

Reviewer response worksheet

Turn one reviewer concern into a traceable decision, revision, and response. Repeat for each comment.

Use and limits. A coordination worksheet, not a promise of acceptance. Follow the editor's instructions. Do not place confidential reviewer text in shared examples or public documents.

WORKED EXAMPLE · FICTIONAL

Fictional reviewer concern: a figure legend does not explain its error bars. All wording and manuscript locations below are illustrative.

1. Comment and identifier

R2.3: The error bars in Figure 2 are not defined. Sub-question: does n refer to samples, experiments, or measurements?

3. Work, owner, and status

Completed: analysis lead checked the plotting code and experiment log; corresponding author revised the legend. The figure itself was unchanged.

5. Response to the reviewer

We agree the legend was incomplete. We added: "Points represent 24 independent cultures; bars show the mean and error bars show one standard deviation" (revised lines 218 to 221).

2. Decision and rationale

Clarify. The plotting code uses standard deviation, and the experiment log identifies 24 independent cultures. The original legend did not define either.

4. Exact change and location

Figure 2 legend, revised lines 218 to 221: "Points represent 24 independent cultures; bars show the mean and error bars show one standard deviation."

6. Consistency check and sign-off

Completed in this fictional revision: Figure 2, its legend, Methods, and response letter use the same definitions. The second author checked the resubmission files.

SOURCE GUIDANCE · CHECKED 2026-09-11

[Noble \(2017\): Ten simple rules for writing a response to reviewers](#). Point-by-point responses, explicit changes, and making the revised text easy to locate.

<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pcbi.1005730>

Original teaching aid by Manusights, not an endorsement by the organizations cited. [CC BY 4.0](#): credit Manusights, link to the source and license, and identify adaptations. Third-party sources retain their own terms.

[Online worksheet and current version](#) · [Corrections](#)

<https://manusights.com/resources/responding-to-reviewers#worksheet>

Reviewer response worksheet

Project / date: _____

Keep completed copies private when they contain unpublished work. Use the online version for longer notes.

1. Comment and identifier

Record reviewer number, comment number, and the full concern in your private working file. Split multi-part requests.

2. Decision and rationale

Choose change, clarify, or respectfully disagree. Explain how the decision addresses the scientific concern.

3. Work, owner, and status

Name the necessary analysis or text change, responsible role, and verification step. Distinguish planned from completed work.

4. Exact change and location

Record revised section, figure/table, and line numbers from the version being resubmitted. Include the changed wording.

5. Response to the reviewer

Answer directly, describe completed changes, and point to the location. If declining, give evidence and explain limitations.

6. Consistency check and sign-off

Check response, manuscript, supplement, and tracked changes agree. Assign the final reviewer of the response package.

BEFORE YOU USE THE RESULT

- Every part of the comment has an answer, including requests declined.
- The response describes completed work and points to the submitted revision.
- Disagreement addresses the scientific issue, not the reviewer's motives.

[Open the interactive worksheet.](#) This is a planning aid; follow applicable institutional and publisher instructions.