



COPE Seminar 2021

# Introduction to publication ethics

Friday 1 October 2021, 12:00 - 13:30 (BST)



Michael Wise



Ana Marušić



Simon Linacre



Trevor Lane  
(Moderator)



#COPE2021



PROMOTING INTEGRITY IN SCHOLARLY  
RESEARCH AND ITS PUBLICATION

## MODERATOR



**Trevor Lane**  
COPE Council Member  
Chair, Education Subcommittee

Trevor Lane is a publishing and education consultant based in Hong Kong. He was the managing editor of several general and specialist medical journals in Asia and the senior editor of two social science journals in the United States. From 2005 to 2015, he headed a knowledge exchange unit at the Faculty of Dentistry, the University of Hong Kong, where he taught research communication and publishing ethics to postgraduate students and helped staff publish and publicise their research.



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## WORKSHOP: Introduction to publication ethics

### Agenda

- Introduction to COPE
- Interactive Cases
- Q & A Session

## PRESENTERS



**Michael Wise**  
COPE Trustee &  
Treasurer

Michael Wise is a bioinformaticist / computer scientist in the Department of Computer Science & Software Engineering at the University of Western Australia. His research interests are primarily in microbial informatics. Michael co-founded the journal *Microbial Informatics and Experimentation*.



**Ana Marušić**  
COPE Council Member

Ana Marušić is Professor of Anatomy and Chair of the Department of Research in Biomedicine and Health at the University of Split School of Medicine, Croatia. She is an Honorary Professor at the University of Edinburgh in the UK. Ana is the Co-Editor in Chief of the *Journal of Global Health*.



**Simon Linacre**  
COPE Trustee

Simon Linacre is Director of International Marketing & Development at Cabells having previously spent 15 years at Emerald Publishing, working in journal acquisitions, open access and business development. Simon is an ALPSP (Association of Learned & Professional Society Publishers) tutor, currently leading courses on introduction to journal publishing.



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# INTRODUCTION TO COPE



| C | O | P | E |

## An Introduction to COPE

COPE Virtual Seminars: Introduction to Publication Ethics  
1 October 2021

Michael J Wise COPE Treasurer  
Associate Professor  
University of Western Australia

[publicationethics.org](http://publicationethics.org)



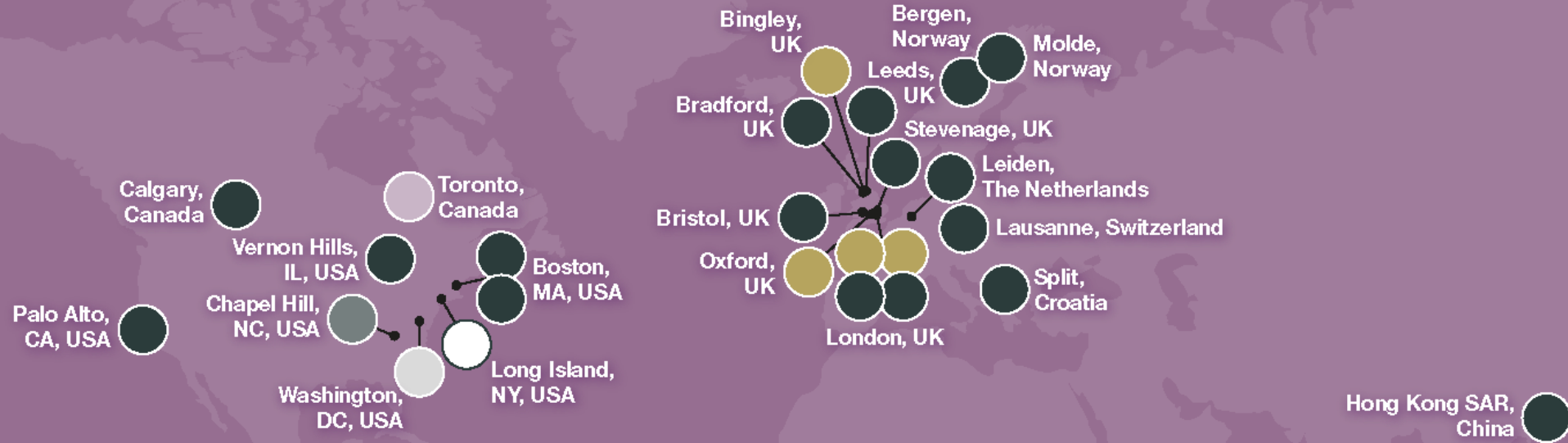
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## Introduction to COPE

### Agenda

- COPE: Who we are (Hint: you)
- 10 Core Practices (but only 2 here 😊)
  - Bucket-loads of Resources

# COPE TRUSTEES AND COUNCIL MEMBERS



## Key

○ Chair (1)

○ Past Chair (1)

● Treasurer (1)

● Council Member (17)

● Vice-Chair (1)

○ Secretary (1)

● Trustee (4)

Perth, Australia



## COPE CORE PRACTICES

Policies and core practices required to reach the highest standards in publication ethics:



Allegations  
of misconduct



Authorship and  
contributorship



Complaints  
and appeals



Conflicts of interest/  
Competing interests



Data and  
reproducibility



Ethical  
oversight



Intellectual  
property



Journal  
management



Peer review  
processes



Post-publication  
discussions and  
corrections



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## COPE CORE PRACTICE

# Allegations of misconduct

<https://COPE.onl/misconduct>





## COPE RESOURCES

### Examples of resources for allegations of misconduct

#### Flowchart

- Reviewer suspected to have appropriated an author's ideas or data

#### Guidelines

- Sharing of information among editors-in-chief regarding possible misconduct

#### Case discussion

- Sharing by a reviewer on social media

#### Webinar

- Webinar 2019: Allegations of misconduct

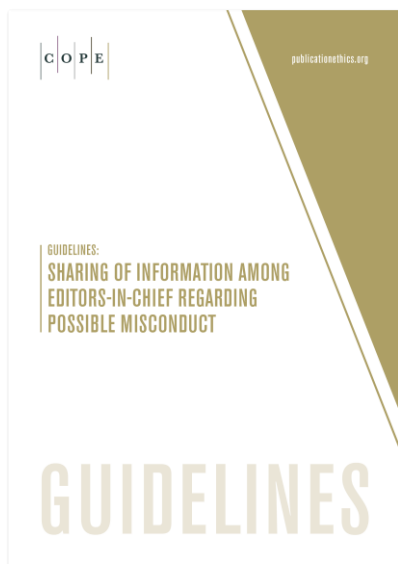
#### Forum



# COPE RESOURCES

## Allegations of misconduct

- Guidelines – Sharing of information among editors-in-chief regarding possible misconduct



...continue exposure, un...  
 ...particularly in cases where the suspicious...  
 ...not uncommon for authors in such cases to allege...  
 ...could potentially give rise to legal action.

The following guidance from **COPE** is not intended to serve as...  
 affording legal protection against such claims; however, it is hoped...  
 in terms of responsible actions on the part of EiCs and publishers

## GUIDANCE

1. In view of the importance of confidentiality in the scientific publishing process, COPE believes that sharing of information between EiCs should only be undertaken when the justifying EiC feels that such sharing is a necessary part of fulfilling the EiC's obligation to prevent and respond to suspected research misconduct.
2. EiCs should make all initial enquiries in suspected cases according to COPE guidelines/best practice, without sharing of information unless there is a reliable indication of an issue beyond just one journal. Information should only be shared if there is no response from the author, the response is inadequate, or more than one journal is thought to be affected.
3. If sharing of information is necessary, disclosure should be made to only those EiCs who the disclosing EiC believes may have information that is pertinent to the case, and the amount of information should be limited to the minimum required.

...shared should be restricted to...



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## COPE CORE PRACTICE

# Authorship and contributorship

<https://COPE.org/authors>





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## COPE RESOURCES

Examples of resources for authorship and contributorship

### Flowcharts

- How to recognise potential authorship problems

### Guidelines

- How to handle authorship disputes: a guide for new researchers

### Case discussion

- Inconclusive institutional investigation into authorship dispute

### Seminar

- WCRI 2019: Responsible authorship

### Forum







# COPE RESOURCES

## Translated resources

- COPE is working towards translating more resources to allow communication with a wider audience.
- Currently, at least some resources in : Arabic, Chinese, French, Italian, Japanese, Persian, Polish, Spanish, Turkish



同行评审研讨会

案例 1: 编辑和审稿人要求作者引用其著作

编辑部注意到一封决定信中，责任编辑要求作者引用一篇责任编辑发表的文章，进一步的调查暴露出一种令人担忧的行为模式：责任编辑的决定函（包括审稿人意见）要求作者添加对其著作的引用50余次，是他们要求作者添加对其并未合著著作的引用的三倍以上。

责任编辑对邀请的四名审稿人评审他们负责处理的论文，添加引用的要求有时来自这些审稿人，有时来自责任编辑。责任编辑要求引用自己的论文达20次以上，并且从来要求引用自己论文以外的文章。这些位审稿人要求责任编辑著作的频率远高于他们要求对自己并未合著论文的引用；此外，他们还要求引用自己作为共同作者的论文。

至少有一次，作者没有按要求添加对责任编辑文章的引用，责任编辑因此将论文再次退回给作者，要求添加该引用。这引发了一种担忧，责任编辑在要求作者添加这些引用，以便他们能够接受论文。

在审阅了涉及论文之后，主编并没有看出这些额外引用在科学上的必要性。主编继而咨询了期刊的编辑委员会，他们也认为这些引用没有科学上的必要性。主编和编辑委员会要求责任编辑解释其要求这些额外引用的原因。

责任编辑回应道，他们要求引用自身著作的频率高于他人著作的原因在于他们最熟悉自己的著作。责任编辑说他们从受到编辑委员会询问的侵犯，并立即辞职。

期刊工作人员审视了期刊的编辑道德政策，确保所有编辑均了解COPE和期刊的道德标准。期刊的道德准则也包含在提供给所有责任编辑的手册中，并且编辑将被要求签署一份协议，声明他们每年都已阅读并同意该道德准则。

问题

1. 期刊应该另外采取哪些行动？
2. 期刊是否应该联系审稿人，或者是否联系责任编辑已经足够？
3. 其他期刊是否具有保护措施，能够帮助更轻松地识别诸如此类模式？

同行评审研讨会 publicationethics.org

# PROMOTING INTEGRITY IN SCHOLARLY RESEARCH AND ITS PUBLICATION

TALLER DE REVISIÓN POR PARES

CASO 1: EL EDITOR Y LOS REVISORES SOLICITAN QUE SE CITE SU TRABAJO

La oficina editorial tuvo conocimiento de una carta de decisión en la que un editor solicitaba a un autor que citase un artículo publicado por el propio editor. Una investigación en mayor profundidad destapó un patrón de comportamiento preocupante: el editor solicitaba en las cartas (incluidos también los comentarios de los revisores) que se añadiesen citaciones de sus trabajos en más de 50 casos, cifra que triplicaba el número de veces que el editor solicitaba añadir citaciones de trabajos en los que no aparecía como coautor.

El editor invitaba frecuentemente a los mismos cuatro revisores a revisar los artículos que gestionaba. A veces, las solicitudes para añadir citaciones venían de estos revisores y, otras veces, solo del editor. Este editor solicitaba que sus propios artículos se citasen en más de 20 casos y nunca solicitaba citaciones de otros artículos que no fuesen suyos. Los cuatro revisores que frecuentemente participaban en el proceso solicitaban citaciones de artículos del editor mucho más frecuentemente que de artículos en los que el editor no había participado. Estos revisores también solicitaban citaciones de artículos en los que ellos mismos habían participado.

En al menos uno de los casos, un autor no citó el artículo del editor, como se le había solicitado, y el editor devolvió una vez más el artículo al autor solicitando de nuevo que se añadiese la citación. Esta conducta levantó sospechas sobre la solicitud de las citaciones como requisito para aceptar los artículos.

Tras la revisión de los artículos, el editor jefe no encontró motivos científicos que justificasen las citaciones adicionales propuestas. El editor jefe consultó entonces al consejo editorial, quienes estuvieron de acuerdo en que no existía una razón científica que justificase la solicitud de las citaciones. El editor jefe y el consejo editorial pidieron al editor que explicase por qué solicitaba suodichas citaciones.

El editor respondió que solicitaba la citación de su propio trabajo más frecuentemente que el trabajo de otros investigadores porque conocía más a fondo su propio trabajo. Además que la consulta del consejo editorial le pareció ofensiva y presentó su dimisión inmediatamente.

El personal de la revista ha revisado las prácticas éticas editoriales para asegurar que todos los editores conozcan COPE y los estándares éticos de la revista. Las prácticas editoriales éticas de la revista también se incluyen en las guías distribuidas a todos los editores y se les solicitó que firmen un acuerdo en el que afirman haber leído y estar de acuerdo con el código ético cada año.

Preguntas:

1. ¿La revista tendría que haber hecho algo de forma diferente? ¿El qué?
2. ¿Tendría la revista que haberselo puesto en contacto con los revisores, o fue suficiente contactar solo con el editor?
3. ¿Tienen otras revistas medidas de protección que puedan ayudar a identificar patrones como este más fácilmente?

Taller de revisión por pares publicationethics.org





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# INTERACTIVE CASES



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# INTERACTIVE CASE 1

## INTERACTIVE CASE 1

Based on [Case 06-15](#)

**You, as editor, discover that a submitted manuscript on health care doesn't seem to have formal ethics approval. When you ask the authors to explain, they reply:**

- The paper presents anonymised aggregated data on maternal mortality and quality of care in facilities in different regions of the country
- They received permission from local authorities (including local elders, community leaders, and health care providers) to scrutinise records of facilities
- This counts as an audit, so they didn't seek permission from the university ethics committee



## INTERACTIVE CASE 1

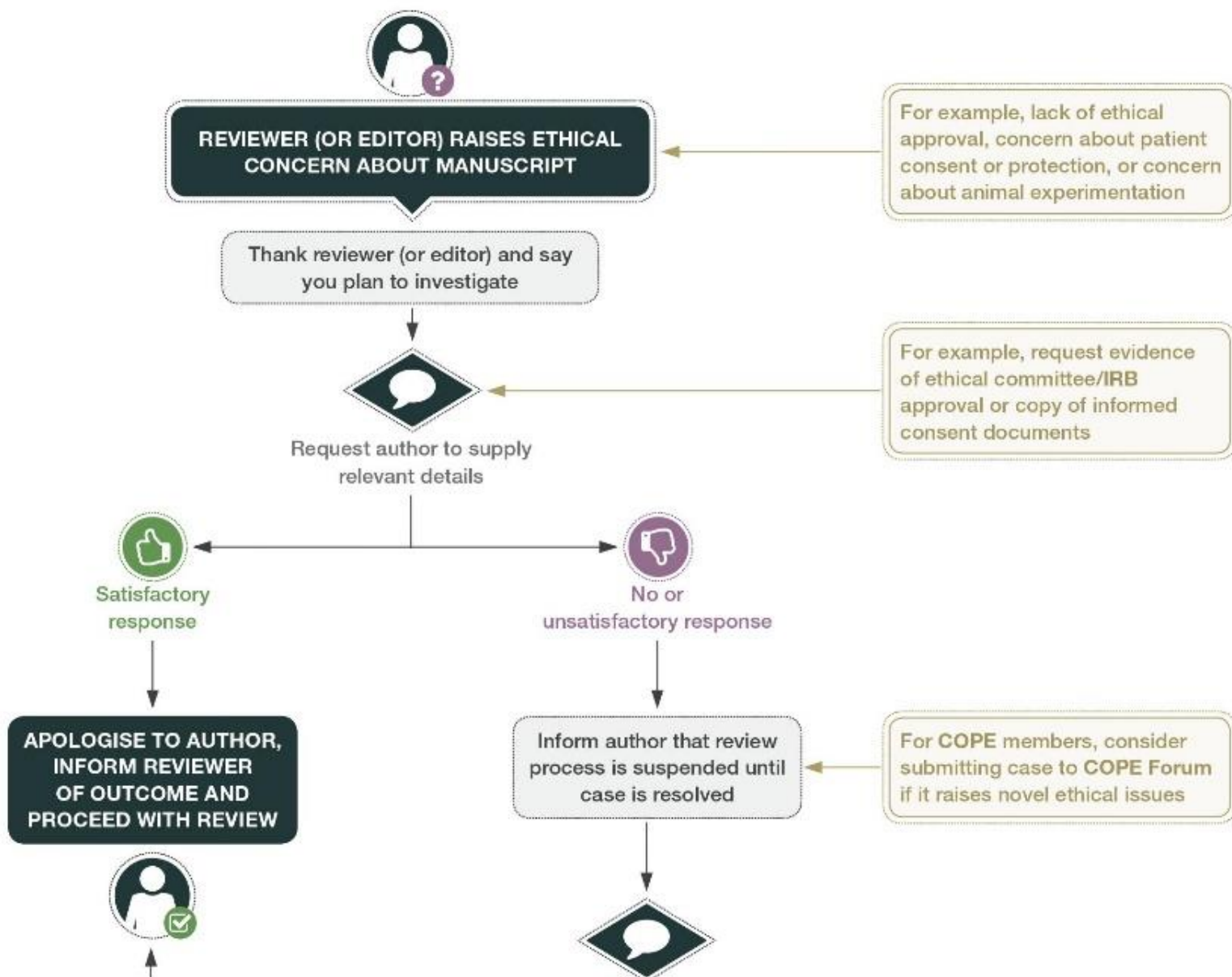
Based on [Case 06-15](#)

### What do you do?

- A. Reject the article
- B. Inform their institution
- C. Review the article as is
- D. Other (please type in the Chat box)



**SUSPECTED ETHICAL PROBLEM  
IN A SUBMITTED MANUSCRIPT**



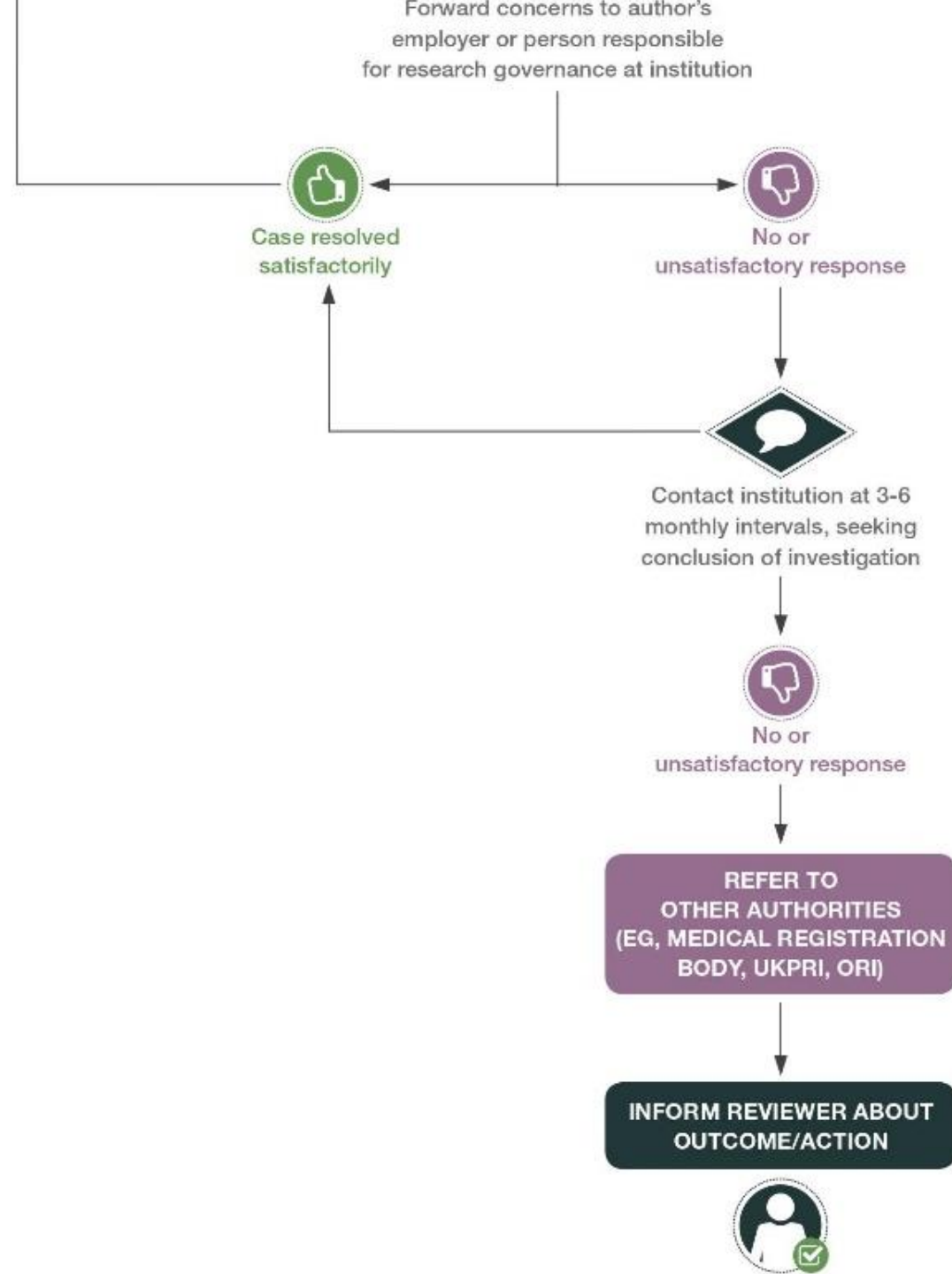
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COPE Council.  
COPE Flowcharts  
and infographics —  
Suspected ethical  
problem in a submitted  
manuscript — English.  
[https://doi.org/  
10.24318/cope.  
2019.2.19](https://doi.org/10.24318/cope.2019.2.19)

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[publicationethics.org](http://publicationethics.org)

Version 2: May 2021.



ETHICAL



[https://publicationethics.org/files/Guidance for Editors Research Audit and Service Evaluations v2 0.pdf](https://publicationethics.org/files/Guidance%20for%20Editors%20Research%20Audit%20and%20Service%20Evaluations%20v2%200.pdf)



## Guidance for Editors: Research, Audit and Service Evaluations

Regulations regarding what type of study requires ethical approval vary worldwide. In some countries all studies require ethical approval but in others not. This may lead to submission to journals of manuscripts relating to such studies that do not satisfy the journal's normal requirement for independent ethical approval, and rejection of the manuscript because of misunderstanding of local regulations.

In the UK, for example, the Health Research Authority (HRA), which coordinates and regulates ethical approval of research involving human subjects, specifically excludes projects from requiring ethical approval if they fall into the categories of clinical audit, service evaluation, research and usual practice/surveillance work in public health, even though: (i) they may have considerable ethical implications (e.g. the danger of coercion and threats to autonomy and confidentiality); (ii) their methods may overlap with studies defined as 'research'; and (iii) it may be difficult to decide how to define certain studies, even using the criteria suggested by HRA.

Other countries may have similar restrictions that make it difficult or unnecessary to obtain approval for certain types of study. This guidance has therefore been produced by COPE as an aid to journal editorial teams who are required to review such manuscripts.

COPE recommends that editors reviewing such a manuscript should consider the following, in addition to the usual criteria that are applied during editorial review:

1. Is the study scientifically valid and clearly presented; for example is the sample size adequate, are the results adequately and clearly presented and explained, and have the investigators excluded or considered the possible confounding factors and/or biases? Second, does the study contribute sufficiently to knowledge to make acceptance and publication a possibility?
2. Have the ethical harms been minimised; for example has due care been taken to avoid coercion or exploitation, to protect confidentiality, to minimise the risk of physical and psychological harm and to respect autonomy where possible? (For example, information sheets and consent forms can still be used for certain audits and service evaluations as a demonstration that appropriate ethical standards are being met, even if a research ethics committee has not asked for it). It may be necessary to seek further information from the investigators to establish how they have addressed these issues.
3. Do the benefits outweigh the harms in this particular study's case?
4. If there is doubt about local law or regulations, editors should clarify this with the authors and ask them to provide a letter from the individual research ethics committee or the research ethics authority in that country about the research.

COPE acknowledges that aspects of this process may already be followed by editorial teams as part of their review of papers, and are also similar to those undertaken by research ethics committees themselves when considering applications. It is suggested, however, that following the above scheme may provide a practical framework. Further, it is advised that such deliberations be documented as part of the journal's standard record-keeping. Finally, it is hoped that this guidance will be useful for authors as well as editor.

Reference  
Written and approved by  
COPE Council June 2008.

Version 1  
First published online,  
October 2008

Version 2  
Revised and published  
17 January 2014





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# INTERACTIVE CASE 2

## INTERACTIVE CASE 2

Based on [Case 05-08](#)

**You, as editor, find that a review published in your journal:**

- Is mainly a translated version of an article published by others in another journal
- Did not declare it was a translation of a published article
- Has some of your editorial board members as authors



## INTERACTIVE CASE 2

Based on [Case 05-08](#)

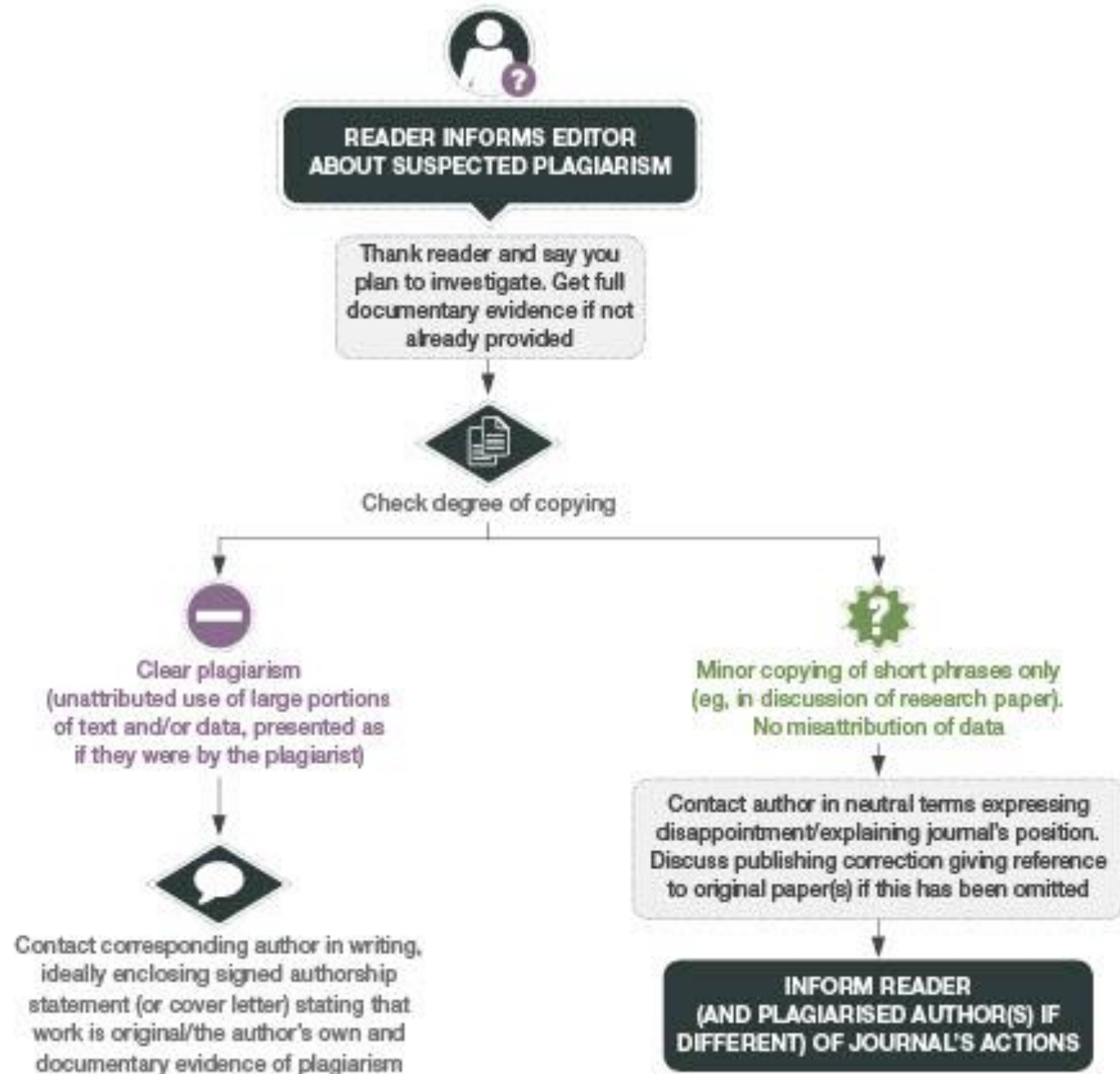
### What do you do?

- A. Retract the article
- B. Dismiss the editorial board members
- C. Write to the authors and institutions
- D. Other (please type in the Chat box)



# PLAGIARISM IN A PUBLISHED ARTICLE

**Note**  
The instructions to authors should include a definition of plagiarism and state the journal's policy on plagiarism.

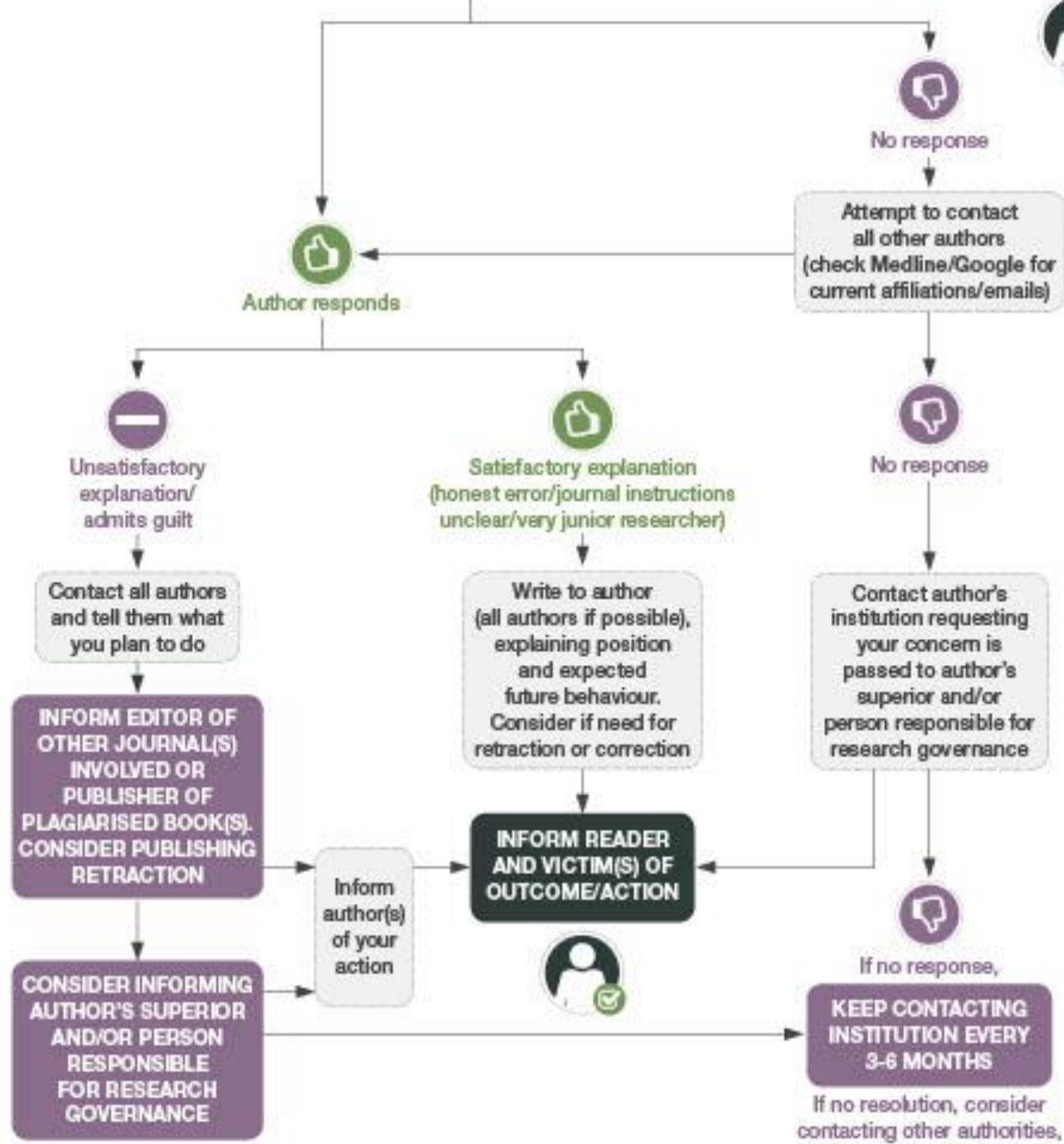


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 COPE Council.  
 COPE Flowcharts  
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 Plagiarism in a  
 published article  
 – English.  
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Version 1: 2006.



INTELLECTUAL  
 PROPERTY





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# INTERACTIVE CASE 3

## INTERACTIVE CASE 3, PART 1

Based on [Case 12-16](#)

**One of your handling editors sends a submitted manuscript to 5 peer reviewers:**

- 3 agree to review
- All reviews are very positive and recommend the revised manuscript to be accepted

**You, as editor, think the reviews are suspicious and investigate:**

- You can't find any past publications for the 3 reviewers
- Their email addresses are from web-based email providers, not institution-based
- You discover all 3 reviewers do not exist

## INTERACTIVE CASE 3, PART 1

Based on [Case 12-16](#)

### What do you do?

- A. Reject the manuscript
- B. Ask the handling editor to explain
- C. Ask the authors to explain
- D. Other (please type in the Chat box)

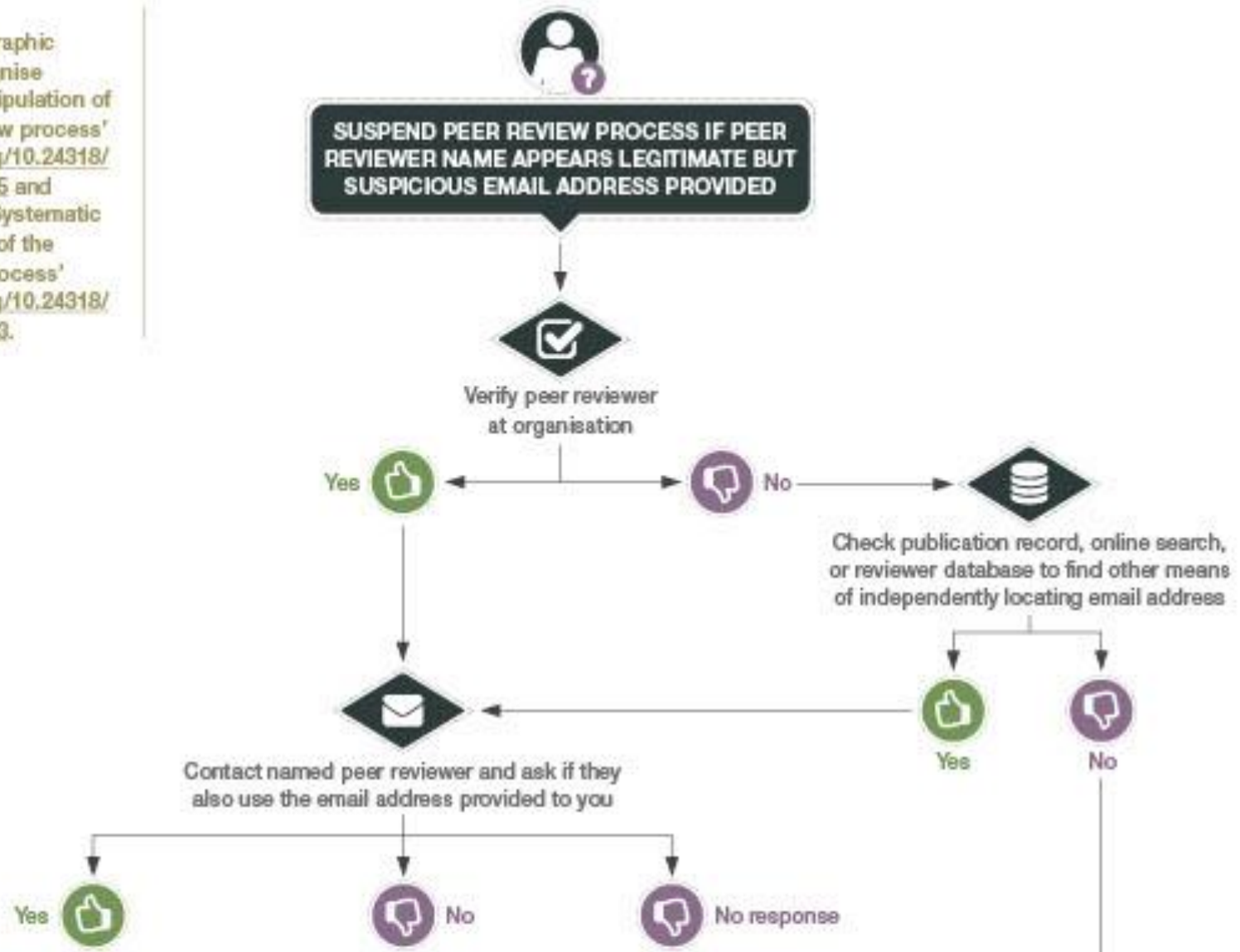




C O P E

PEER REVIEW MANIPULATION  
SUSPECTED DURING THE PEER REVIEW PROCESS

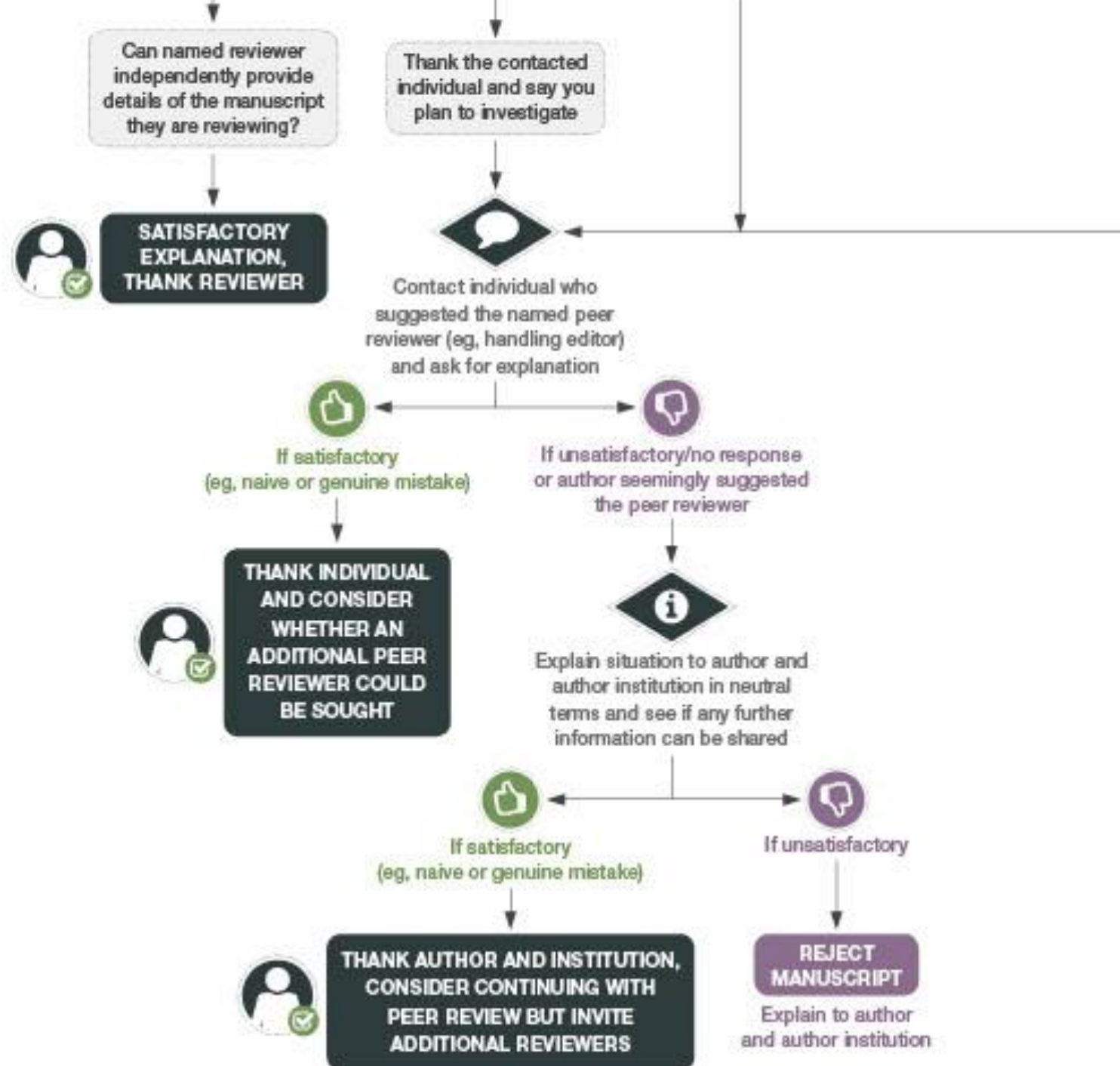
Note  
See also infographic  
'How to recognise  
potential manipulation of  
the peer review process'  
[https://doi.org/10.24318/  
cope.2019.2.15](https://doi.org/10.24318/cope.2019.2.15) and  
guidance on 'Systematic  
manipulation of the  
publication process'  
[https://doi.org/10.24318/  
cope.2019.2.23](https://doi.org/10.24318/cope.2019.2.23).



Cite this as:  
COPE Council.  
COPE Flowcharts  
and infographics –  
Peer review  
manipulation  
suspected during  
the peer review  
process – English.  
[https://doi.org/  
10.24319/cope.  
2019.2.20](https://doi.org/10.24319/cope.2019.2.20)

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[publicationethics.org](http://publicationethics.org)

Version 1:  
November 2018.



## INTERACTIVE CASE 3, PART 2

Based on [Case 12-16](#)

### You ask the handling editor to explain:

- 2/5 reviewers were nominated by the handling editor but did not reply
- The 3 reviewers who reviewed the paper were suggested by the authors at submission stage

### You ask all authors to explain, but none reply:

- You also can't find the institutional research ethics committee
- You discover the vice principal is the paper's senior author

## INTERACTIVE CASE 3, PART 2

Based on [Case 12-16](#)

### What do you do?

- A. Dismiss the handling editor
- B. Keep trying to contact the authors/institution
- C. Search for submitted/published papers with same authors/reviewers
- D. Other (please type in the Chat box)



# HOW TO RECOGNISE POTENTIAL MANIPULATION OF THE PEER REVIEW PROCESS

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 <sup>(Ref 1)</sup>, the peer review process can be susceptible to manipulation <sup>(Ref 2-4)</sup> as discussed at COPE's 2016 North American Seminar. <sup>(Ref 5)</sup>

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**  
<http://bit.ly/2eTOMVm>

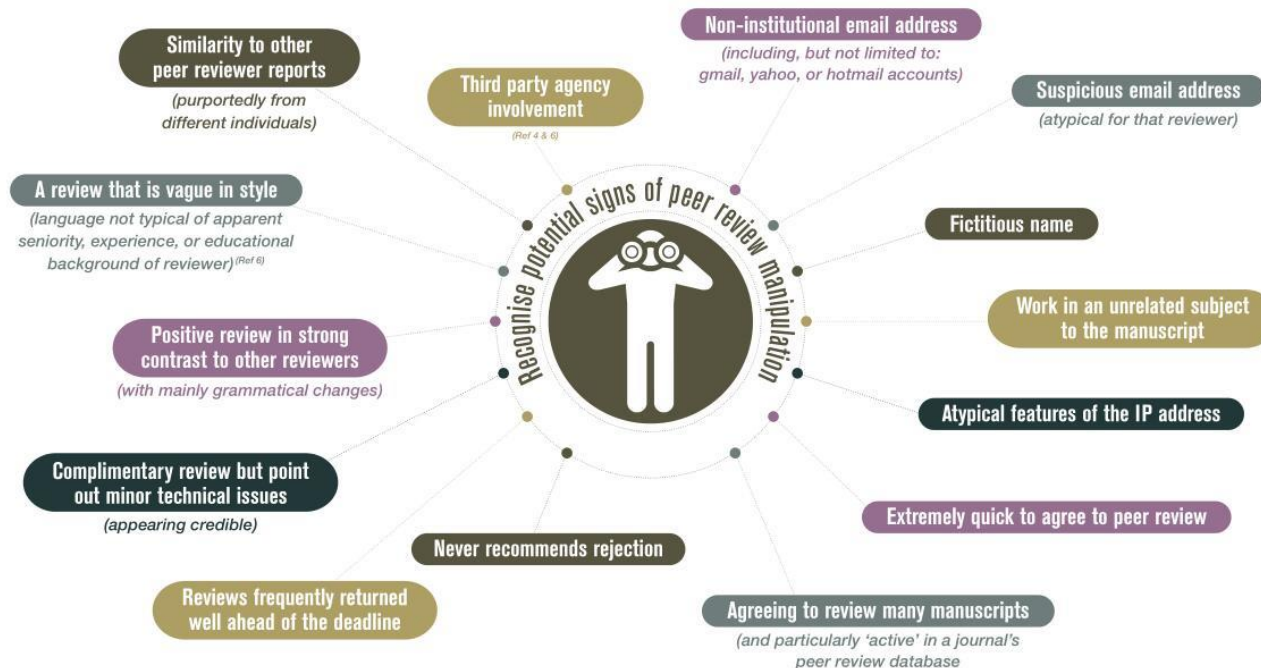
**Case 12-12: Compromised Peer Review in Published Papers**  
<http://bit.ly/2wVLkKU>

**Case 12-16: Compromised Peer Review (Unpublished)**  
<http://bit.ly/2y2O4nv>

## References:

1. COPE Ethical Guidelines to Peer Review.  
<http://bit.ly/2xZcZrk>
2. COPE Statement on Inappropriate Manipulation of Peer Review Processes.  
<http://bit.ly/2f2NRMw>
3. Who Reviews the Reviewers? Jigisha Patel  
<http://bit.ly/1AgfKDC>
4. Inappropriate Manipulation of Peer Review. Elizabeth Moylan  
<http://bit.ly/2w64bTN>
5. Can You Spot a Fake? The Trend of Fake Peer Reviews. Alison McCook  
Who Reviews the Reviewers?  
Kristen Overstreet  
Peer Review Manipulation. New Challenges and New Solutions. Jigisha Patel  
<http://bit.ly/2vSjZoY>
6. Organised Crime Against the Academic Peer Review System. Adam Cohen et al  
<http://bit.ly/1UmlH7Y>

## Recognised Features or Patterns of Reviewer Activity



## Best Practice to Minimise Peer Review Manipulation



Require that authors submit manuscripts to the journal themselves.



Try to use institutional emails or institutionally verified ORCIDiDs when inviting peer reviewers.



Always check that suggested peer reviewers are qualified to review the manuscript and their email address is accurate.



Check for unusual patterns of behaviour which in combination may suggest peer review manipulation is occurring.



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# INTERACTIVE CASE 4



## INTERACTIVE CASE 4, PART 1

Based on [Case 01-33](#)

**You, as editor, receive an email saying that:**

- A published article in your journal has nearly the same title and content as an article previously published in another journal
- The author lists of the two articles are different



## INTERACTIVE CASE 4, PART 1

Based on [Case 01-33](#)

### What do you do?

- A. Retract the article
- B. Inform the other journal about duplicate publication
- C. Report the authors to their institution for plagiarism
- D. Other (please type in the Chat box)

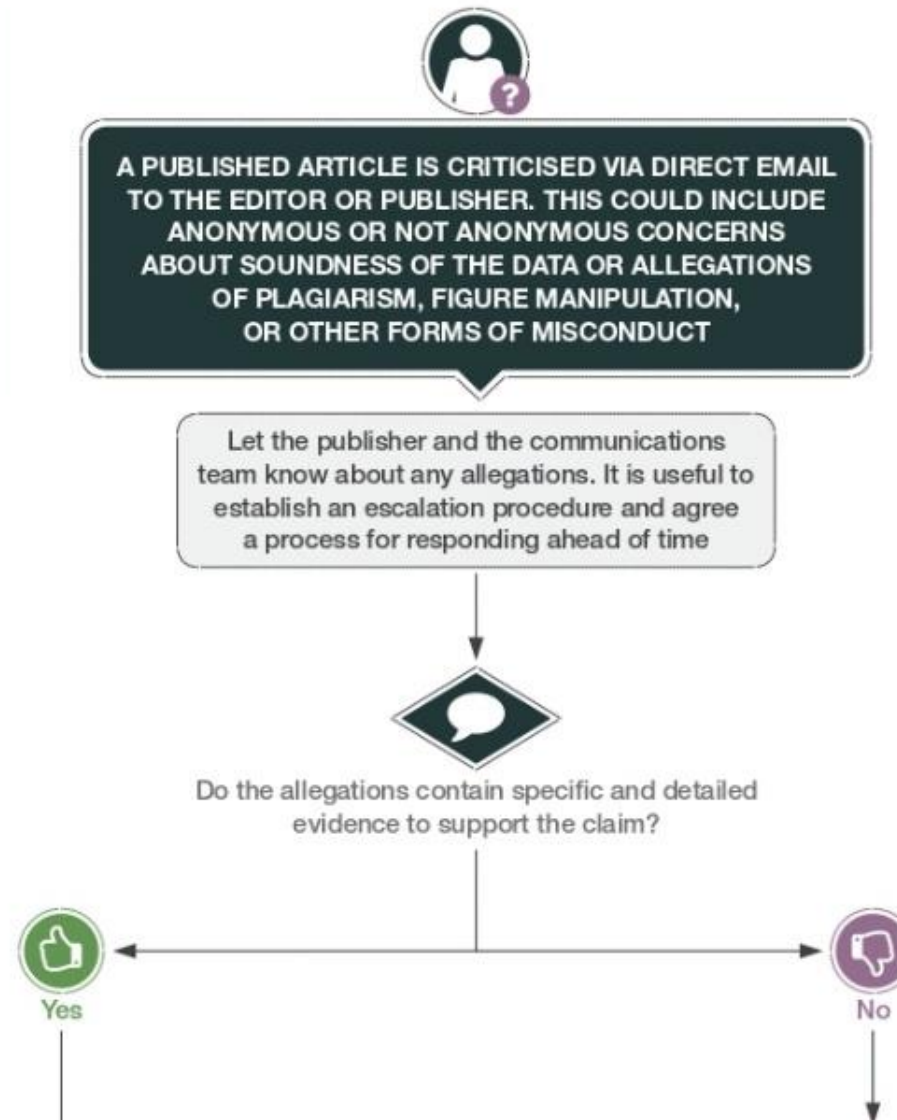


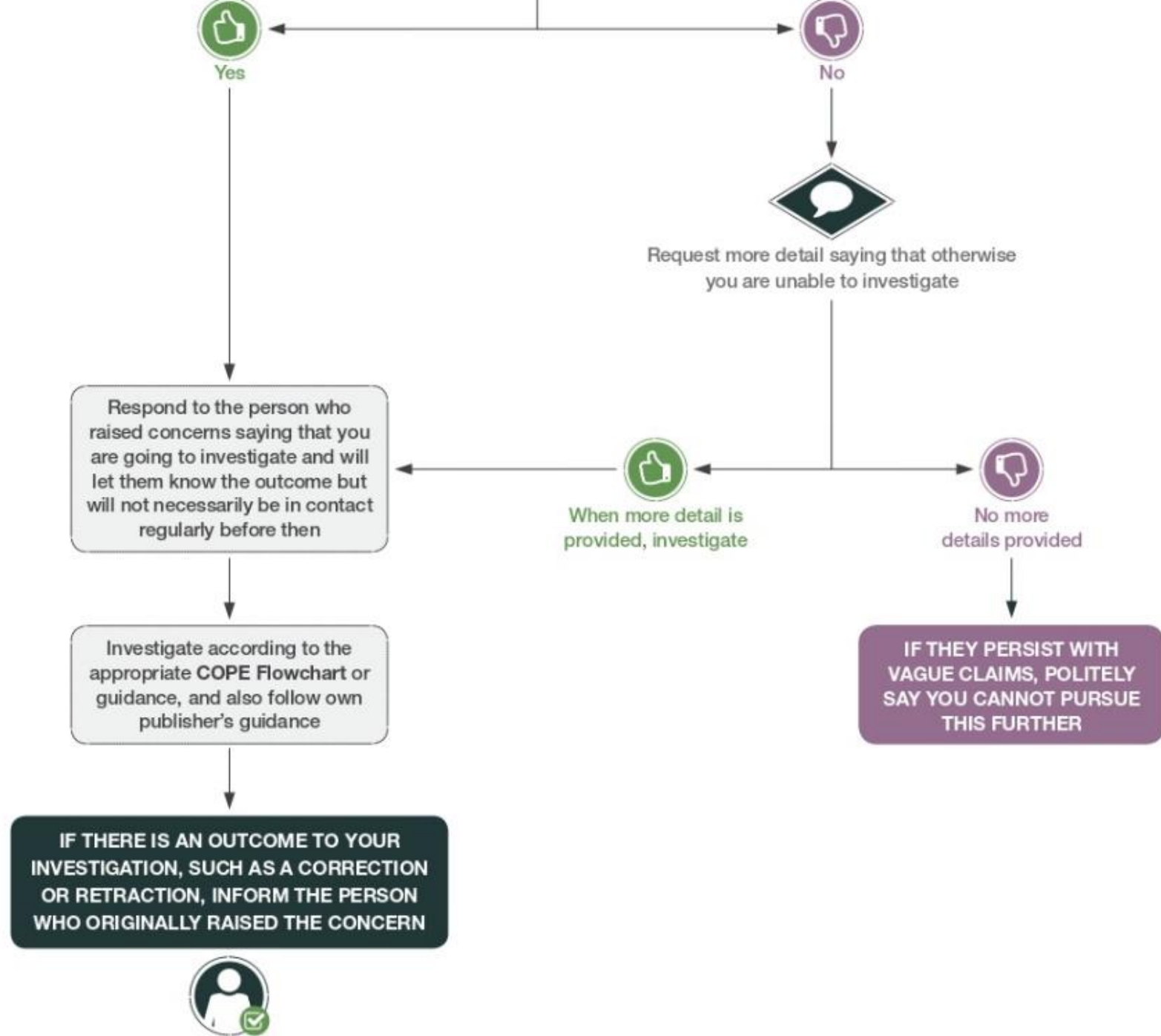


**RESPONDING TO WHISTLEBLOWERS**  
WHEN CONCERNS ARE RAISED DIRECTLY

**Notes**

- The tone of the allegations may be aggressive or personal. Respond politely; don't get drawn into personal exchanges.
- Sometimes the whistleblower may prefer to remain anonymous. It is important not to try to 'out' people who wish to be anonymous.





Cite this as:  
 COPE Council.  
 COPE Flowcharts  
 and infographics –  
 Responding to  
 whistleblowers when  
 concerns are raised  
 directly – English.  
[https://doi.org/  
 10.24318/cope.  
 2019.2.25](https://doi.org/10.24318/cope.2019.2.25)

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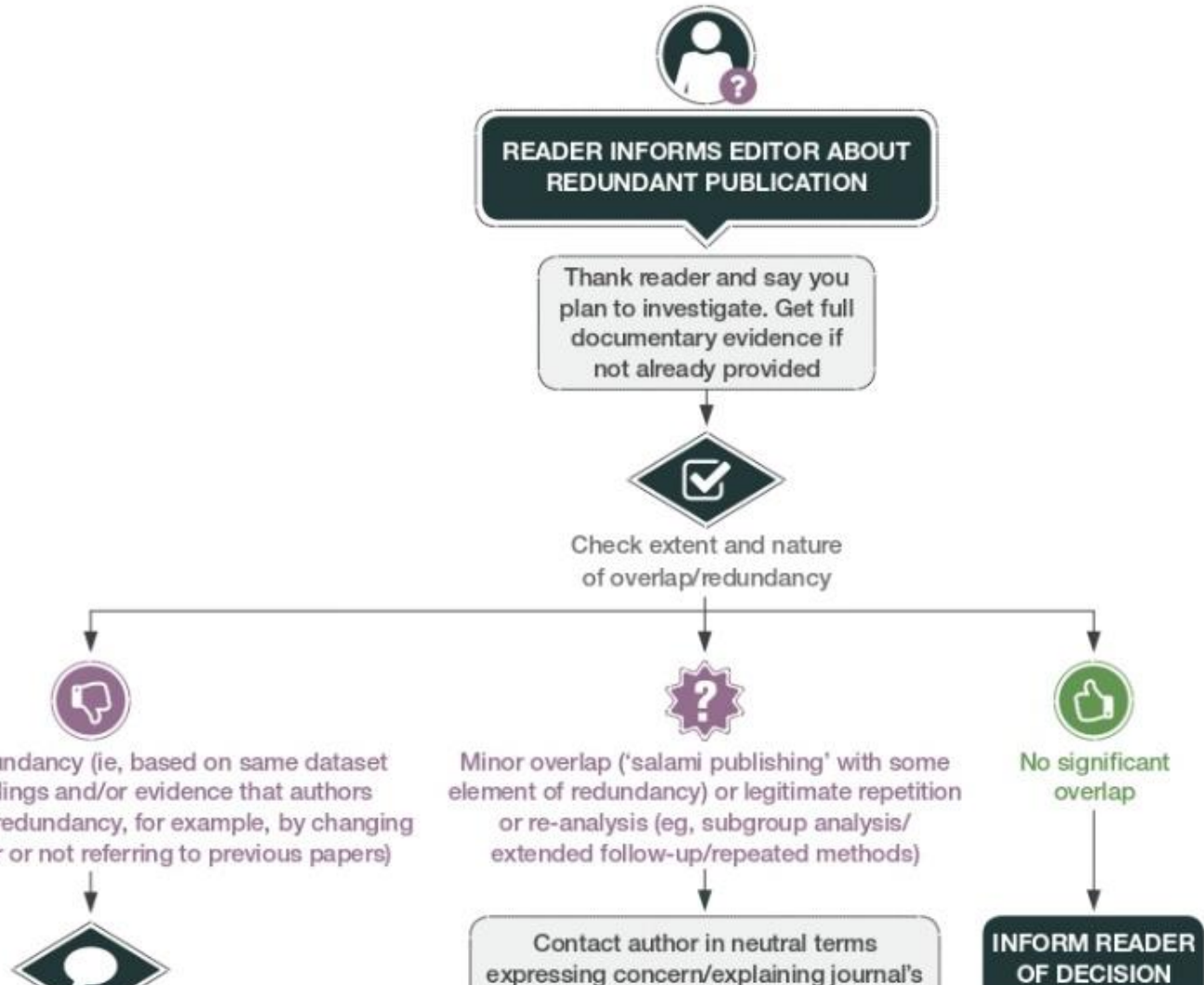
Version 1:

# C O P E

## REDUNDANT (DUPLICATE) PUBLICATION IN A PUBLISHED ARTICLE

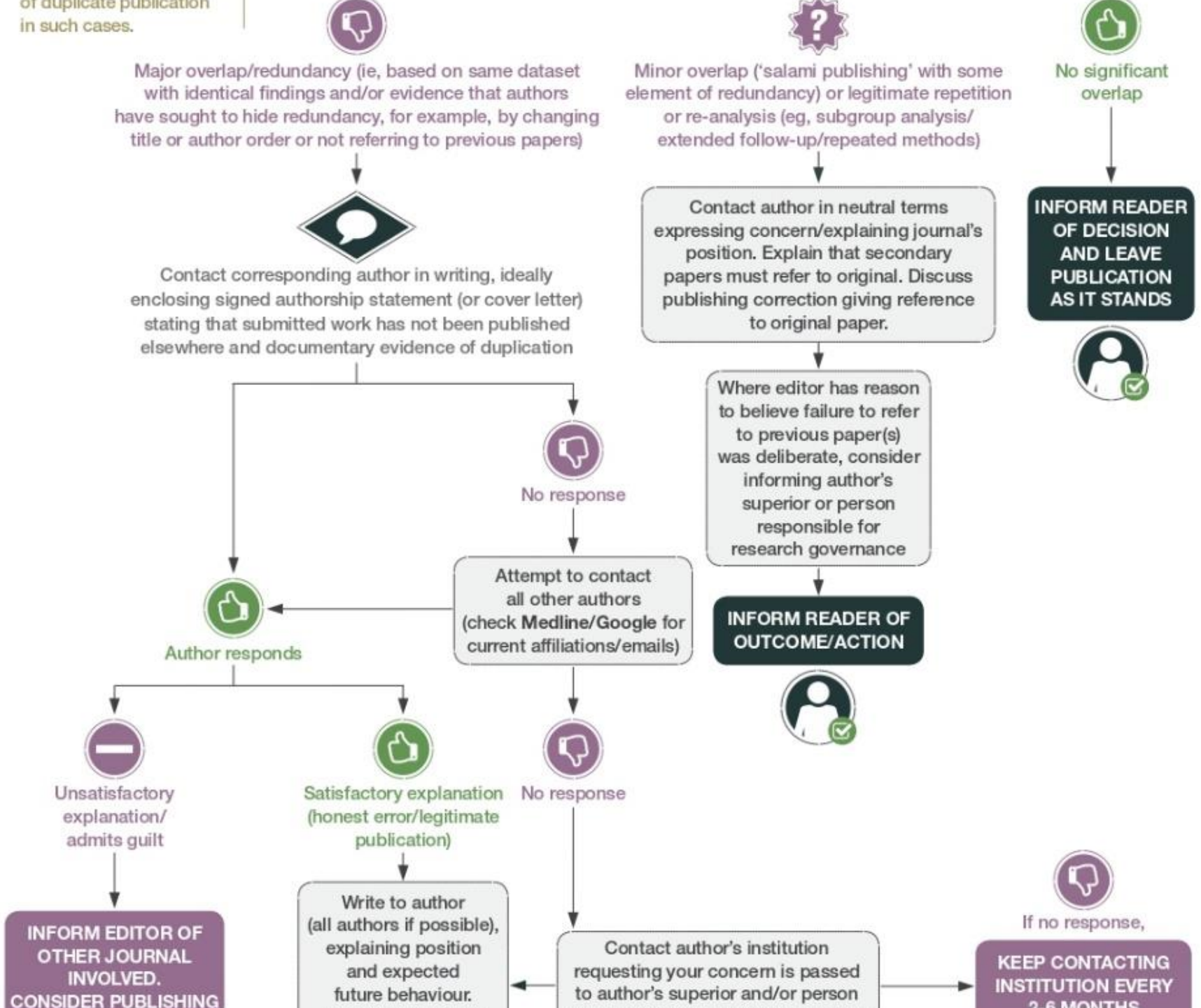
### Notes

- The instructions to authors should state the journal's policy on redundant publication.
- To help in future investigations, ask authors at submission stage to verify that their manuscript is original and has not been published elsewhere.
- ICMJE advises that translations are acceptable but **MUST** reference the original. Editors may consider publishing a correction (ie, the link to the original article) rather than a retraction/notice of duplicate publication in such cases.



# REDUNDANT

or duplicate publication in such cases.



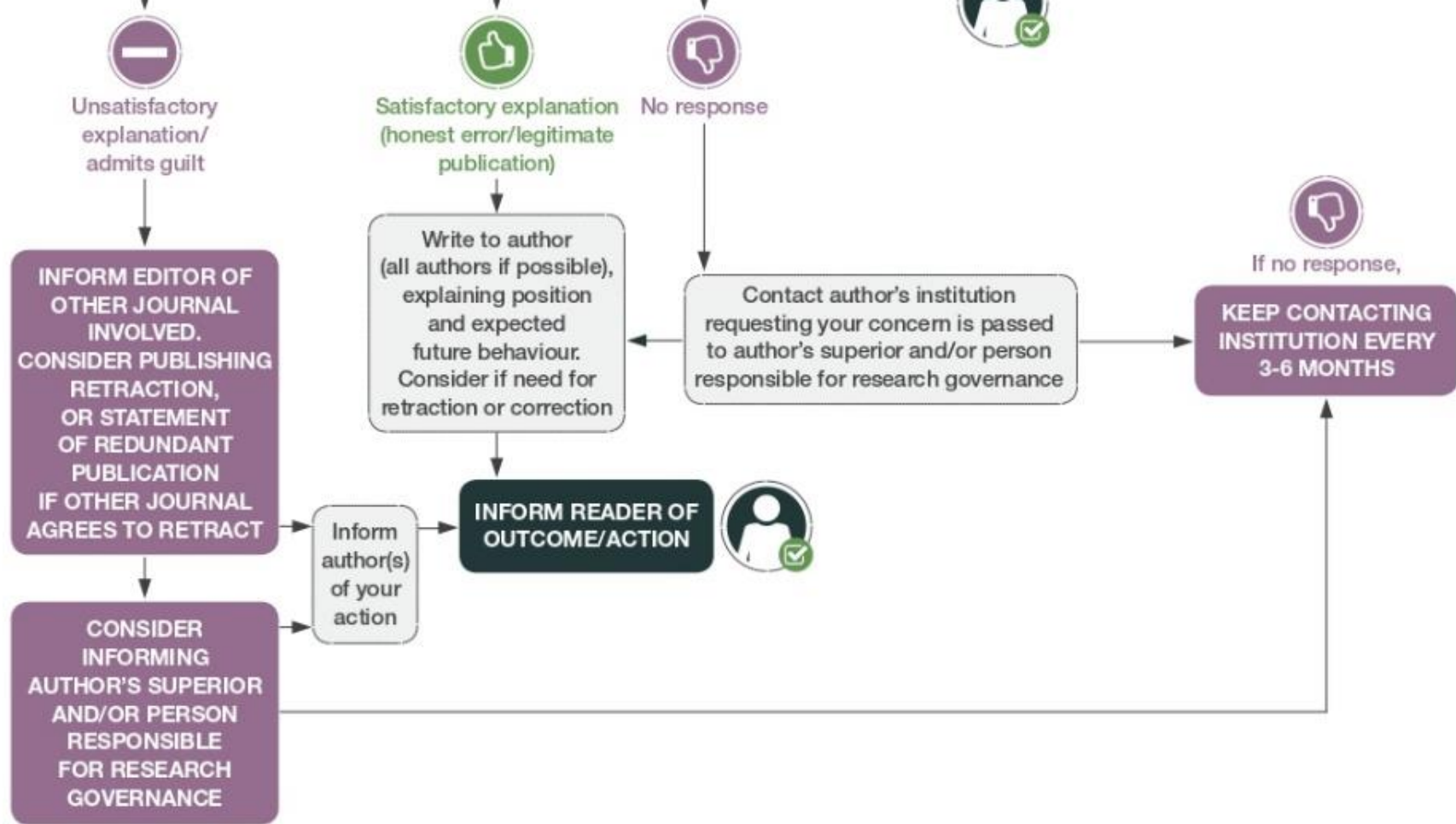
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POST-PUBLICATION DISCUSSIONS  
AND CORRECTIONS





## INTERACTIVE CASE 4, PART 2

Based on [Case 01-33](#)

**You then receive a request from the corresponding author to withdraw the article on the grounds that “the same work has been published by my senior colleague in some other journal”**

## INTERACTIVE CASE 4, PART 2

Based on [Case 01-33](#)

### What do you do?

- A. Retract the article
- B. Retract and remove the article
- C. Ask the other journal to publish a statement of redundant publication
- D. Other (please type in the Chat box)





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DISCUSSION DOCUMENT:  
**AUTHORSHIP**





## Cooperation between research institutions and journals on research integrity cases: guidance from the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE)

### *Summary*

Institutions and journals both have important duties relating to research and publication misconduct. Institutions are responsible for the conduct of their researchers and for encouraging a healthy research environment. Journals are responsible for the conduct of their editors, for safeguarding the research record, and for ensuring the reliability of everything they publish. It is therefore important for institutions and journals to communicate and collaborate effectively on cases relating to research integrity. To achieve this, we make the following recommendations.

Institutions should:

- have a research integrity officer (or office) and publish their contact details prominently;



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SHARING OF INFORMATION AMONG  
EDITORS-IN-CHIEF REGARDING  
POSSIBLE MISCONDUCT**

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| GUIDELINES:  
**RETRACTION GUIDELINES**



PROMOTING INTEGRITY IN SCHOLARLY RESEARCH AND ITS PUBLICATION

FOR MORE INFORMATION <https://publicationethics.org/>

COPE logo and URL: [publicationethics.org](https://publicationethics.org)

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A SHORT GUIDE TO  
ETHICAL EDITING FOR NEW EDITORS

GUIDELINES

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## THANK YOU

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