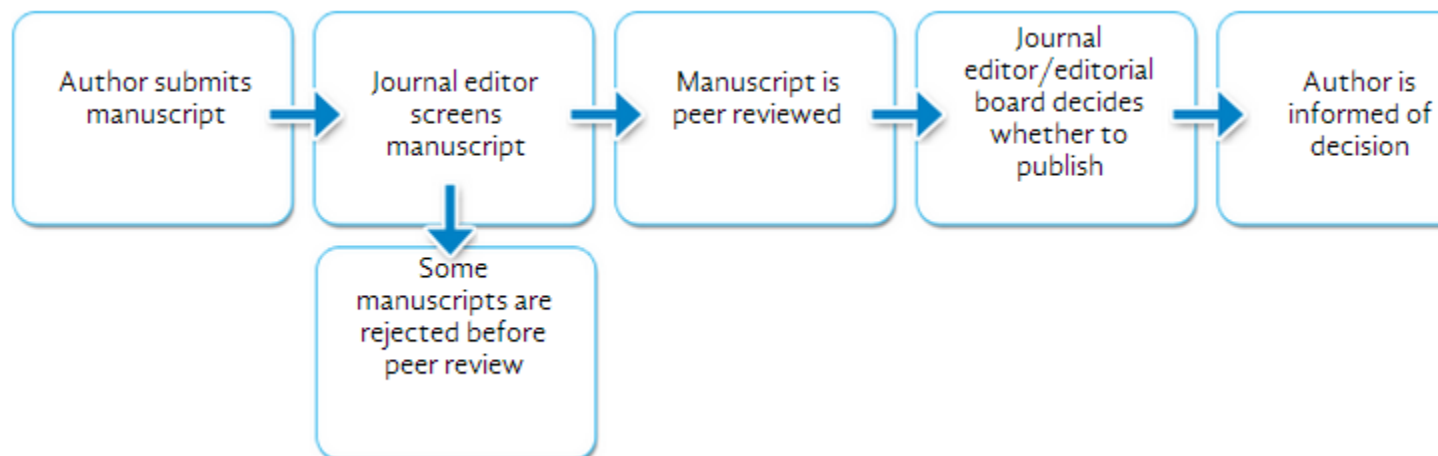


## Peer review

In academics, peer review or refereeing is the evaluation of your work (book/article) after it has gone to a publisher, by other people who are in the same field and have an expertise. The process is essentially a quality control mechanism. It is a process by which experts evaluate scholarly works, and its objective is to ensure a high quality and gives you feedback on various aspects of writing- be it content or style or grammar or even the formatting.

- Peer review is the process by which journals scrutinize and regulate the quality of content they publish, by inviting experts in the field to review and comment on manuscripts received.
- Manuscripts submitted to a journal first go through an initial screening by the editorial team.
- Those that clear the screening are sent to at least two experts for peer review.
- Peer reviewers independently make a recommendation to the journal editor as to whether the manuscript should be rejected or accepted (with or without revisions).
- The journal editor considers all the feedback from peer reviewers and makes an informed decision to accept or reject the manuscript.



There are three common types of peer review:

- **Single blind:** names of reviewers are not revealed to authors
- **Double blind:** names of reviewers and authors are not revealed to each other
- **Open peer review:** Names of authors and reviewers are revealed to each other

Generally, a minimum of 2 peer reviewers (up to 6) are chosen for the peer review.

Peer reviewers are ideally experts in their field who have sufficient subject matter expertise to do justice to the manuscript. There are certain general criteria that most reviewers have in mind. Broadly, the criteria are:

**1. Structure of the composition. It includes:**

- i) Organization of arguments
- ii) The flow of thoughts
- iii) The movement from one idea to next
- iv) Formatting- general and specific
- v) Adherence to word limit

**2. Grammar:**

- i. Language
- ii. Vocabulary
- iii. Style
- iv. Register
- v. Punctuation

**3. Relevance of content and the use of source material:**

- i. Clarity of aims and objectives
- ii. Originality of thoughts
- iii. Use of examples

iv. Use and acknowledgement of sources

**The reviewers evaluate according to certain scales. For example:**

Excellent	>70%	Exceeding expectation
Very Good	60-70%	Meets Expectation
Satisfactory	50-60%	Needs Improvement
Not Satisfactory	40-50%	Inadequate
Poor	<40%	Rejected

**Final decision**

The journal editor or editorial board considers the feedback provided by the peer reviewers and arrives at a decision. The following are the most common decisions that are made:

1. accept without any changes (acceptance): the journal will publish the paper in its original form
2. accept with minor revisions (acceptance): the journal will publish the paper and asks the author to make small corrections
3. accept after major revisions (conditional acceptance ): the journal will publish the paper provided the authors make the changes suggested by the reviewers and/or editors
4. revise and resubmit (conditional rejection): the journal is willing to reconsider the paper in another round of decision making after the authors make major changes

5. reject the paper (outright rejection): the journal will not publish the paper or reconsider it even if the authors make major revisions

The first option (accept without any changes) is rare. The second decision (accept with minor revisions) is typically the best outcome authors should hope for. Once a journal rejects a paper outright, authors are well advised not to resubmit to the same journal. If the journal wanted to reconsider the paper, they would have issued a conditional rejection. An outright rejection means that the journal thinks the paper will not meet its publication standards or interests even after heavy revisions.