Role Description

*French History* Reviews Editor

The reviews editor has an important role setting out the overall scope of the reviews section of *French History.* The journalpublishes 4 print issues in each year, and the number of book reviews and shorter notices in each issue should be at least 20, but preferably nearer to 30.

We have in recent years expanded our total pagination for the journal as a whole, and aim to extend the reviews section further in this space. The new reviews editor will be asked to provide an overview of activity and prospects after their first year in post to help determine a future strategy for review publication.

Managing book reviews, both seeking books from publishers who are sometimes slow to come forward (in particular French publishers), and chasing reviewers, requires attention to detail and a good system for managing contacts.

We use ScholarOne ‘Manuscript Central’, a web-based database system, for managing both reviews and articles. The new reviews editor will receive training and guidance in this system, which allows us to manage the process efficiently and to identify and respond to delays and bottlenecks.

We aim to have book reviews published online well in advance of the print version, and to have a minimum of around 25 book reviews in advance online publication at any time. This provides a ‘cushion’ of book reviews to assist with adjusting the overall journal contents to length for the print pagination.

Forward planning and strategic oversight of how key French academic publishers (and others) are responding is thus important in ensuring that a good flow of review copy is built up, ensuring we maintain this capacity.

To support this role, a number of hours per week of editorial assistance will be funded by the publishers of *French History*, Oxford University Press. Responsibility for postage costs will be discussed with the successful applicant and their host institution.

**Details of responsibilities:**

*Receiving books*

* On arrival, an initial decision between full review (800 words, usually reserved for works which are fully and originally focused on French history), or short notice (400 words, for example for translations of monographs, works which are not entirely focused on France, works which are more social-scientific or literary than historical, or otherwise of lesser interest);
* Occasionally, it may be appropriate to propose a joint review of a number of books, or a substantive review article. Some books not close enough to our remit can simply be rejected. We try to only review more recent books, though will be less strict for books published in French than English;
* Identifying and soliciting an appropriate reviewer or reviewers, either personally or in liaison with the reviews assistant, who will create a stub in the database;
* Managing, with the assistant, the despatch of review copies, with the appropriate instructions included; books not taken up for review after several requests can be removed from the database and listed as ‘books received’ for publication in the next print edition;
* Responding to all reviewer correspondence, thanking them for suggesting other names, and dealing with their questions;
* Responding to requests from individuals to review particular books, judging whether these are appropriate, and soliciting texts where necessary from publishers; you may also choose to solicit books from publishers of your own accord.

*Processing reviews*

* Reviewers will receive automatic reminders, though at a certain point you will need to decide that a review is not going to be forthcoming and delete the stub from the system;
* Editing and processing submitted reviews in the ScholarOne system, ensuring that they meet the formatting requirements of the journal, as well as editing for style and grammar. If any changes are substantial (ie more than changing American spelling) then you may need to go back to the reviewer. The reviewer will see the proofs, so will be able to comment on small corrections if they think it is an issue at that stage. Copyright permission is dealt with by OUP.
* Reviews submitted in French are translated at the expense of SSFH. It will be necessary to identify one or more people to do this work on a regular basis. These are paid from the Society via the treasurer (not OUP, who pays the assistant).
* Sending reviews through to production once edited, and in their final form (you can already check proofs at this stage). You will need to prepare an ‘order’ for each issue, to inform the publisher which reviews should appear under which heading (Review Articles, Book Reviews, Short Notices, Books Received – not all used in each issue). This is normally in chronological order by the subject of the books, within each of the above categories. This list will need to be sent to the OUP production team once the reviews for a particular issue have been all sent through.

*Reporting and Planning*

* To attend committee meetings and AGMs to report on activity. The committee normally meets in late June/early July at the Annual Conference, and in January at the Annual Douglas Johnson Memorial Lecture in French History (normally held in London). Travel expenses can be reclaimed.
* To attend periodic editorial meetings with the Journal Editors and representatives from Oxford University Press to discuss journal plans. Travel expenses can be reclaimed.