

# The Ethical Code of Reviewers

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# Background

In the regime of **performance management**, journal articles are viewed as the yardstick for measuring someone's academic ability. However, this phenomenon provokes at least two core problems, namely **poor quality and plagiarism**, which can be reduced by an ethical code of reviewers.

# British Sociological Association

## Professional Integrity

5. Sociologists have a responsibility both to **safeguard the proper interests of those involved in or affected by their work, and to share their analyses/report their findings accurately and truthfully.** They need to consider the effects of their involvements and the consequences of their work or its misuse for those they study and other interested parties.

[https://www.britsoc.co.uk/media/24310/bsa\\_statement\\_of\\_ethical\\_practice.pdf](https://www.britsoc.co.uk/media/24310/bsa_statement_of_ethical_practice.pdf)

# COPE Ethical Guidelines for Peer Reviewers

Peer reviewers play a role in ensuring the integrity of the scholarly record. The peer review process depends to a large extent on the trust and willing participation of the scholarly community and requires that everyone involved behaves responsibly and ethically... **Journals have an obligation to provide transparent policies for peer review, and reviewers have an obligation to conduct reviews in an ethical and accountable manner...**

[https://publicationethics.org/files/Ethical\\_Guidelines\\_For\\_Peer\\_Reviewers\\_2.pdf](https://publicationethics.org/files/Ethical_Guidelines_For_Peer_Reviewers_2.pdf)

# Competing interests

Ensure you **declare all potential competing, or conflicting interests**. If you are unsure about a potential competing interest that may prevent you from reviewing, do raise this. **Competing interests may be personal, financial, intellectual, professional, political or religious in nature**. If you are currently employed at the same institution as any of the authors or have been recent (e.g., within the past 3 years) mentors, mentees, close collaborators or joint grant holders, you should not agree to review...

# Confidentiality

Respect the confidentiality of the peer review process and refrain from using information obtained during the peer review process for your own or another's advantage, or to disadvantage or discredit others.... The names of any individuals who have helped with the review should be included so that they are associated with the manuscript in the journal's records and can also receive due recognition for their efforts.

## **Bias and competing interests**

It is important to **remain unbiased by considerations related to the nationality, religious or political beliefs, gender or other characteristics of the authors, origins of a manuscript or by commercial considerations...**

<https://authorservices.wiley.com/Reviewers/journal-reviewers/how-to-perform-a-peer-review/general-and-ethical-guidelines.html>

# ELSEVIER

## Confidentiality of the Submitted Article

The contents and the very existence of a submitted manuscript **must be considered as confidential until the article is published.** If the article is not accepted for the journal, then all aspects of its review in this journal are to be considered as confidential without time limit.



# Confidentiality of Reviews

Reviewers are requested to consider all reviews as confidential. This applies both to the reviews they write themselves, and to those made by the other reviewers.

The term 'confidential' as used above, implies (1) that the reviewer shall keep confidential material in a safe place where it can't be accessed by others, (2) that he shall not divulge the confidential material to any other person except if approved by an Associate Editor or Editor-in-Chief of the Journal, and (3) that any other person that obtains access to the material, after approval, shall also be informed about and accept the same rule.

<https://www.journals.elsevier.com/artificial-intelligence/policies/guide-for-reviewers>

# Labfolder

## The publication scandal in Nature

Recent groundbreaking papers published in *Nature* on **January 29, 2014 by stem-cell biologists** have created a media storm for three reasons: confusion over non-replicability, duplication of images, and textual borrowing...

The study in the papers claims a discovery in which T cells can be reprogrammed into pluripotent stem cells through stressed induced by dipping them into acid...**Soon concerns from other scientists not being able to replicate the study and talk of plagiarism took the limelight.**

<https://www.editage.com/insights/the-stap-story-so-far/1395129988>

## More scandal stories

Can a research assistant use his or her boss's data to publish articles?

Journal article retractions

Retraction Watch

<http://retractiondatabase.org/RetractionSearch.aspx?>

Can the author review his or her own manuscripts?

How can he or she undertake such anti-ethical actions?

# Personal experiences

## 1. Professional knowledge

### a. Disciplinary knowledge

e.g. cultural mobility; semantic gravity and density

### b. Research methods

sample size or informant background

### c. check the abstract carefully

2. Identifying the manuscript quality
  - a. The format of manuscripts required by the journal
  - b. Literature review: **Reconceptualization and a theoretical framework**
  - c. A logical model and research method
  - d. Findings
    - e.g. factor analysis, experimental design, effect size
  - e. Secure the interests of the research subjects:  
Anonymous
  - f. **Common sense or convincing arguments**

g. Self-plagiarism

Can the author use the same data to replicate articles?

### 3. Excellent comments

Relevant, precise, understandable, constructive and workable



## 4. Commitment and integrity

- a. Are the referees recommended by the author appropriate?
- b. Conflicting interest embedded within social networks
- c. Oversimplified Comments
- d. Giving many comments unrelated to the manuscript.
- e. Suggesting the author to cite the references that are the reviewer's publications

**Thanks!**