



Ethical standards in academic publishing

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1. Ethical standards in publishing – what and why the complexity?



Ethics is concerned with the conduct of Editors and their behaviour in the publication of academic Journals.



Many categories - chief editor, managing editor, executive editor, section editor, assistant editors, editorial board members



Serve voluntarily providing their services as scholarship responsibility and sheer altruism.



Ethics include peer-reviewers...those nameless, selfless volunteers of the journal publishing system



2. Receipt of submission and internal checks

- Confirmation of receipt and allocation of a reference number – gives identity and shows respect
- Check for duplicate submissions and ensure confidentiality till publication
- Monitor authorship; avoid gifting/ghost authorship... statement that all individuals listed as authors meet the appropriate authorship criteria

3. Peer review process

Research integrity

- Authorship criteria data fabrication, falsification or plagiarism
- Initial submission package to include relevant statement on authorship, plagiarism and integrity

Manipulating the peer review process

- Allowing authors to suggest reviewers.
- Compromising the blind review principle
- Substitution of a manuscript at the re-submission stage

Timeliness of the peer review process and publication of papers

Quality of peer review

- monitor reviewers and ignore defamatory, rude reviews

4. Decision on rejection/revisions and re-submissions

Monitor the peer review process ensuring fairness and minimise bias

Giving precise constructive reasons for article rejection...based on the intellectual content of the manuscript without bias [race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, origin, citizenship, social status or political preferences of the author]

Clarify the type of review and stick to it

- Kmietowicz (2008) shows that 71% of respondents rated double-blind reviewing as effective;
- 52% rated single-blind review as effective;
- Open review was the least popular method of peer review, with just 26% of respondents rating it as effective.

5. Post-publication

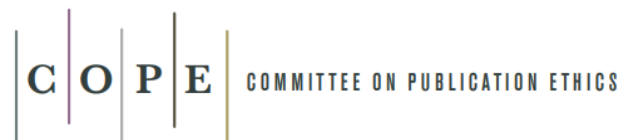
Publishing errata when errors could affect the interpretation of data or information, whatever the cause of the error (arising from author errors or editorial mishaps).

Publishing retractions if work is proven fraudulent or expressions of concern if editors have well-founded suspicions of misconduct.

Change in authorship requests – with genuine reasons

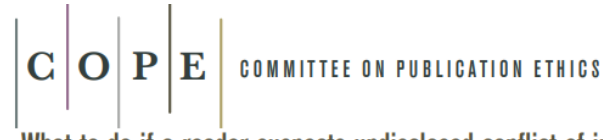
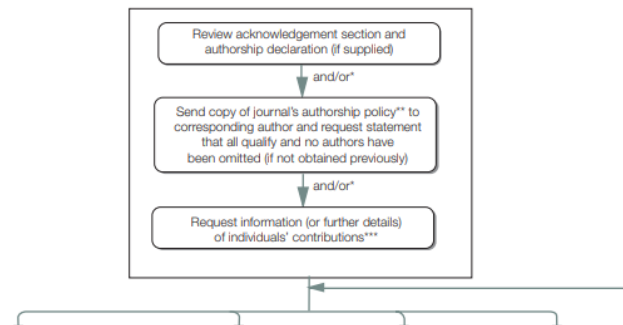
The Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE)

- User-friendly flowcharts and information graphics designed to help editors follow best ethical practices in publishing

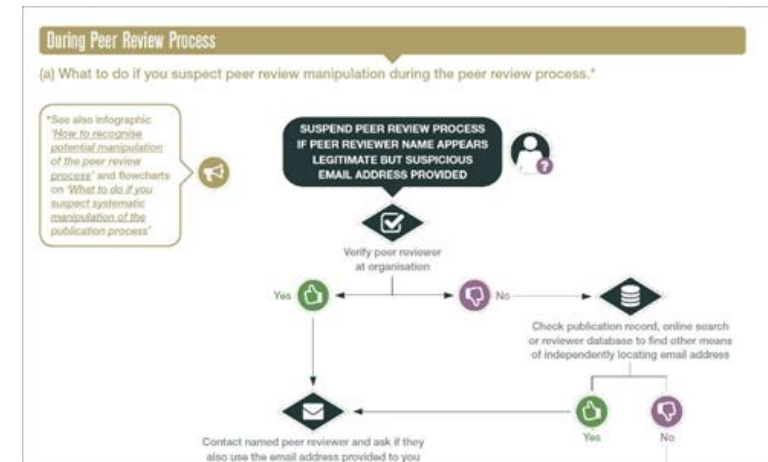
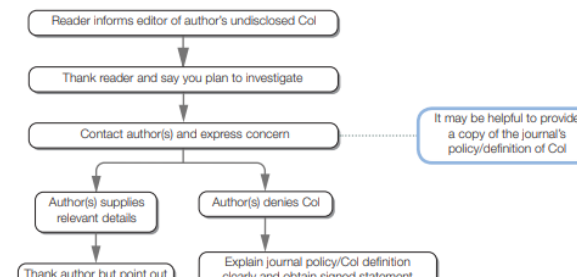


What to do if you suspect ghost, guest or gift authorship

(see also flowcharts on Changes in authorship, as such requests may indicate the presence of a ghost or gift author)



What to do if a reader suspects undisclosed conflict of interest (Col) in a published article



What does it mean for Editors?

- Academic integrity focuses on authors – rarely is fraud blamed on editors yet they too they have their own motivations and biases.
- Editors' work is unpaid and they are burdened high article submission rates
- Editor misconduct happens - through action or inaction, fails to uphold the journal's mission
 - failure to disclose conflicts
 - Ideological preconceptions – publish editor's personal beliefs
 - refusing retractions
 - Pre-publication page fees
- Maintaining ethical standards is a moving target!
- Self-policing through online submission systems – OJS and PKP and etc

References

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- Shelomi, M. (2014). Editorial misconduct—definition, cases, and causes. *Publications*, 2(2), 51-60.