Peer review

Meeting of Veterinary Editors, Split, 12 June 2014
• “Peer review ensures that a research paper has been checked by other qualified scientists for mistakes and omissions, as well as to clarify what the findings show.

• Scientific research that has not been subjected to this form of review is of no help to anyone....

• The need to clarify the status of scientific evidence is growing.”

• www.senseaboutscience.org.uk
Peer review in the 21st century

- Scale of scholarly publishing – some 28,100 active peer-reviewed journals publish around 1.7-1.8 million articles/yr
- 4 million reviews of published articles (true number much higher)
- 12,000 journals – 15 million hours /yr spent for reviews of manuscripts that are rejected
  – (modified as cited by I. Hames, 2013)
1. What is best practice in the peer review process?

- “Preferred” vs “non-preferred” reviewers?
- Review forms and checklists?
- Double blind or not?
- Timeliness?
- Sharing reviews between journals?
- Dealing with appeals from authors?
- Reviewing the same study for more than one journal?
2. How can we mentor peer reviewers?

- What do peer reviewers do well?
- What do they do badly?
- How do they gain skills?
- What is the best way to feedback to reviewers?
- Are peer reviewing tutorials effective?
- How can journals support peer review mentoring?
- How do we reward reviewers?
What is your experience/opinion

• male editors = more male reviewers?
• female editors = diverse pool of reviewers?
• geographical diversity of authors/reviewers?
• male reviewers (more extreme recommendations (accept as it is/reject)
• male reviewers reject more than female reviewers
Summing up: current status and future aims

• increasing numbers of articles from developing countries
• acute need for education of authors
• high pressure on editors – rejection of poor manuscripts
• high pressure on peer reviewers
• review as a part of “author education”
• Checking for author misconduct?
• Sharing the author misconduct information between journals?