

## How to respond to whistle blowers

When concorne are raised directly

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No

Request more detail saying that otherwise you are unable to investigate

When more detail is

provided, investigate

A published article is criticised via direct email to the editor or publisher. This could include anonymous or not anonymous concerns about scientific soundness or allegations of plagiarism, figure manipulation or other forms of misconduct

Let the publisher and the communications team know about any allegations. It is useful to establish an escalation procedure and agree a process for responding ahead of time

Do the allegations contain specific and detailed evidence to support the claim?

Respond to the person who raised concerns saying that you are going to investigate and will let them know the outcome but will not necessarily be in contact regularly before then

Yes

Investigate according to the appropriate COPE flowchart or guidance and also follow own publisher's guidance

If there is an outcome to your investigation, such as a correction or retraction, inform the person who originally raised the concern

## Note

The tone of the allegations may be aggressive or personal. Respond politely; don't get drawn into personal exchanges

## Note

Sometimes the whistle blower may prefer toremain anonymous. It is important not to try to "out" people who wish to be anonymous

If they persist with vague claims, politely say you

cannot pursue this further

Developed in collaboration with BioMed Central

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**Version one** Published November 2015

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