Reviewer Selection Handbook
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Introduction

Sourcing reviewers can be the most time-consuming part of an editor’s role. This Reviewer Selection Handbook aims to minimise the number of invites an editor must send for each manuscript and improve time to decision for our authors.

The Handbook provides you with:

- A guide to the various ways in which you can search for potential reviewers
- Relevant information on SAGE’s ethics and best practice policies and recommendations
- Time-saving tips

Further information can be found in SAGE’s Editor Guide to Peer Review Best Practice and Publishing Policies, or the Editor User Guide provided by ScholarOne Manuscripts.

SAGE’s peer review policy

In general, SAGE strongly recommends obtaining two independent external reviews, which have addressed the paper in detail, before making a first decision.

Unless desk rejected, Reject decisions may be based on a thorough single review.

If the two reviews are insubstantial, highly conflicting or raise any cause for concern, a further review should be sought.
Building an effective reviewer database

To maintain an effective SAGE Track database of active reviewers we recommend that you:

1. Regularly select reviewers from outside of SAGE Track and add them to the database

To do this via the system:

- Click ‘External Searches’

  - Select the criteria you would like to search for and then select the platform that you wish to search across
    - Selecting too many keywords may overwhelm the search and not provide results; it is suggested to start with the most relevant keyword
  - You can search across the following platforms:

- Once you have found a potentially suitable reviewer they must be verified (see page 35)

- If they can be verified, you can add them to the database and invite them:
  - Enter the first name, last name and email address
  - You can provide more account information if desired
  - Select ‘Create and Add’
  - The reviewer will automatically appear in the Reviewer List
2. Flag inactive reviewers

Edit the user’s account to list them as an ‘Excluded Reviewer’ so that their names don’t pull into your results.

3. Give every review an R-Score

The R-Score is the average score a reviewer receives from editors. At the bottom of a completed review, you will see two brief rating scales – one for timeliness and one for quality assessment, on a scale from 1 to 3. Simply give your score for the review and click ‘Save’.
Each score a reviewer receives is collected and averaged to produce the overall R-Score. The R-Score is attached to a person's account, and can be used in reviewer searches and reports to find and determine the best reviewers in your site.

**TIPS**

- Change the sort order of your search results to Primary: R-Score descending to obtain the higher rated reviewers first
- You will get the most accurate R-Score results if every editor in the site rates reviewers for every review completed.
Using the SAGE Track reviewer database

The SAGE Track database contains contact information for authors who have previously submitted to the journal and reviewers who have been invited to review and/or reviewed for the journal. A user (e.g. a prospective reviewer) can create an account for a journal at any time. The following searches can help identify suitable reviewers from these existing users in the system.

**TIP** Use an asterisk (*) to search for partial keywords, areas of expertise or titles, e.g. “review” would return any papers related to ‘review’, ‘reviews’, ‘reviewer’, ‘reviewing’, ‘reviewed’, etc.

**NOTE** Searches are not case-sensitive.

1. Quick search
   - Search by first or last name, and search for multiple people by separating with a comma
     - Use at least 4 characters for more relevant results
     - By default, the search only looks at users with a Reviewer role. If you wish to search other roles, select another role from the list.

2. Related papers search
   - The related paper search returns a list of users that had some involvement (usually as an author or reviewer) with related past papers
   - Basing this search on the manuscript title or keywords tends to return the most relevant results.

**Manuscript title**

You can search for authors and reviewers of papers that have certain important words or phrases in the title.

For example, if your journal didn’t have the keyword ‘centrifugal pump’ but you knew that there were submissions in the subject, you could search the database for these keywords:

- This will return a list of authors and reviewers of papers with the phrase ‘centrifugal pump’ somewhere within the title
• Note the asterisks: this tells the system to search for the phrase within a title. Without the asterisks, it would search for papers with the exact, full, title of ‘centrifugal pump’.

You can also separate the two (or more) words to return results that have the words ‘centrifugal’ and ‘pump’, but not necessarily as an exact string:

Historical data
• You will be able to view historical data of other papers that a reviewer has reviewed or co-authored
• If you view the historical data, you will need to use the breadcrumb trail at the top of the screen to move back to the manuscript you were working on.
3. Keywords

Searching for keywords is an effective way of finding reviewers. Each journal can have a large list of keywords, through which you can search for specific terms or perform partial searches.

In this example, ‘fluid dynamics’ is an existing system keyword, so you can type it into the box and search. This will return authors and reviewers who have worked on papers with the selected keyword.

If you need to look up a list of keywords, you can select ‘Pick’ with an empty dialogue box.

You can choose your keyword(s) from the pop-up window, which will populate the dialogue box(es) within the search.

However, if a long list of keywords is too broad, you can narrow the Pick function. For example, if you want to see what keywords there are associated with fluids, you can type *fluid* in the dialogue box and then click ‘Pick’.
NOTE The Boolean options on the right of the search boxes allows you to combine keywords.

It is often useful to combine exact keyword searches with partial searches. For example, if you wanted to find a paper on pumps but within fluids specifically, you would search on the exact keyword ‘pumps’ and the partial search ‘fluid’:

4. Auto-suggest results
   - This feature uses keywords from the author submission and matches them to keywords used in a reviewer’s account
   - If you wish to select a reviewer, click the Add checkbox, then the Add button
   - When using the Auto-Suggest option, if you change the AND section to OR, you will likely receive better results.
5. Advanced search results

In Advanced Search, you can search for reviewers who have keywords associated with their accounts.

6. Set search preferences

Search results will be alphabetical by default but can be reordered according to the criteria in the columns. These criteria can be changed here using ‘Set My Search Preferences’.  

**TIP** Select ‘Exclude unavailable reviewers’ in Set My Search Preferences.
Tools for finding reviewers and how to use them

Web of Science

The Web of Science Core Collection is a database for papers published in indexed journals. The collection of citation indexes represents the citation connections between scholarly research articles found in the most globally significant journals, books, and proceedings in the sciences, social sciences and art & humanities.

**NOTE** To access all the content and features, you need a Web of Science Core Collection subscription.

**Basic search**

- Read over the abstract and/or the manuscript to determine a few keywords that best encapsulate the topic(s) of the manuscript
- At the top of the Web of Science homepage, select the ‘Search’ button or the ‘Web of Science’ icon
- Use the Basic Search to search keywords

- Insert the keyword in the search bar and determine how the keyword will be searched in the drop-down menu on the right (an explanation of how the keyword will be searched will appear when the mouse hovers over a category)
- Add more keywords to the search by selecting ‘+ Add row’
- After adding another row, determine if the keywords should be included or excluded from the search by selecting ‘And’, ‘Or’ or ‘Not’
- Determine the timespan. For best results, select ‘Last 5 years’
- Select the ‘Search’ button.

**TIP** Select ‘search tips’ next to the search button for additional search tips.
1. New Search
2. The number of results from the search
3. List of keywords selected for the search
4. Refining results tools
5. Area to reorder results
6. Article results
7. Change to another page of results
8. Analyze Results tool
9. Times Cited
Viewing an article

To view an article, select the title from the Basic search

- Read over the abstract and/or the manuscript to determine a few keywords that best encapsulate the topic(s) of the manuscript
- At the top of the Web of Science homepage, select the ‘Search’ button or the ‘Web of Science’ icon
- Use the Basic Search to search keywords
- Insert the keyword in the search bar and determine how the keyword will be searched in the drop-down menu on the right (an explanation of how the keyword will be searched will appear when the mouse hovers over a category)
- Add more keywords to the search by selecting ‘+ Add row’
- After adding another row, determine if the keywords should be included or excluded from the search by selecting ‘And’, ‘Or’ or ‘Not’
- Determine the timespan. For best results, select ‘Last 5 years’
- Select the ‘Search’ button.

**TIP** Select ‘search tips’ next to the search button for additional search tips.

Results page

Article information will appear when the page reloads. This will include the full list of authors, journal information, keywords, the abstract and the email address of the corresponding author.

Refine search

Select a subsection by clicking the blue triangle

- Select one or more of the checkboxes and select ‘Refine’
- Multiple checks in different subsections are allowed
- For more advanced refining, select ‘more options / values…”
- Check the boxes the search should include or exclude
- Select ‘Refine’ or ‘Exclude’
- Using the exclude function can help ensure the institutions or authors associated with the manuscript are not included in the results.
Modify the time span

- In some cases, extending or reducing the time span of a search will provide more reviewers in that area of study and/or reviewers that are more responsive
- Begin a new search
- Select the ‘Timespan’ dropdown menu and select a different timespan.

KeyWords Plus

- After finding an article that encapsulates the topic(s) of the manuscript, view the manuscript and scroll to ‘KeyWords Plus’ (underneath ‘Author Keywords’)
- The keywords listed may offer new keywords to use in another search
- Selecting one of the keywords will direct you to a new search that does not include your previous search.

**KeyWords Plus:** KEYWORD; KEYWORD; KEYWORD; KEYWORD; KEYWORD; KEYWORD

Sort by

**Sort by times cited**

- Sorting the search results by how many times an article has been cited may indicate the expertise of the authors in their field
- On the Basic search
- Read over the abstract and/or the manuscript to determine a few keywords that best encapsulate the topic(s) of the manuscript
- At the top of the [Web of Science homepage](#), select the ‘Search’ button or the ‘Web of Science’ icon
- Use the Basic Search to search keywords
- Insert the keyword in the search bar and determine how the keyword will be searched in the drop-down menu on the right (an explanation of how the keyword will be searched will appear when the mouse hovers over a category)
- Add more keywords to the search by selecting ‘+ Add row’
- After adding another row, determine if the keywords should be included or excluded from the search by selecting ‘And’, ‘Or’ or ‘Not’
- Determine the timespan. For best results, select ‘Last 5 years’
- Select the ‘Search’ button.

**TIP** Select ‘search tips’ next to the search button for additional search tips.

- **Results** page, sort by ‘Times Cited’
- The number of times an article has been cited can be found on the right side of an article.

Sort by source titles

- Refining the results to ‘Source Titles’ will limit results to journals that publish similar research to the manuscript’s topic
- While in the Basic search
• Read over the abstract and/or the manuscript to determine a few keywords that best encapsulate the topic(s) of the manuscript

• At the top of the **Web of Science homepage**, select the ‘Search’ button or the ‘Web of Science’ icon

• Use the Basic Search to search keywords

• Insert the keyword in the search bar and determine how the keyword will be searched in the drop-down menu on the right (an explanation of how the keyword will be searched will appear when the mouse hovers over a category)

• Add more keywords to the search by selecting ‘+ Add row’

• After adding another row, determine if the keywords should be included or excluded from the search by selecting ‘And’, ‘Or’ or ‘Not’

• Determine the timespan. For best results, select ‘Last 5 years’

• Select the ‘Search’ button.

**TIP** Select ‘search tips’ next to the search button for additional search tips.

• Results page, locate the ‘Refine Results’ section

• Select the ‘Source Title’ section

**OR**

• While in the Analyze Results tool, locate the categories on the left

• Select the ‘Source Title’ category.

**View cited references**

• After finding an article that encapsulates the topic(s) of the manuscript, scroll to the bottom to view all the cited references

- Select the blue title to view the article

- If the title is not in blue, it cannot be selected.

**TIPS**

• Create a new window or tab to view the article since it is not possible to return to the previous search

• Be aware of who is in the author list and when a cited paper was published.
PubMed comprises more than 30 million citations for biomedical literature from MEDLINE, life science journals, and online books. Citations may include links to full-text content from PubMed Central and publisher websites.

Basic search

- Read over the abstract and/or the manuscript and determine a few keywords that best encapsulate the topic(s) of the manuscript
- At the top of the PubMed homepage, make sure 'PubMed' is selected from the drop-down menu next to the search field
- Use the Basic Search to search keywords
- Insert the keyword(s) in the search bar (suggestions will display as you type your keywords) and select search
- Detailed instructions on using the basic search feature can be found here
- More refined searches can help to narrow the results list to best fit your manuscript:
  - Keyword search in title only: KEYWORD[TITLE]
  - Keyword search in title and abstract: KEYWORD[TITLE/ABSTRACT]
  - To string keywords together, you can use 'AND', 'OR', 'NOT' between them to include or exclude keywords from your search
  - For a full list of fields that you can use to refine your search please refer to the drop-down menu on the Advanced Search Builder page
- Most used search functions:
  - TITLE: Usually a keyword that is essential to the manuscript. For example, all manuscripts from a journal that focuses on HIV and AIDS may want articles with ‘HIV’ or ‘AIDS’ in the title;
  - TITLE/ABSTRACT: A keyword or phrase that is important to the manuscript, but may not always appear in the title. For example, a specific drug name or a specific medical condition. For example, ‘children’ could be used to refine the search to only include articles about children;
  - MeSH terms: A way to refine phrases that include the keyword. This is useful when the terminology of the manuscript is unfamiliar or if the results were too broad.

NOTE You can also use the Advanced Search Builder to build more complex search strings. The fields auto-populate as well. The search string you construct appears in the field at the top of the page. Video instructions can be found on YouTube.
Results page

1. New search
2. The number of results from the search
3. List of keywords selected for the search
4. Refining results tools
5. Area to reorder results
6. Article results
7. Change to another page of results

Viewing an article

To view an article, select the title from the Results page.

Article information will appear when the page reloads. This will include the full list of authors, journal information, keywords, the abstract and the email address of the corresponding author. It will also include similar articles and articles the paper was cited by, if applicable, which may be useful to search for additional reviewers closely related to the topic.
Association of microRNA-27a rs895819 polymorphism with the risk of cancer: An updated meta-analysis.

Dai J, Chen Y, Gong Y, Gu D, Chen J.

If the corresponding author email address does not appear in the ‘Author Information’ section, you can check the article using the Full text link (if present), at the top right.

Refine search
Select a field to refine by from one of the categories and a filter will be applied.

- Select additional fields and they will be automatically applied
- For additional filters, select ‘Show additional filters’, check the filter(s) you would like and select ‘Show’
- To remove a filter, select the field(s) you’ve filtered by and they will automatically be removed. Alternatively, you can clear all filters by selecting ‘Clear All’ at the top of the search results list.

Modify the time span
In some cases, extending or reducing the time span of a search will provide more reviewers in that area of study and/or reviewers that are more responsive

- You can filter by 5 years or 10 years as well as a custom range by selecting from the filter options on the left side of the screen in the ‘Publication dates’ category.

Sort by
Sort by Most Recent or Publication Date

- Sorting the search results by date will allow you to identify the most recent researchers in the field and who may be most relevant for reviewing new research
On the Results page sort by ‘Most Recent’ or ‘Publication Date’

**Sort by Best Match**

- Sorting by ‘Best Match’ will yield articles that are the closest match to your keyword search and may reveal researchers who have the greatest expertise in the field

**TIPS**

- You may need to use keywords that were not provided by the author or in the title
  - Using MeSH terms or gathering keywords from the manuscript can be useful
- If emails are not provided, look under ‘Full Text Link’ and select one of the links
  - PMC, Springer Link, Oxford Academic, PLOS One, and Wiley Online Library are the most reliable
- When looking at an article, a section called ‘Related information’ will occasionally appear on the bottom right of the screen under ‘Similar Articles’. Here you can select ‘Articles frequently viewed together’ to view more articles that are similar to each other.
Scopus

Scopus is a source-neutral abstract and citation database curated by independent subject matter experts. It places powerful discovery and analytics tools in the hands of researchers, librarians, institutional research managers and funders.

Scopus provides a number of useful tutorials and FAQ pages that you can use to supplement this guide.

Basic search

- Read over the abstract and/or the manuscript and determine a few keywords that best encapsulate the topic(s) of the manuscript
- Go to the Scopus Document search page
- Use the Basic Search to search documents, authors, or affiliations

  Insert the keyword in the search bar and determine what field the keyword will be searched in (or select all fields) using the drop-down menu on the right

  Add more keywords to the search by selecting ‘+’. After adding another row, determine if the keywords should be included or excluded from the search by selecting ‘And’, ‘Or’ or ‘And Not’
• Determine the timespan. For best results, adjust the fields to span the last 5 years if searching by the Published date. There is also an option to search by how recently an article was added to Scopus (within the past 7, 14, or 30 days).

• There are also filter options to search by a specific document type or all documents as well as what type of access there is to the document (All or Open Access).

• Select the ‘Search’ button.

**TIP** Select ‘Search tips’ to the right of the search field for additional search tips. This includes recommended practices for using Boolean and Proximity operators, searching using exact or approximate phrases, and search filters.

### Advanced search

• The advanced search allows for the construction of complex query strings. Information on best practices for this feature can be found [here](#).

### Results page

1. **New Search**
2. The number of results from the search
3. List of keywords selected for the search
4. Refining results tools
5. **Area to reorder results**
6. Article results
7. **Analyze search results tool**
8. Times Cited
To view an article, select the title from the Basic search

- Read over the abstract and/or the manuscript to determine a few keywords that best encapsulate the topic(s) of the manuscript
- At the top of the Web of Science homepage, select the ‘Search’ button or the ‘Web of Science’ icon
- Use the Basic Search to search keywords
- Insert the keyword in the search bar and determine how the keyword will be searched in the drop-down menu on the right (an explanation of how the keyword will be searched will appear when the mouse hovers over a category)
- Add more keywords to the search by selecting ‘+ Add row’
- After adding another row, determine if the keywords should be included or excluded from the search by selecting ‘And’, ‘Or’ or ‘Not’
- Determine the timespan. For best results, select ‘Last 5 years’
- Select the ‘Search’ button.

**TIP** Select ‘search tips’ next to the search button for additional search tips.

**Results page**

Article information will appear when the page reloads. This will include the full list of authors, journal information, keywords, the abstract and the email address of the corresponding author. It will also include articles the paper was cited by, which may be useful to search for additional reviewers closely related to the topic.
Refine search

- Select a subsection by clicking the blue triangle
- Select one or more of the checkboxes and select ‘Limit to’ or ‘Exclude’
- Multiple checks in different subsections are allowed
- Using the exclude function can help ensure the institutions or authors associated with the manuscript are not included in the results.

Visuals

- To change the visual type, either go back one page in the browser or select a visualization from the images at the bottom of the screen
- To adjust the year range to analyze, adjust the range using the drop-down menu on the right side of the page and select ‘Analyze’
- To sort sub-categories in ascending or descending alphabetical order, select the ‘Subject area’ icon at the top of the sub-category list on the left side of the screen.

Additional keywords

- After finding an article that encapsulates the topic(s) of the manuscript, view the manuscript and scroll to the Author keywords and Indexed keywords sections
- The keywords listed may offer new keywords to use in another search.
References as a source for additional authors

- At the end of a manuscript page, all articles referenced by the manuscript are listed
- This can be a useful source for finding additional relevant reviewers
- Select a manuscript and on the manuscript information page you can find corresponding author information and email addresses.

Related articles as a source for additional authors

- On the ‘document results’ page, selecting ‘Related documents’ for any manuscript will display a list of all related articles
- On a manuscript page, you can identify related documents based on the author list or author-provided keywords in a section on the right side of the screen.

Sort by

Sort by Times Cited

- Sorting the search results by how many times an article has been cited may show the expertise of the authors in their field
- The number of times an article has been cited can be found on the right side of an article.

Sort by source titles

- Refining the results to ‘source titles’ will limit results to journals that publish similar research to the manuscript’s topic
- While in the Basic search
- Read over the abstract and/or the manuscript to determine a few keywords that best encapsulate the topic(s) of the manuscript
• At the top of the **Web of Science homepage**, select the ‘Search’ button or the ‘Web of Science’ icon.

• Use the Basic Search to search keywords.

• Insert the keyword in the search bar and determine how the keyword will be searched in the drop-down menu on the right (an explanation of how the keyword will be searched will appear when the mouse hovers over a category).

• Add more keywords to the search by selecting ‘+ Add row’.

• After adding another row, determine if the keywords should be included or excluded from the search by selecting ‘And’, ‘Or’ or ‘Not’.

• Determine the timespan. For best results, select ‘Last 5 years’.

• Select the ‘Search’ button.

**TIP** Select ‘search tips’ next to the search button for additional search tips.

• Results page, locate the ‘refine results’ section.

• Select the ‘source title’ section.
JANE tool

- Jane tool will compare your document to documents in PubMed to find similar journals, authors or articles
- Enter the title, partial title or abstract and select either ‘Find authors’ or ‘Find articles’
- There is also an option to search by keywords
- Results will display in order of relevance.

Example

- Enter the title or abstract in the space provided

For ‘Find authors’, click ‘Show articles’ against an author’s name

Click on the hyperlinked name(s) to be taken to the PubMed entry
For ‘Find articles’, click on the hyperlinked name(s) to be taken to the PubMed entry.

To search by keywords, use Boolean operators (AND, OR, NOT) along with the key terms.
Search engine

- Search specifically for academic institutions using the ‘site:.edu’, ‘site:.ac.uk’, etc. tag after an appropriate keyword(s) e.g. turbomachinery site:.edu
- This may generate faculty pages for academics with related research interests.

About 55,600 results (0.35 seconds)

Turbomachinery Laboratory
https://turbolab.tamu.edu/
The Turbo Lab organizes the annual Turbomachinery & Pump Symposia (TPS), the premiere conference for professionals in petrochemical, oil refining, oil and ...

Turbomachinery Research Consortium - Turbomachinery Laboratory
https://turbolab.tamu.edu/trc/
TRC. The TRC is an exclusive organization of major turbomachinery developers and users who have united with the Turbo Lab to find answers to important ...

Course - Turbo Machinery - TEP4195 - NTNU
https://www.ntnu.edu/studies/courses/TEP4195
Flow conditions in stationary cascades. Flow conditions and performance in the runner. Axial forces and torque. Rating and analysis of different turbo machinery, ...

Turbomachinery Research Papers - Academia.edu
www.academia.edu/Documents/in/Turbomachinery
View Turbomachinery Research Papers on Academia.edu for free.

Turbomachinery Laboratory // University of Notre Dame
https://turbo.nd.edu/
The Notre Dame Turbomachinery Laboratory's mission is to advance turbomachinery technology using engine-relevant experiments in parallel with large-scale, ...
Publons

Through the SAGE partner dashboard, you can view lists of each journal’s top reviewers, suggested reviewers who review for similar journals, and researchers who have expressed interest in reviewing for your journals.

Use these tools to build or expand a journal’s pool of reviewers. They are not designed to find reviewers for specific papers.

Contact your SAGE Publishing Editor for access to the dashboard.

Each reviewer verified by Publons has a reviewer profile that lists a wealth of information such as a link to their institutional webpage, a list of their verified reviews, which journals they have reviewed for, whether they sit on any editorial boards, how many articles they have published, and the number of times they have been cited.

Note that you will still need to verify the identity of potential reviewers you find on Publons by following the steps outlined in the ‘reviewer verification’ section below.
Reference list

• You can also find reviewers by searching for authors listed in the references
  • Search online for the potential reviewer using the title of the referenced paper in order to ensure you identify the correct person.

NOTE

• Using the reference list for identifying potential reviewers should be a last resort
• Authors may have cited papers that are consistent with their own research and findings, so the reviewer’s assessment of the manuscript may be less objective
• It is also important to be particularly cautious of bias – the reviewer may look more favourably on a paper knowing that their own work will be cited if it is published.
Identifying suitable reviewers

It is important to include a basic search for some background information on each reviewer you invite. This not only ensures you’re selecting candidates who are more likely respond positively to your invite, but it’s an important due diligence step for minimising conflicts of interest of biases in the peer review process.

Reviewer expertise

Reviewers should meet as many of the criteria below as possible:

- The reviewer’s field of study and emphasis is confirmed
  - Check their publication record
  - Check their institutional page for their specialities within a field of study and what they focus on
- The reviewer is familiar with all aspects of the manuscript
  - Look for people who have been first or last authors on several papers in the area, not someone who's consistently in the middle in papers with multiple authors (as they might be a technician or someone with only tangential expertise)
- There is overlap between the reviewer’s previous work and the manuscript
- Keywords essential to the manuscript in process should overlap with those found in a reviewer’s profile or previous work
- The reviewer has reviewed other manuscripts on the same topic (when sourced via the SAGE Track database or Publons).

Bias and conflicts of interest

When inviting reviewers, it’s necessary to ensure that there is no conflict of interest with the authors. For example:

- The reviewer should have no prior knowledge of the submission
- The reviewer should not have recently (COPE recommend 3 years) collaborated with any of the authors
- Editors should also be aware of potential conflicts of interest between authors and reviewers with regard to industry associations (e.g. relating to relationships with pharmaceutical companies).

SAGE Track account info

The following information is available on SAGE Track. Click the magnifying glass next to the person’s name to open the pop-up window.

Account information

- Are there any comments in the user’s account information to suggest this person should not be invited? E.g. ‘They have retired’.

Author history

- Has the reviewer previously submitted to the journal? If so, has their submission(s) been accepted or rejected?

Reviewer history

- Has the reviewer reviewed for the journal before?
• If yes:
  o It can be useful to look at the reviewer’s past reviews to ensure they have submitted good quality comments
  o Their basic history will show the reviewer’s recommendation and the final decision
  o When did they last review for the journal? We try to avoid overburdening our reviewers and so would advise against inviting a reviewer who has recently provided a review (e.g. in the last 6 weeks)
  o Their basic history will also list their turnaround times (you may wish to avoid inviting reviewers who have routinely provided overdue comments)
• If no:
  o Has the reviewer authored a paper previously submitted to the journal? These users may be more likely to agree to review for the journal.
  o Has the reviewer previously agreed to review papers but failed to submit comments?
  o Has the reviewer recently declined to review a paper?
  o Has the reviewer failed to respond to invitations in the past?
• Does the reviewer have any pending assignments? As above, to avoid overburdening our reviewers, we try to avoid concurrent assignments.

NOTE All reviewers must be verified. See ‘Reviewer Verification’ in the Ethics and Best Practice section of this handbook.
Ethics and best practice

Reviewer verification

Once you have found potential reviewers using the selection tips provided in this document, you will need to verify them by taking the following steps:

- Search for the reviewer’s email address using a search engine
  - This (especially in cases where the email address is derived from an institution) should lead you to the reviewer’s institutional website
- If you find the person but the email address listed on the website differs from that given on SAGE Track, contact the reviewer using the email address provided on the website
  - Ask if they can confirm whether they are the same person as the individual who has a SAGE Track account registered under the other email address
- Some individuals may have ORCID profiles which will provide information on publications, peer review activity, employment history, education and qualification, and other relevant details
- A fake email address is unlikely to be registered anywhere, or to appear in results.

Institutional email addresses

- If you can find an institutional or employer webpage containing the person’s name, email address and some indication of their position, qualifications and expertise, the reviewer is considered ‘verifiable’
- If you can find the reviewer’s institutional website but it does not have a page with their professional qualifications and contact details, try searching for the name in the reviewer’s department or faculty listing.

If the reviewer cannot provide an institutional email address, then consider the following guidance on verifying those with non-institutional email addresses before deciding whether to invite the reviewer.

Non-institutional email addresses

- Be particularly wary of using non-institutional email addresses that include numbers or additional letters, e.g. FIRSTNAME.SURNAMEb@address or INITIAL.SURNAME152@address
- Search for the reviewer’s publication history; is this email address used as their corresponding email for their recent publications?
  - If not, contact the email address they have published with and use this (if recent) when inviting them to review
- For reference, here is a list of internet country codes and top-level domains and domain extensions: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Internet_top-level_domains.

If you cannot verify a reviewer based on the information you have, you may wish to email the reviewer and ask for an institutional, or other verifiable, email address.

**TIP** If you can verify a reviewer, we recommend adding a note to their account, with a link to the relevant webpage(s). This will make identifying suitable reviewers easier in the future.
Review content

- All reviews and comments should be substantiated
- Reviewers should not recommend citations of their own papers without sufficient explanation as to why the work is relevant
- Be aware of any rapid or short reviews that recommend acceptance or minor revision without detail
- You should also look out for duplicate reviews (i.e. similar reviews from two different accounts for the same manuscript)
- If found, flag this with your Publishing Editor
- For detailed information on SAGE’s expectations for the content of a review, see the Reviewer Gateway.

Reviewing a paper yourself

- It is not best practice for editors to review manuscripts to which they are assigned in an editorial capacity
- Contact your Publishing Editor should you have an exceptional circumstance whereby you feel that you may need to review a manuscript yourself
- If you do complete a review for a paper you’re assigned to, then best practice is to provide a non-anonymised review, listing your name and role on the journal at the end of the review comments.

Peer reviews by early career researchers

We can accept reviews from students or junior researchers on the following conditions:

- A supervisor/mentor must agree to provide guidance to the mentee and approve the review comments before submission
- The review comments must be submitted by the early career researcher via their own account (NOTE The supervisor can still receive recognition for their contribution via Publons)
- As with any review, the Editor should be confident with the level of detail and quality of the review for it to contribute to their final decision
- Where the appropriate wording is in the Reviewer Invitation email*, upon declining an invitation supervisors can recommend a junior colleague through the ‘Suggested Alternates’ function, using the Comments section to note their status as an Early Career Researcher

In all other cases, supervisors must request permission from the Editor.

*Wording for the reviewer invitation email template

Unable to review at this time?

You will be given the opportunity to recommend alternative expert reviewers should you decline this invitation. Where possible, we ask that you provide institutional email addresses when doing so.

Want to involve a junior colleague in the review?

[Journal name] supports peer review mentoring and accepts reviews from students and junior researchers. Should you decline this invitation but wish to suggest a junior colleague to review the paper, type ‘Early Career Researcher’ or ‘ECR’ in the Comments Box when recommending alternative reviewers for the paper. Note that you will be expected to provide guidance and approve the final comments before the review is submitted.

Recommended reviewers

In general, SAGE does not permit the use of author-suggested reviewers. If your journal has an agreement with the Publishing Editor which allows recommended reviewer use then it is essential to adhere to the guidance on the Editor Gateway.
Optimising turnaround times

Alternate reviewers

- Queue invites for multiple suitable reviewers using the ‘Alternates’ function
- Using the Order column, you can move reviewers into the list as ‘Alternate 1’ (or 2, 3, etc. depending on how many people you find) and click ‘Save’
- If anyone from the main reviewer list declines to review, the system will auto-invite from the alternates list
- This saves time as the next reviewer does not have to be manually invited and the invitation is sent out at the earliest possible time.

Customising invitations

- A positive response may be more likely if you tailor the invitation to the reviewer
- If there is a specific reason why you are inviting them, then include a note on this toward the beginning of the invitation.

Add additional templates

- Reviewer reminders
- Alternative reviewer suggestion for papers with overdue reviewers.
Further reading

COPE Ethical Guidelines for Peer Reviewers: https://publicationethics.org/resources/guidelines-new/cope-ethical-guidelines-peer-reviewers

Responsibilities in the Submission and Peer-Review Process:


How to select peer reviewers: Advice from an expert journal editor: https://www.editage.com/insights/how-to-select-peer-reviewers-advice-from-an-expert-journal-editor

SAGE Resources

Editor Gateway: https://sagepub.com/journal-editor-gateway
Reviewer Gateway: https://sagepub.com/journal-reviewer-gateway
Reviewer’s Guide: https://journals.sagepub.com/reviewer-guide

Reviewer Videos:
- How to become a peer reviewer
- How to conduct a peer review
- Peer review ethics