

What is Peer Review?

What does the term "Peer Review" mean? Simply put, it means an evaluation of the quality of your work by an academic community of equals. The [Empire State College Library](#) highlights three qualities of peer-reviewed articles:

- The author is regarded as an expert.
- That expertise has been verified through evaluations by other experts before the article is published.
- The author has cited all sources of information in the article.

Most academic journals and book publishers seek peer reviews of all manuscripts submitted for publication; many of the sources in your bibliographies have undergone peer review. Scholars participate in the peer review process in two ways:

- They conduct reviews of other scholarly work, often in what is called a "double-blind process". This means that neither the author nor the reviewer knows the other's identity.
- They receive and respond to reviews.

Understanding what peer review is and how it works actually can make writing research papers and creating new knowledge less intimidating. Peer review, when done well, actually is a form of civic engagement. Scholars of all levels, including undergraduates such as yourself, are working together to create new knowledge for purposes of social good. To get a vivid sense of how peer review works, check out this video from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, entitled [No One Writes Alone](#). In it, students and professors demystify the peer-review process.

Peer review is a valuable exercise in college study, even for students who do not plan to pursue careers as professors or other academic researchers. It provides students opportunities to:

- Offer supportive and constructive assessments of the work of other students (peers) in a manner that helps them as well the reviewers themselves gain insights on strengthening their work;
- Receive supportive and constructive feedback on one's own work.

Before you begin your peer review activities in this module, you might also check out these resources:

- [Giving Feedback for Peer Review](#)
- [Peer Review: Looking at Texts from a Reader's Perspective](#)
- Shackelford, Lynne. [Guidelines for Peer Review](#)



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