

How to conduct a review

Before you accept or decline an invitation to review, consider the following questions:

Does the article match your **area of expertise**? Only accept if you feel you can provide a high quality review.

Do you have a potential **conflict of interest**? Disclose this to the editor when you respond.

Do you have **time**? Reviewing can be a lot of work – before you commit, make sure you can meet the deadline.

Finally: Educate yourself on the peer review process through the free [Elsevier Publishing Campus](#)

Respond to the invitation as soon as you can – delay in your decision slows down the review process, whether you agree to review or not. If you decline the invitation, provide suggestions for alternative reviewers.

Before you
start

Your
review
report

Checklist

Your
recommen
dation

Final
decision

Before you start

If you accept, you must treat the materials you receive as confidential documents. This means you can't share them with anyone without prior authorization from the editor. Since peer review is confidential, you also must not share information about the review with anyone without permission from the editors and authors.

First read the article and then take a break from it, giving you time to think. Consider the article from your own perspective. When you sit down to write the review, make sure you know what the journal is looking for, and have a copy of any specific reviewing criteria you need to consider.

Your review report

Your review will help the editor decide whether or not to publish the article. Giving your overall opinion and general observations of the article is essential. Your comments should be courteous and constructive, and should not include any personal remarks or personal details including your name.

Providing insight into any deficiencies is important. You should explain and support your judgement so that both editors and authors are able to fully understand the reasoning behind your comments. You should indicate whether your comments are your own opinion or are reflected by the data.

Checklist

Summarize the article in a short paragraph. This shows the editor you have read and understood the research.

Give your main impressions of the article, including whether it is novel and interesting, whether it has a sufficient impact and adds to the knowledge base.

Point out any journal-specific points – does it adhere to the journal's standards?

If you suspect plagiarism, fraud or have other ethical concerns, raise your suspicions with the editor, providing as much detail as possible. Visit Elsevier's Ethics site or the [COPE Guidelines](#) for more information.

Give specific comments and suggestions, including about layout and format, Title, Abstract, Introduction, Graphical Abstracts and/or Highlights, Method, statistical errors, Results, Conclusion/Discussion, language and References.

Your recommendation

When you make a recommendation, it is worth considering the categories the editor most likely uses for classifying the article:

Reject (explain reason in report)

Accept without revision

Revise – either major or minor (explain the revision that is required, and indicate to the editor whether or not you would be happy to review the revised article)

The final decision

The editor ultimately decides whether to accept or reject the article. Elsevier plays no part in this decision. The editor will weigh all views and may call for a third opinion or ask the author for a revised paper before making a decision. The online editorial system provides reviewers with a notification of the final decision, if the journal has opted in to this function. If this is not applicable for your journal, you can contact the editor to find out whether the article was

