What to do if you suspect plagiarism

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Author responds

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If no response, keep contacting institution every 3–6 months
If no resolution, consider contacting other authorities, e.g. ORI in US, GMC in UK

Unsatisfactory explanation/admits guilt

Satisfactory explanation (honest error/journal instructions unclear/very junior researcher)

Attempt to contact all other authors (check Medline/Google for emails)

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What to do if you suspect plagiarism

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Reader informs editor about suspected plagiarism

Thank reader and say you plan to investigate
Get full documentary evidence if not already provided

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Clear plagiarism (unattributed use of large portions of text and/or data, presented as if they were by the plagiarist)

Contact corresponding author in writing, ideally enclosing signed authorship statement (or cover letter) stating that work is original/the author’s own and documentary evidence of plagiarism

Author responds

No response

Unsatisfactory explanation/admits guilt

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If no response, keep contacting institution every 3–6 months

If no resolution, consider contacting other authorities, e.g. ORI in US, GMC in UK

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Discuss publishing correction giving reference to original paper(s) if this has been omitted

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