

Guidelines for Reviewers

The Responsibilities of the Peer Reviewer

Peer reviewer is responsible:

- For critically reading and evaluating assigned manuscript in their specialty field, and then providing respectful, constructive, and honest feedback to the editor and authors about their submission. It is appropriate for the Peer Reviewer to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the article, ways to improve the strength and quality of the work and evaluate the relevance and originality of the manuscript
- To maintain blind review confidentiality in terms of retaining the manuscripts after the process is commenced
- To evaluate the manuscript in a constructive way providing a legible insight to author without any controversy
- To maintain impartiality, in other words, reviewer decision should solely depend on scientific merit, relevance to the subject, and the scope of the journal rather on financial, racial, ethnic origin etc... of the authors

Reviewer should also be responsible to complete the review within the relevant time and should take all necessary steps to fulfill the limitations of the journal

Before Reviewing

Please consider the following:

- Does the article's subject you are being asked to review match your expertise? If you receive a manuscript that covers a topic that does not sufficiently match your area of expertise, please notify the editor as soon as possible. Please feel free to recommend alternate reviewer.
- Do you have time to review the paper? Finished reviews of an article should be completed within six weeks. If you do not think you can complete the review within this time frame, please let the editor know and if possible, suggest an alternate reviewer. If you have agreed to review a paper but will no longer be able to finish the work before the deadline, please contact the editor-in-chief as soon as possible.
- Are there any potential conflicts of interests? While conflicts of interest may not necessarily disqualify you from reviewing the manuscript, it is important to disclose all conflicts of interest to the editors before reviewing. If you have any questions about potential conflicts of interests, please do not hesitate to contact the editor-in-chief.

The Review

When reviewing the article, please keep the following in mind:

Content Quality and Originality

Is the article sufficiently novel and interesting to warrant publication? Does it add to the canon of knowledge? Does the article adhere to the journal's standards? Is the research question an important one? In order to determine its originality and appropriateness for the journal, it might be helpful to think of the research in terms of what quality percentile it is in? Is it in the top 25% of papers in this field? You might wish to do a quick literature search using tools such as Scopus to see if there are any reviews of the area. If the research has been covered previously, pass on references of those works to the editor.

Organization and Clarity

- **Title:** Does it clearly describe the article?
- **Abstract:** Does it reflect the content of the article?
- **Introduction:** Does it describe what the author hoped to achieve accurately, and clearly state the problem being investigated? Normally, the introduction should summarize relevant research to provide context, and explain what other authors' findings, if any, are being challenged or extended. It should describe the experiment, the hypothesis(es) and the general experimental design or method.
- **Method:** Does the author accurately explain how the data was collected? Is the design suitable for answering the question posed? Is there sufficient information present for you to replicate the research? Does the article identify the procedures followed? Are these ordered in a meaningful way? If the methods are new, are they explained in detail? Was the sampling appropriate? Have the equipment and materials been adequately described? Does the article make it clear what type of data was recorded; has the author been precise in describing measurements?
- **Results:** This is where the author/s should explain in words what he/she discovered in the research. It should be clearly laid out and in a logical sequence. You will need to consider if the appropriate analysis has been conducted. Are the statistics used correct? If you are not comfortable with statistics, please advise the editor when you submit your report. Interpretation of results should not be included in this section.
- **Conclusion/Discussion:** Are the claims in this section supported by the results, do they seem reasonable? Have the authors indicated how the results relate to expectations and to earlier research? Does the article support or contradict previous theories? Does the conclusion explain how the research has moved the body of scientific knowledge forward?
- **Tables, Figures, Images:** Are they appropriate? Do they properly show the data? Are they easy to interpret and understand?

- **References:** Are they correctly noted? Are they timely? Do they include other related work?

Scope

Is the article in line with the aims and scope of the journal?

Final Comments

- All submissions are considered confidential, of blind review and please do not discuss any aspect of the submissions with a third party.
- If you would like to discuss the article with a colleague, please ask the editor first.
- Please do not contact the author directly.
- Ethical Issues:
 - Plagiarism: If you suspect that an article is a substantial copy of another work, please let the editor know, citing the previous work in as much detail as possible and follow the flowcharts below.
 - Fraud: It is very difficult to detect the determined fraudster, but if you suspect the results in an article to be untrue, discuss it with the editor
 - Other ethical concerns: For medical research, has confidentiality been maintained? Has there been a violation of the accepted norms in the ethical treatment of animal or human subjects? If so, then these should also be identified to the editor. Did all the consent to treatment/procedure forms for human subjects secured?

Next Steps

Please complete the "Reviewer's Comments" form by the due date. Your recommendation regarding an article will be strongly considered when the editors make the final decision, and your thorough, honest feedback will be much appreciated.

When writing comments, please indicate the section of comments intended for only the editors and the section of comments that can be returned to the author(s). Please never hesitate to contact the editors with any questions or concerns you may have.

Sample comments

Please note that these are just examples of how you might provide feedback on an author's work. Your review should, of course, always be tailored to the article in question and the specific requirements of the journal and the editor.

■ Positive comments

- *The manuscript is well-written in an engaging and lively style.*
- *The level is appropriate to our readership.*
- *The subject is very important. It is currently something of a "hot topic," and it is one to which the author(s) have made significant contributions.*
- *This manuscript ticks all the boxes we normally have in mind for an X paper, and I have no hesitation in recommending that it be accepted for publication after a few typos and other minor details have been attended to.*
- *Given the complexity involved, the author has produced a number of positive and welcome outcomes including the literature review which offers a useful overview of current research and policy and the resulting bibliography which provides a very useful resource for current practitioners.*
- *This is a well-written article that does identify and address an important gap.*

■ When constructive criticism is required

- *In the "Discussion" section I would have wished to see more information on ...*
- *Overall I do not think that this article contains enough robust data to evidence the statement made on page X, lines Y–Z.*
- *I would strongly advise the author(s) of this paper to rewrite their introduction, analysis, and discussion to produce a more contextualized introduction to...*
- *There is an interesting finding in this research about However, there is insufficient discussion of exactly what this finding means and what its implications are.*
- *This discussion could be enlarged to explain ...*
- *The authors could strengthen the paper by ...*
- *The paper would be significantly improved with the addition of more details about ...*
- *The abstract is very lengthy and goes into detailed accounts that are best suited for the article's main discussion sections. As such, it is suggested the section is reduced in size and that only the most important elements remain.*
- *To make this paper publishable the author needs to respond to the following substantive points ...*

■ When linguistic alterations are required

- *This paper would benefit from some closer proof reading. It includes numerous linguistic errors (e.g. agreement of verbs) that at times make it difficult to follow. I would suggest that it may be useful to engage a professional English language editor following a restructure of the paper.*
- *The paper is to benefit from making stylistic changes in the way it has been written to make a stronger, clearer, and more compelling argumentative case.*
- *There are a few sentences that require rephrasing for clarity.*

Make a recommendation

Once you've read the paper and have assessed its quality, you need to make a recommendation to the editor regarding publication. The specific decision types used by a journal will vary but the key decisions are:

- **Accept** – if the paper is suitable for publication in its current form.
- **Minor revision** – if the paper will be ready for publication after light revisions. Please list the revisions you would recommend the author makes.
- **Major revision** – if the paper would benefit from substantial changes such as expanded data analysis, widening of the literature review, or rewriting sections of the text.
- **Reject** – if the paper is not suitable for publication with this journal or if the revisions that would need to be undertaken are too fundamental for the submission to continue being considered in its current form.

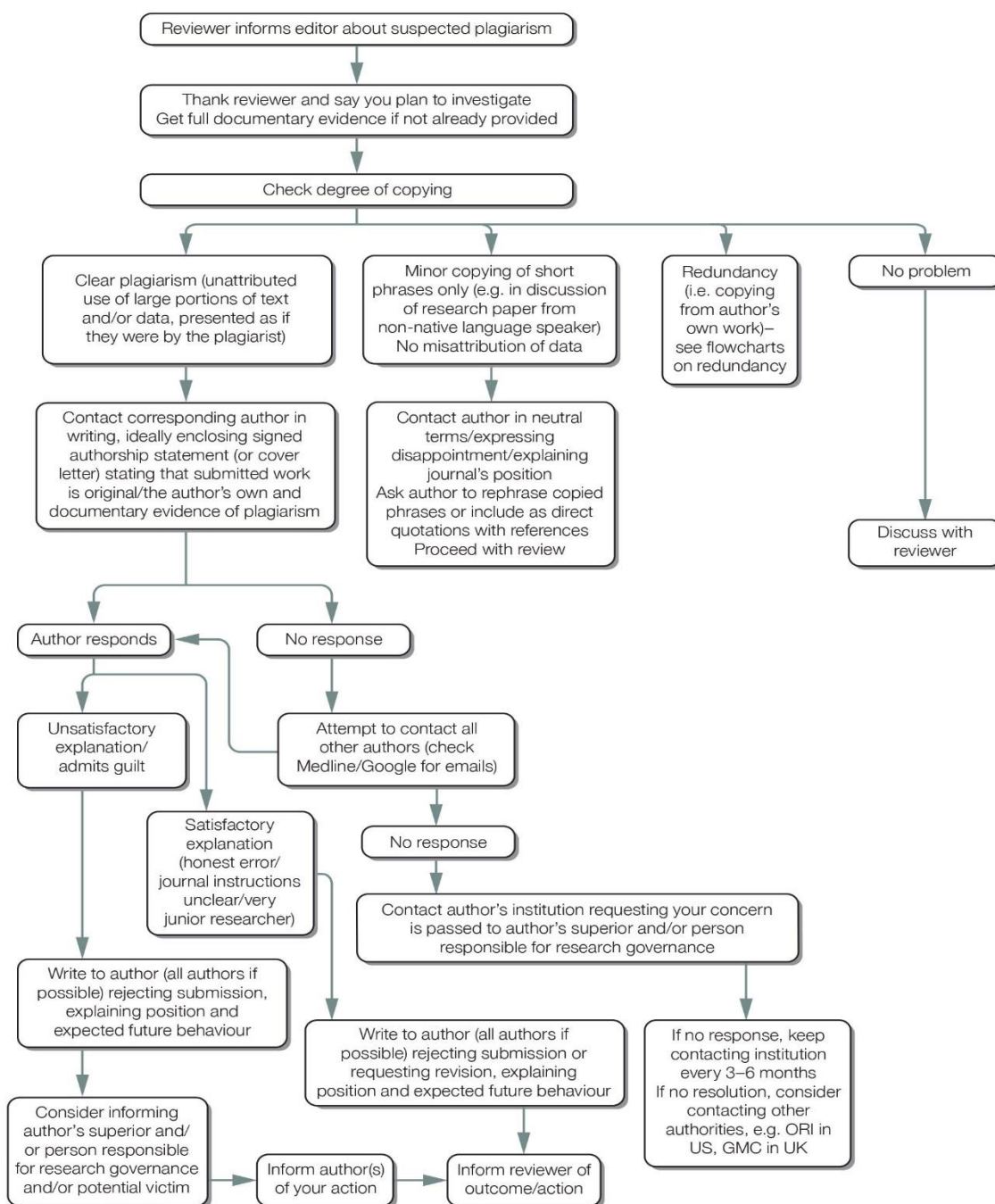
A note about revisions

When authors make revisions to their article in response to reviewer comments, the revised version is usually returned to the original reviewer, who is then asked to affirm whether the revisions have been carried out satisfactorily.



What to do if you suspect plagiarism

(a) Suspected plagiarism in a submitted manuscript



Note
The instructions to authors should include a definition of plagiarism and state the journal's policy on it

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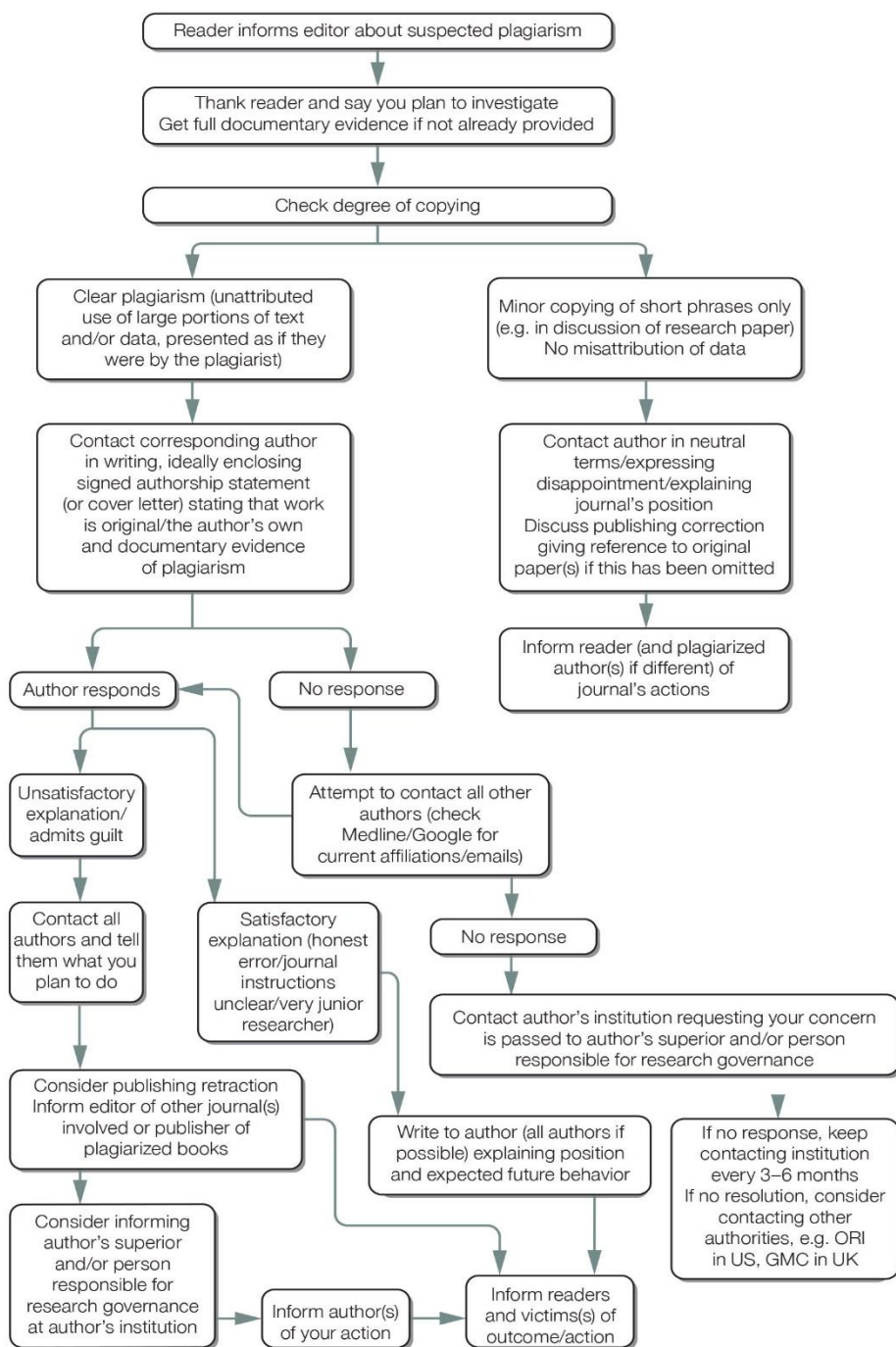
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C O P E COMMITTEE ON PUBLICATION ETHICS

What to do if you suspect plagiarism

(b) Suspected plagiarism in a published manuscript



Note
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