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**A series of  
one-page, jargon-free  
briefing papers  
on hot topics  
and live issues**

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**PEER REVIEW**

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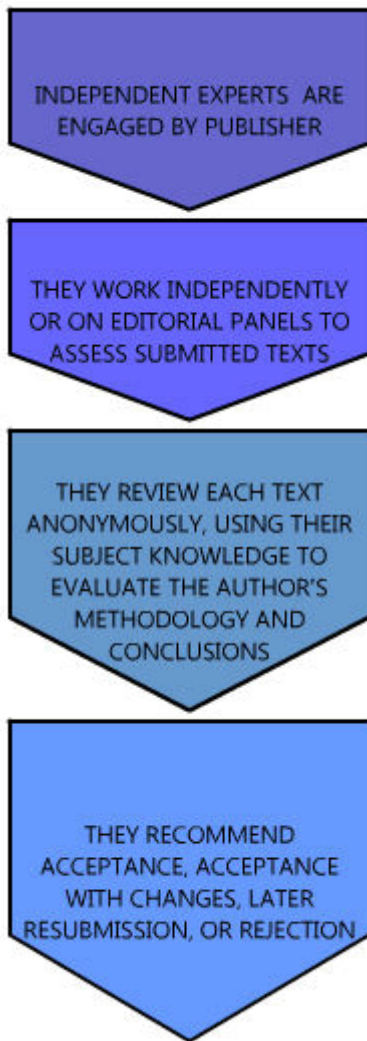
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### What is peer review?

Peer review is a quality assurance process that is commonly employed in academic research, scholarship and publishing. It is also sometimes referred to as refereeing. In the peer review process, independent third party experts are engaged by publishers to review and evaluate any texts that have been submitted for publication. Sometimes this is done via an online system such as [ScholarOne Manuscript](#).

### What are the benefits of peer review?

Publishers can use peer review in order to ensure that the information they publish is of the highest quality. Peer review can:

- Ensure accuracy, objectivity and sound methodology in the printed material
- Prevent unproven claims or statements
- Prevent interpretations or conclusions based on unsound evidence
- Encourage authors to adhere to commonly accepted standards in the discipline
- Establish a reliable and credible research base
- Detect and prevent plagiarism

### Who uses peer review?

Many different types of publisher or organisation employ peer review. However, there are certain areas in which the peer review model dominates. These include:

- Academic publishers
- Scholarly journals
- Professional organisations or bodies
- Scientific journals
- University presses

### What are the different forms of peer review?

Over time, different forms of peer review have developed to suit different disciplines or needs. The peer review model employed by medical journals like The Lancet for example will be much more rigorous than that used elsewhere, because there is a danger of real harm if incorrect information is published. Types of peer review include:

#### *Blind*

The identity of the expert reviewer is unknown to the author.

#### *Double-Blind*

The identities of both the expert reviewer and the author are unknown to each other.

#### *Open*

The identities of both the expert reviewer and the author are mutually known, in an attempt to increase accountability.

### How do I know if information has been peer-reviewed?

Academic and scholarly journals will often include a note on their peer review processes and policies in their front matter. Many academic publishers provide Peer Review Policies on their websites. Some online resources, databases and e-journals will display a logo when information has been peer reviewed. Your librarians Duncan [d.chappell@gsa.ac.uk](mailto:d.chappell@gsa.ac.uk) and David [d.buri@gsa.ac.uk](mailto:d.buri@gsa.ac.uk) will also be able to advise on the status of particular journals.