

The Peer Review Process

What is peer review?

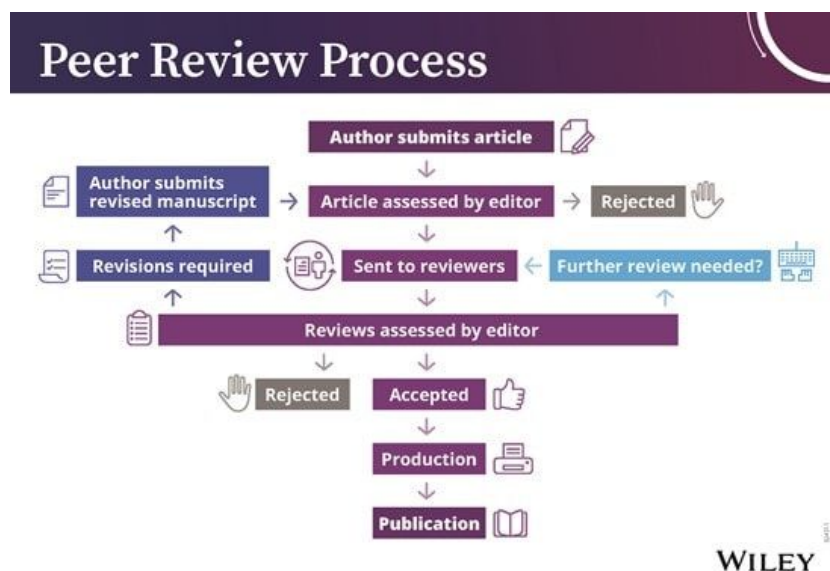
A peer-reviewed research article means that other experts in the field have reviewed it before it was published. This ensures that the article has no major flaws and improves its quality, as well as making it more clear and readable for its audience.

The process

The author first submits a manuscript to the journal, usually digitally. It is first reviewed by an editor who ensures that it is appropriately formatted and fits basic guidelines. The editor checks how relevant the content is to the journal and whether it overlaps too much with published articles.¹

If the editor approves the manuscript, they contact experts in that field to do a peer review. A minimum of two reviewers is needed. However, this can depend on the journal. Most reviewers use some form of checklist to carefully assess the work. This process can often take a long time as the reviewers need to read the manuscript multiple times, from initial reading to taking apart all the details.²

After the peer review, the document is either sent back to the author for revisions or accepted for publishing. Below is a flowchart that shows the entire peer-review process:



(image source:

<https://authorservices.wiley.com/Reviewers/journal-reviewers/what-is-peer-review/the-peer-review-process.html>)

Type of peer review

There are several types of peer reviews, and they are categorized as closed reviews or open reviews. Closed reviews can be single-blinded or double-blinded. Single-blinded means that the author does not know who the reviewer is, but the reviewer knows who the author is, while double-blinded means that both the reviewer and the author are unknown to each other.¹ Each type comes with its pros and cons. An advantage of a single-blind review is that reviewers are not influenced by the authors, which gives them the freedom to provide honest feedback. However, the reviewer might be biased against the author or their institution. A double-blind review reduces bias in this area. However, a limitation is that when an author's research draws heavily from their other works, it is better to know their identity. It gives reviewers important information they need to understand the research.¹

On the other hand, open review means that both the reviewer and author are known to each other. Sometimes this can mean that the reviewer's names, review reports, or both are published with the article. Publishing review reports can reduce bias and malicious comments; however, it may also cause a reviewer to tone down their criticism due to politeness.³ Many journals experiment with different ways of doing the peer review process. If you are interested in publishing in a journal, you can usually find out what type of peer review process they use on their website.

References

1. Voight, M. L., & Hoogenboom, B. J. (2012). Publishing your work in a journal: understanding the peer review process. *International journal of sports physical therapy*, 7(5), 452–460.
2. Wiley. (n.d.). *The peer review process*. <https://authorservices.wiley.com/Reviewers/journal-reviewers/what-is-peer-review/the-peer-review-process.html>
3. Elsevier. (n.d.). *What is peer review?* <https://www.elsevier.com/reviewers/what-is-peer-review>.