## Topic guide for semi-structured interviews

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Key area of investigation</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Questions and prompts</th>
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| **Background information** | - Explore personal background  
- Level of experience  
- Roles and tasks as an editor | • Tell me about your journal and the job you have.  
• How long have you been in this position?  
• Did you hold any other editorial position before your current position? If yes, what were your responsibilities then? Prompt: percentage of time devoted to editorial duties (e.g., part time, full time)  
• What are your current responsibilities (roles and tasks)? |
| **Journal set-up** | - Explore journal set-up | • Tell me about your journal - how does it work? Prompt: availability of resources (e.g. human and financial resources), relationship with publisher  
• How does the peer review process work in your journal? Prompt: submission system, peer review model (e.g., single blind etc)  
• What do you do within the process? Prompt: Interaction with peer reviewers |
| **Opinion on peer reviewers roles and tasks** | - Roles and tasks of peer reviewers  
- Expectations | • What do you expect from peer reviewers in terms of their roles and tasks?  
• What about training for peer reviewers? Prompt: use items from scoping review (roles and task related), attitudes and beliefs (e.g. on training, how they peer review themselves) , organisational expectations  
• How do you let your reviewers know what you expect from them? Prompt: journal guidelines  
• Can you tell me about a specific situation when you were not satisfied with a review report or with a peer reviewer?  
• What did you do in that a situation? Prompt: probe for factors other than being late with a review, or not doing a review once you they have accepted it  
• Can you tell me about a situation when you were exceptionally satisfied with a review or with a peer reviewer?  
• Were there situations (in regards to the roles and task of reviewers) when you disagreed with the other editors you work with? What about? What happened?  
• What about other journals, do roles and tasks differ among journals in your field? Prompt: if yes (i.e. differences exist), then:  
  • How does this affect the process?  
  • How does it affect your communication?  
  • How do you negotiate those differences? Does it matter? |
| Communication between editors, peer reviewers and authors | - Communication between the three parties  
- Potential conflicts  
- Power | • Can you describe your experience of the communication process between editors, authors and peer reviews?  
• How do you communicate with authors and peer reviewers?  
• Can you give me some specific examples of situations where this communication is challenging?  

Prompt:  
What are potential conflicts?  
When do disagreements arise?  
What happens if there is disagreement between peer reviewers? |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Conclusion | - Snowballing  
- Documents  
- Final comments | • Is there anybody else whom you think I should speak to?  
• Any articles/documents I can access/should look at?  
• Any final comments? Is there anything else that you think is important to mention? |