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Towards greater accountability and trust: the launch of transparent peer review in *Sensors & Diagnostics*

The publishing landscape is rapidly evolving and the need for integrity, rigour and transparency in research becomes more apparent every day. Amidst and against this disruption, the Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC) strives to increase trust in peer review and publishing processes by pursuing open science principles and values. As a testimony of our commitment to supporting unbiased and fair peer review, we are rolling out transparent peer review across our portfolio and the time has come to launch this peer review model in *Sensors & Diagnostics*. Thus, from the 6th of November, we proudly offer our authors the option of transparent peer review, which they can choose upon original submission and upon submitting their revised manuscript.

Transparent peer review means that should the authors choose this option, the full history of peer review will be published alongside their accepted manuscript; this includes the reviewers' comments, authors' responses and the editor's decision. It is worth mentioning that we do not publish confidential comments to editors and do not reveal the reviewers' names, so their identities remain anonymous, and, in this manner, we avoid compromising confidential parts of the process. Adapting this model of transparent peer review allows us to preserve the integrity of the review process and protect our reviewers from potential conflicts and biases.

Launching transparent peer review in our portfolio of journals represents a significant shift toward greater openness in scientific communication, with benefits for authors, readers, and the community alike. Introducing more scrutiny to the peer review process promotes a more constructive relationship among authors, reviewers and editors and minimizes potential bias, particularly against younger, less experienced individuals or even entire groups of authors based on ethnicity or gender.

Authors can highlight the rigorous evaluation their manuscript has been through, strengthening the credibility of their findings. They can also showcase the depth of revisions made to their work that align it more closely with the requirements and needs of today's research procedures and potentially reduce the ambiguity of the presented results.

This transparency invites readers to engage with the nuances of peer review feedback and showcases the collaborative work of the authors, reviewers and editors that shapes the final publication. The peer review history offers a glimpse into the thought process behind a paper's acceptance and allows readers to dive deep into the aspects of the manuscript that have undergone scrutiny and how the work evolved through expert input.

Transparency in peer review can serve also as an educational resource

for early-career researchers and students. Gaining insight into the process that usually happens behind closed doors allows the younger generation of scientists to learn from their more experienced colleagues. Thus, transparency has the potential to increase the standards of future research.

We hope that the introduction of the transparent peer review option will drive a deeper engagement with and understanding of the process that leads to the final publication and as we move forward with this, we encourage authors and reviewers to do so. Together, we can continue to increase the quality, trust, and accountability of academic publishing.

Disclosure

While the words and ideas behind this piece are my own, this Editorial was prepared with the assistance of an AI language model (*OpenAI*. (2024). *ChatGPT*; <https://chatgpt.com>).

In particular, I generated the list of benefits that transparent peer review offers to authors, readers, and editors, and organized the editorial around these insights.

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