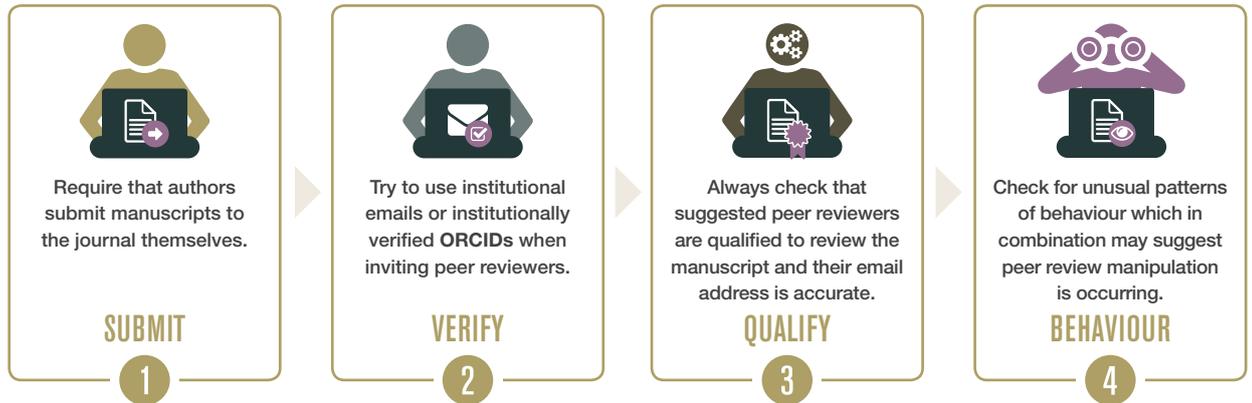


Best practice to minimise peer review manipulation



Peer reviewers may be suggested by:

- the Editor handling the manuscript.
- authors on submission of their manuscript to a journal.
- another reviewer who is unable to peer review the manuscript.

While there is an expectation that everyone involved in the process acts with integrity,¹ the peer review process can be susceptible to manipulation,²⁻⁴ as discussed at COPE's 2016 North American Seminar.⁵

The features or patterns of activity shown opposite are suggested to help editors recognise potential signs of peer review manipulation. Often it is the occurrence of these features in combination that may indicate a potential issue, and they may only become apparent at later stages in the peer review or publishing process.

Relevant COPE cases:

- Case 11-27: Author creates bogus email accounts for proposed reviewers. <https://cope.onl/bogus-email>
- Case 12-12: Compromised peer review system in published papers. <https://cope.onl/case-review>
- Case 12-16: Compromised peer review (unpublished). <https://cope.onl/compromised>

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PEER REVIEW PROCESSES