

# Guidelines for Peer Review

Adapted from MIT's Principles of Applied Mathematics course

The purpose of writing a peer review is for you to help your classmate to improve his/her paper. To write a review that is helpful, think about what sorts of comments would be most helpful to you as you revise your paper? write similarly helpful comments for your peer. Be sure to give some honest comments about what is done well in the paper as well suggestions for improving the paper.

Consider the following questions:

1. Is the paper clear?

The author should write clearly enough for the paper to make sense to you. Point out anything that you find to be confusing or unclear. Try to point out precisely what is causing the confusion so the author can determine how best to clarify the text.

2. Is the paper consistent and correct?

If you aren't comfortable stating that something is incorrect, or can't tell whether it is or isn't, you could word your comment as a question ("Why is...?") or as a confusion ("I don't understand why...").

3. Are new topics and ideas introduced with sufficient explanation?

New topics and ideas should be connected to ideas that are familiar to the audience (for example, from class or from an earlier part of the paper). Also, the reason for introducing the new topic or idea should be clear.

4. Are topics presented in a logical order?

This question applies to all levels of the paper. For example, sections should be presented in a logical order, and the steps within a proof or parts of an example should be presented in a logical order.

5. Does the paper achieve an appropriate balance of conciseness and explanation?

Point out places where the text is too wordy or too concise.

6. Is the paper proofread for grammar, spelling, etc? Does the text flow naturally? Are sentences correctly constructed?