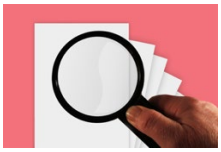
24 July 2022

How to peer review a manuscript

You will see some of the latest research in your field and will learn useful critical thinking skills



See all the great tips about how to peer review in Hooper et al. (below)

A suggested approach (but see the tutorials below):

Read the manuscript through once, thinking about general aspects:

a) What are the research questions? Is it explained why they are important?
b) Do the methods seem appropriate and up to date?
c) Do the results support the manuscript's conclusions?
d) Do the study results contribute to the field, e.g. new information, methodology, approach?
e) Would the study be interesting and relevant for the journal readership?

Write your report:

a) Start by summarising what the manuscript is about and how it adds to current knowledge
b) Mention the strengths of the manuscript, but also any main problems that you think should be corrected before it is publishable
c) Evaluate the sections of the paper in turn, e.g.
   - Are the research questions clearly explained in the Introduction section?
   - Is the study design appropriate for the research question(s)?
   - Are the methods explained in sufficient detail that someone could replicate the study?
   - Were the data analysed and interpreted correctly?
   - Are further data or analyses needed to answer the research questions?
   - Are ethical aspects mentioned in the Methods section?
   - Do the results link back to the research questions?
   - Do the conclusions reflect the study findings?

d) Is the manuscript well-written and easy to read? Does the English need editing?

Hooper M, Bradbury S, Walsh A, et al. (2018) Journal Peer Review. figshare. Journal contribution. https://doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.5782815.v1

Springer online tutorials on writing scientific manuscripts and how to peer review

The EQUATOR Network has a link to a free online course on journal peer review:

https://eyes.cochrane.org/free-online-course-journal-peer-review

(funded partly by National Institutes of Health & Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health)