

A STANDARD TERMINOLOGY FOR PEER REVIEW

What is the problem that we are solving?

- **Peer-review is a hallmark of academic publishing** - yet it's not a singular approach and misconceptions or unclarity about what it is (and isn't) can lead to confusion and erosion of trust.
- In recent decades, a **significant number of new peer review models** have been introduced (most notably for open review), but they have not been accompanied by the development of a clear and consistent nomenclature.
- Increased call for more **openness** and **transparency** in scholarly communication, including peer review, in order to maintain trust in the scholarly ecosystem

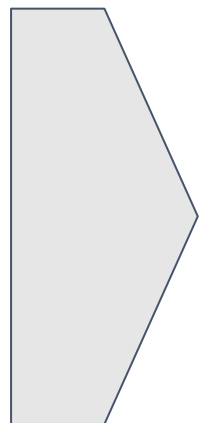
*“Recognising the absence of a consensus view on what open peer review is, this article undertakes a systematic review of definitions of “open peer review” or “open review”, to create a corpus of **122 definitions**. These definitions are systematically analysed to build a coherent typology of the various innovations in peer review signified by the term, and hence provide the precise technical definition currently lacking.”*

Source: Ross-Hellauer T. What is open peer review? A systematic review [version 2; peer review: 4 approved]. F1000Research 2017, 6:588
(<https://doi.org/10.12688/f1000research.11369.2>)

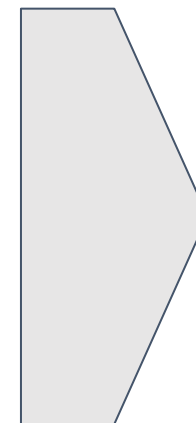
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2019: An STM Working Group was formed to harmonize and create improved definitions of discrete elements of the peer-review process



2021: NISO took up standardization at the same time as a pilot program was underway at several publishers.



2023: Launched as formal ANSI/NISO standard Z39.106-2023

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What is the solution?



A Standard Terminology for Peer Review

1 identity transparency:

This category describes the extent to which identities of participants are made visible to each other during the review process. Identities not made visible during the process may be made visible at publication on the article page (see section 3, review information published).

TYPE	DESCRIPTION
all identities visible	Reviewer identity is visible to author, author identity is visible to reviewer, reviewer and author identity is visible to (decision-making) editor
single anonymized	Reviewer identity is not made visible to author, author identity is visible to reviewer, reviewer and author identity is visible to (decision-making) editor
double anonymized	Reviewer identity is not made visible to author, author identity is not made visible to reviewer, reviewer and author identity is visible to (decision-making) editor
triple anonymized	Reviewer identity is not made visible to author, author identity is not made visible to reviewer, reviewer & author identity is not made visible to (decision-making) editor

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other reviewers	Direct interaction/collaboration (e.g., via submission system or email) between reviewers, or the possibility to receive and/or comment on each other's reports before reviewer makes recommendation to the editor. Identities can be anonymized or visible
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review reports	Full content of the reviewer reports is published
review reports (author opt in)	Full content of the reviewer reports is published if the corresponding author opts for this
review reports (reviewer opt in)	Full content of the reviewer reports is published if the reviewer(s) opt(s) for this
submitted manuscript	The version of the manuscript that the author submitted for peer review is published.
submitted manuscript (author opt in)	The version of the manuscript that the author submitted for peer review is published if the corresponding author opts for this.
author/editor communication	Including editor decision letter and reviewer responses (rebuttals) are published
reviewer identities	Identities of the reviewers are published
reviewer identities (reviewer opt in)	The identities of the reviewers are published if the reviewers opt for this
editor identities	Identities of the handling editors

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More information:
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authors	Direct interaction/collaboration (e.g., via submission system or email) between author and reviewer before reviewer makes recommendation to the editor. Identities can be anonymized or visible

3 review information published:

This relates to information that is published about the review process on the article page. Select and list the items that are applicable.

TYPE	DESCRIPTION
none	No information about the review process or editorial decision process is published
review summaries	Can be summaries or parts of the reviews, or a summary of the review process
review reports	Full content of the reviewer reports is published
review reports (author opt in)	Full content of the reviewer reports is published if the corresponding author opts for this
review reports (reviewer opt in)	Full content of the reviewer reports is published if the reviewer(s) opt(s) for this
submitted manuscript	The version of the manuscript that the author submitted for peer review is published.
submitted manuscript (author opt in)	The version of the manuscript that the author submitted for peer review is published if the corresponding author opts for this.
author/editor communication	Including editor decision letter and reviewer responses (rebuttals)
reviewer identities	Identities of the reviewers are published
reviewer identities (reviewer opt in)	The identities of the reviewers are published if the reviewers opt for this
editor identities	Identities of the handling editors

4 post publication commenting:

Relates to comments on the online published version of the version of record on the publishing platform, and does not include possible integrations with third party platforms (e.g., PubPeer). Article types such as comment / reply / letter are not considered post publication commenting as they are stand-alone publications. Only use this category when applicable.

TYPE	DESCRIPTION
open	Commenting open to anybody. Can be anonymous, require signing in and/or registration (e.g., via ORCID)
on invitation	Only editor- (or publisher-) selected and/or invited individuals can comment on the article post publication

Use of terminology

As an example, the description of a (traditional) review process to authors (e.g. on the Guide for Authors) would be:

identity transparency: single anonymized
reviewer interacts with: editor
review information published: none

Publishers can include links in these descriptions which lead to a page where the terms are explained. In case journals allow authors to choose between review models, all the options should be listed. e.g.

identity transparency: single anonymized, double anonymized

It should be actively communicated when post publication commenting is adopted. For example:

identity transparency: all identities visible
reviewer interacts with: editor, other reviewers
review information published: review reports, reviewer identities
post publication commenting: open



Advancing
trusted research



More information:

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A STANDARD TERMINOLOGY FOR PEER REVIEW

What do I do with this?

- Internalize the terminology and use it whenever discussing peer review models!
- Publishers are encouraged to implement the terminology in all communication about journal peer-review practices, and report progress
- More info: <https://peerreviewterminology.niso.org/>

