of the form that includes all questions.

6) Do I need to answer all the questions on the form?

You will need to answer most questions in the 'Edit' sections of the form if you are completing the review, or 'Decline to Review' only if you are declining the review request. You will then need to 'Submit Document' in order for STFC to receive your response(s). Choosing validate document, at any time, will show you which mandatory questions, if any, still require completion. You can do this before you start the review to get an indication of which questions you will have to respond to – this will be most of them.

There are maximum character limits (including spacing and punctuation) for each question, but no minimum limits. To check character counts for text prepared off line, or to edit longer text to the character limit, you may use the character count test page within Je-S (a link to this is provided under each text box).

7) What information should I be giving in response to each question on the form? Are any guidance notes available?

Previously, guidance notes were sent in hard copy along with proposals for review. Within Je-S there is context-sensitive Help text into which we have inserted our guidance notes for completing the form.

If you select Help at the top-right corner of the screen while in any section of the review form, the appropriate guidance will appear. It is important that you take account of the Scheme under which the proposal has been submitted, as there will be scheme-specific guidance in many cases. The Scheme may be found in the header banner at the top of each of the peer review form screens.

8) I'm not sure what to do next. Who can I contact for help?

If you need any assistance or advice in your use of the system or experience any problems, you should contact the Je-S Helpdesk. They can be contacted by telephone on 01793 444164 or by email on JeSHelp@rcuk.ac.uk and are available from 9am to 5pm Monday–Friday.

9) I'm not sure that I'm eligible to complete the review. Who can I contact for advice?

If you need advice on your eligibility to carry out the review or have any questions regarding information contained in the proposal or on the review process, you should contact the STFC officer whose details appear in the 'Reviewer Information' section of the form.

10) I don't want to complete the review that I have been asked for. What should I do?

It would be very helpful if you could tell us that you are unable or unwilling to complete the review as soon as possible, so that we may approach an alternative reviewer.

Ideally, you should do this by selecting 'Decline to Review' under the Document Data menu in the Je-S review form i.e you will need to login to the Je-S System and enter the peer review document in question. It is important that you select to Submit this section when you have supplied the information that is requested in order for STFC to be made aware of your response.

11) I have elected to decline the review request and have been asked to suggest an alternative reviewer. Do I need to do this?

This is optional; however, it would be helpful if you could suggest an alternative.

12) I am happy to do the review and will submit it by the due date. Do I need to tell you this?

You do not have to tell us but it would be helpful if you could give us an indication that you are intending to complete the review. You can do this by emailing the STFC contact named in the 'Reviewer Information' section of the form.