



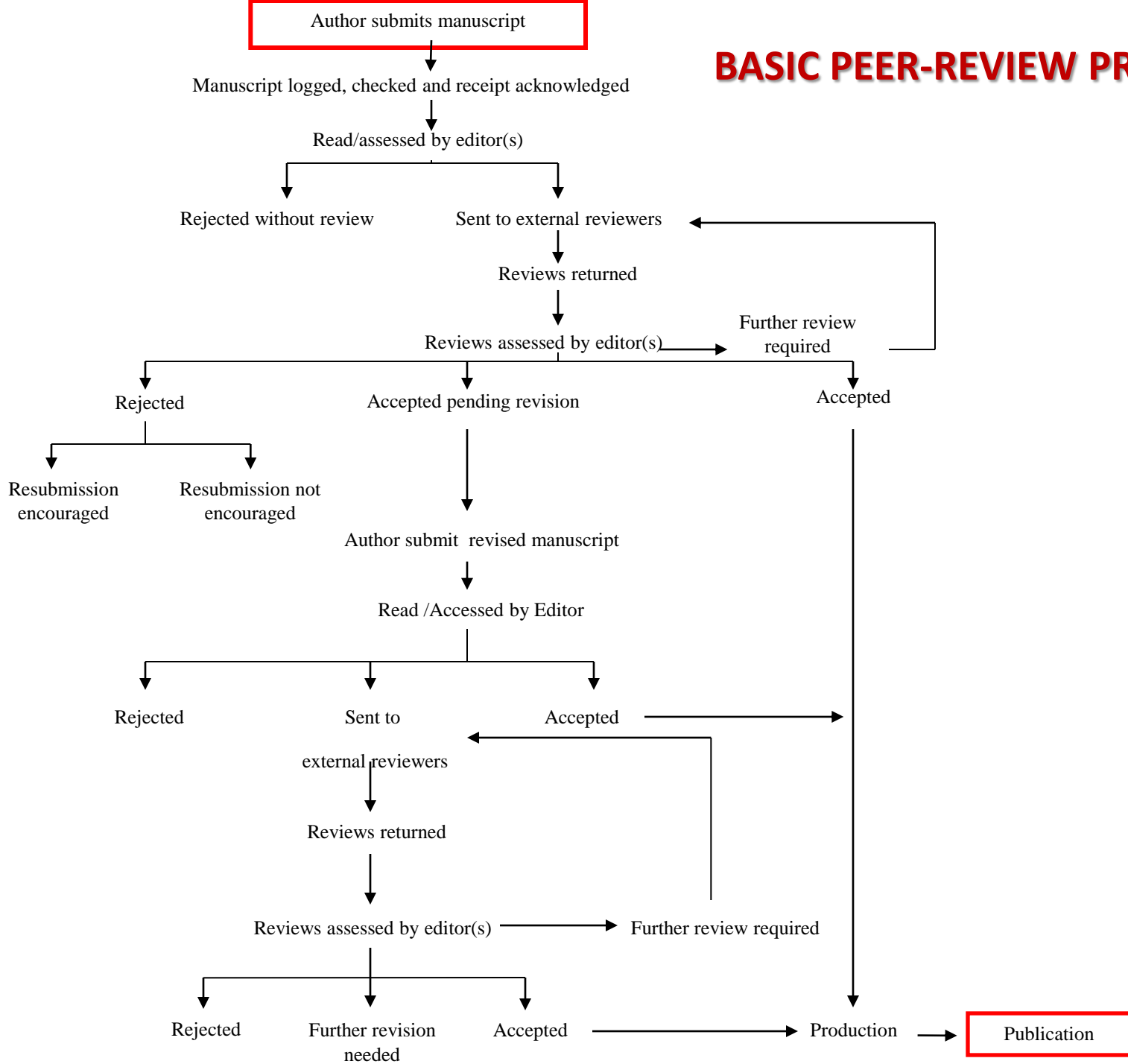
Guide to Managing a Scientific Journal

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Peer Review is the critical assessment of manuscript submitted to journals by experts who are not part of the editorial staff

Editors are responsible for ensuring the quality of their journals and that what is reported is ethical, accurate and relevant to their readership

BASIC PEER-REVIEW PROCESS



What Should Peer Review Do?

- Prevent the publication of bad work – filter out studies that have been poorly conceived, designed or executed
- Check that the research reported has been carried out well and there are no flaws in the design or methodology
- Ensure that the work is reported correctly and unambiguously, with acknowledgement to the existing body of work

- Ensure that the results presented have been interpreted correctly and all possible interpretations considered
- Ensure that the results are not too preliminary or too speculative, but at the same time not block innovative new research and theories
- Select work that will be of the greatest interest to the readership
- Provide editors with evidence to make judgment as to whether articles meet the selection criteria for their particular publications
- Generally improve the quality and readability of the publication (although this is more a by-product of peer review).

Reviewing - Rules

- The submissions of a manuscript and all the details associated with it must be kept confidential by the editorial office and all the people involved in the peer-review process.
- The identity of the reviewers must be kept confidential unless open peer review is used.
- Reviewers advise and make recommendations; **editors make the decisions.**
- Reviewers must assess manuscripts objectively and review the work, not the authors.

Identifying Potential Reviewers

- From the journal's database
- From editors' own contacts or suggestions from those individuals
- From his or her knowledge of scientists in the field
- From the bibliography given in the manuscript
- From literature and database searches
- From suggestions put forward by the authors.

Review Process

Identifying and selecting appropriate reviewers

Finding reviewers

Getting the manuscript and associated material to the reviewers

Helping the reviewers with any problems they may encounter during review

Monitoring review progress and ensuring reviews are returned in a timely fashion

Receiving and checking of returned reviews

Getting the reviews and ancillary information ready for assessment and decision by the editor handling that manuscript

Reviewer's Report

- Start with a brief summary of what the paper is about and what the findings are
- Put the findings into the context of the existing literature and current knowledge
- Indicate the overall significance of the work and whether it is novel or mainly confirmatory
- Give an idea of the quality and completeness of the work; indicate its strengths
- State whether there are any major flaws or weaknesses
- Note any special considerations – for example if preciously held theories are being overturned

Major issues

- Are there any flaws (technological, design, or interpretational), what are they, and what is the severity of their impact on the findings?
- Has similar work already been published without the authors acknowledging this and how does the current study relate to the published study (or studies)? Does it present similar results that reinforce any other studies, or results that contradict them?
- If the authors are presenting findings that contradict current thinking, have they presented strong enough evidence to substantiate their case? If not, what additional data would be required? Have they cited all the relevant work that would contradict their thinking and addressed it appropriately?
- If major revisions are required, what are they?
- Are there major presentational problems? What are they? Are they serious enough to prevent you carrying out an accurate assessment of the work or to prevent readers understanding it? Are the problems related to language, manuscript structure, or data presentation?
- Are there any ethical issues? If there are, what are they?

More minor issues

- Are there any places where meaning is unclear or ambiguous? How can this be corrected?
- Are the correct references cited? If not, which should be cited instead?
- Is citation adequate to reflect other work? Is it excessive, limited, or biased?
- Are there any factual errors? What are there?
- Are there any numerical or unit errors? What are these?
- Are the figures/diagrams/plates/tables appropriate, sufficient, and properly labeled? If not, indicate which are not.

Expansion of questions/comments made in the reviewing checklist

These will vary from journal to journal and will depend on what questions are on their forms. Examples are:

- Do the keywords accurately reflect the content? If not, suggest alternatives.
- Are there any nomenclature issues? If there are, what are they and how should they be corrected?
- Have all journal policy requirements been followed? If not, which have not?
- Have all appropriate depositions of data and materials been made and reference numbers provided? If not, give details of omissions.

Opinion

Reviewer briefly summarize their opinion of the work - but note that some journals explicitly request that reviewers do not make any recommendation as regards publication in their report for the authors

Don't misinform authors about the status of their manuscripts in the review process – be truthful.

Don't release editorial outcome decisions to authors prematurely; they may be wrong. Wait until they've been finalized.

Editors-in-chief must have full editorial independence

Editorial decisions must be based on the merits of the work submitted and its suitability for the journal; they should not be dictated by commercial reasons, be influenced by the origins of a manuscript, or be determined by the policies of outside agencies.

Take care with requests from authors that communications for their manuscript be sent to all the co-authors – deal with just one author, the ‘corresponding author’.

Don’t automatically dismiss appeals from authors – reviewers, and editors, can be wrong.

Dealing with resubmissions

There are basically three types of resubmissions:

1. Those from authors who were originally given a 'provisionally accepted with minor revision' decision who were unable to make the revision deadline.
2. Those being submitted in response to encouragement to resubmit following a rejection decision.
3. Those being submitted by authors whose original submissions were rejected and where resubmission was neither invited nor encouraged.

Reviewer training

Ways to recompense reviewers

How to develop and maintain reviewer loyalty

Recognition of peer review as an accredited professional activity

Everyone involved in the peer-review process must always act according to the highest ethical standards.

Information received during the submission and peer-review process must not be used by anyone involved for their own or others' advantage or to disadvantage or discredit others.

All the parties in the peer-review process must declare any potential conflicts of interest and excuse themselves from involvement with any manuscript they feel they not be able to handle or review objectively or fairly.

Editors – their obligations and responsibilities

- General responsibilities
- Responsibilities to authors
- Responsibilities to reviewers
- Responsibilities to readers

Reviewers – their obligations and responsibilities

Editorial office staff – their obligations and responsibilities

Conflicts of interest – what they are and how to deal with them

No conflict of interest or prejudice must be allowed to influence the submission of a manuscript, its review, or the decision on whether it should be published.

The potential for bias, both positive and negative, can exist whether or not someone believes that a relationship could affect their judgment.

Regional Journal

Take advantage of the abundance of scientific discovery/results from this region :
flora/fauna/geology/environment etc.

Get new results from this region although it may be preliminary

Publish latest papers presented in conferences organized locally. Work with the organizer to get the best paper.

Thank you

References

Irene Hames 2007. *Peer review and Manuscript Management in Scientific Journals*. Blackwell Publishing

How to Start a Journal

- Why this new journal is necessary
 - Decide a name for the journal - check for any overlap with existing journal
 - Who are the readers
 - What is unique about this journal
 - Set the frequency, scope, e- journal or hardcopy or both

How to Start a Journal (cont.)

- Get ISSN / e-ISSN from Perpustakaan Negara
- Form an editorial board
- Come up with editorial policy
- Invite Advisory Board - can be updated from time to time
- How to get manuscripts?
- Get the journal indexed, - advertising
- Open access ? Advantage / Disadvantage

Titles and Roles – Journal Editorial

Editor –in-Chief (EiC) - The main or head editor. Responsible for the quality and content, highest level of decision making

Editor – High level of editorial input, responsible in formulating editorial policy with EiC and other editors

Handling/Subject/ Specialist Editor – Manuscript handling and review process, responsible for subgroup of manuscript

Managing Editor – Managing editorial office staff, overseeing peer review process, liaises with all parties in manuscript submission, handling, review, publication promotion, production etc. May or may not have decision making powers

Editorial Assistant - Assist the EiC, managing editor, editor and all areas of editorial from manuscript submission to publication

Copy Editor – improve formatting, style, accuracy of text. Copy editing is done before typesetting and proof reading (the last step in editorial cycle)