

RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

PRINCIPLES OF GOOD RESEARCH PRACTICE FOR PUBLICATION & AUTHORSHIP

1. OVERVIEW

- 1.1 The recent UK Research Integrity Office 'Code of Practice for Research: Promoting Good Practice and Preventing Misconduct Public Consultation Document' (2009) has highlighted the need for researchers and universities to address issues relating to publication and authorship.
- 1.2 Whilst, there is no universally agreed definition of what constitutes authorship, many academic journals widely accept the guidance of the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE), which states that authorship credit should be based only on: (1) substantial contributions to conception and design, or acquisition of data, or analysis and interpretation of data; (2) drafting the article or revising it critically for important intellectual content; and (3) final approval of the version to be published. Conditions (1), (2), and (3) must all be met. Acquisition of funding, the collection of data, or general supervision of the research group, by themselves, do not justify authorship" (ICMJE, 2008).
- 1.3 Sheffield Hallam University recognises the importance of authorship and publication as integral to the publication and dissemination of research findings, and the reputation and strength of the university. This document therefore provides a code of conduct for individuals who publish and disseminate research, which is in line with UKRIO guidance (2009), RCUK Policy and Code of Conduct on the Governance of Good Research Conduct (2009) and the University's existing [Research Ethics Policies and Procedures](#).

2. THE ROLE OF SHEFFIELD HALLAM UNIVERSITY

- 2.1 The university will:
- Encourage researchers to publish and disseminate research in a way that accurately reports all research and the findings of the research, without selection that could be misleading;
 - Ensure that funders and sponsors of research: recognise the charitable purpose of the University and allow researchers to publish their research and the findings of their research in line with normal academic practice; do not discourage or suppress appropriate publication or dissemination of research; or attempt to influence the presentation or interpretation of findings;
 - Provide support and training to guide researchers in the publication and dissemination of research and the findings of research.

3. THE ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY OF THE AUTHOR

3.1 Authorship

Authors should always adhere to University policies and procedures and the specific guidance, criteria and processes of the relevant sponsor or funder. In addition, the following good practice should be applied:

3.1.1 Attributing Authorship

The University's [Research Ethics Policies and Procedures](#) state that authors of scientific publications are always responsible for their content and all authors must be able to identify their specific contributions to a paper. In addition, the following contributions to the work from which the publication arises are not by themselves regarded as sufficient to justify authorship:

- Responsibility for obtaining the funds for the research;

- The contribution of important materials;
- The training of co-authors in certain methods;
- Involvement in the collection and assembly of data;
- Directing an institution or working unit in which a publication arises.

Authorship should be restricted to those contributors and collaborators who have made a significant practical or intellectual contribution to the research and no individual who meets these criteria should be excluded from the submitted work. Good practice guidance suggests that researchers should address issues relating to publication and authorship and the roles of all collaborators and contributors at an early stage of the design of a project and decisions should be agreed jointly and communicated to all members of the research team (UKRIO, 2009).

3.1.2 **Accountability**

With authorship there is accountability and anyone listed as an author should be prepared to take public responsibility for the publication; be able to identify their contribution to it; ensure its content and accuracy; and defend the publication as a whole. Each author should have the opportunity to critically review drafts of the publication and to approve the final version.

3.1.3 **Honorary and guest authorship**

Honorary and guest authorships are not acceptable. This is defined as authorship that is given to those that do not fulfil the criteria of authorship and where authorship is based on an expectation that inclusion of a particular author will increase the status of the work and improve the likelihood that the study will be published. Guest authorship can also refer to professional writers whose role is not acknowledged. Whilst, such writers are unlikely to meet the criteria for authorship, their contribution should still be acknowledged (see 3.1.4 below).

3.1.4 **Acknowledgment**

All contributors who do not meet the authorship criteria should be listed in an acknowledgements section. This includes those who directly or indirectly support the research with for example the collection of data; supervised data analysis; assistance in obtaining funding; and the provision of technical support. Authors should also acknowledge all sources of funding and any products or services provided by third parties (i.e. statistical analysis, materials and equipment, etc).

3.1.5 **Co-authorship and the order of authorship**

Co-authors of a publication should be individuals who have made a significant intellectual contribution to the work and who share responsibility and accountability for the results. There are no rules on the number of authors, but guidance suggests that it is helpful to agree on who meets the criteria of authorship and then to include all those who do (COPE, 1999).

As the order of authorship can vary between journals and publications and across disciplines and include: placing the person who took the lead in writing the manuscript or doing the research first and the most experienced contributor last; the descending order of contribution; and alphabetical or random order; it is not always possible to interpret the contributions of individual authors from the order of authorship. Good practice suggests that this should be determined by the journal or publishers rules and where not stated, should be a joint decision of the co-authors.

Neither the inclusion nor ordering of names should be influenced by the status of the individual author. Authors should specify the contributions of each author and how they have assigned the order in which they are listed. University guidance suggests that where

there are a large number of contributors to a piece of research, it may be advisable for an agreement to clarify authorship and other rights.

3.1.6 Principal Author / Guarantor / Corresponding author

It is good practice for one author to take primary responsibility for the work as a whole as many journals now request "guarantors" who take responsibility for the integrity of the work overall. This principal author should assure that all authors meet basic standards for authorship, agree upon the order of authorship and assure that the contributions of all study participants are properly recognised and have been approved by all authors.

3.1.7 Student-supervisor collaborations

Where articles are substantially based on the student's work, the student should usually be the principal author. The exception to this is where a supervisor has made a major contribution to the research such as provided all of the ideas and the design for the research or provided further extensive analysis that was beyond the scope of the original research. In these instances, prior agreement between the supervisor and the student regarding authorship must be reached before publication.

3.1.8 Anonymous Authorship

In order to ensure transparency and accountability, it is not appropriate to use pseudonyms or to publish work anonymously, except in cases where attributing the author's name to a document could have serious implications (e.g. threat to personal safety).

3.1.9 Deceased or Incapacitated Authors

Where a co-author dies or is incapacitated during the writing or submission process, co-authors should obtain disclosure and copyright documentation from a familial or legal proxy.

3.1.10 Disputes over authorship

Disputes over authorship will be addressed in accordance with procedures for dealing with allegations of research misconduct as set out in the University Research Ethics Policy and Procedures.

3.1.11 Follow-on activity

The same rules of authorship should apply to any follow-on activity. Work should not be accepted or authorship assumed without consulting former co-authors.

3.2 Publication

Authors should publish their results in a manner which conforms with current best practice and in compliance with any relevant funders' and sponsors' terms and conditions. In doing so, authors should:

3.2.1 Avoid under-reporting research

Authors should take all reasonable steps to publish and disseminate research as failure to submit or publish negative studies contributes to publication bias (ICMJE, 2008).

3.2.2 Avoid duplicate and fragmented publications

Authors should not submit or publish work which is identical or which overlaps with work published or submitted elsewhere unless: the previous work was a conference abstract or working paper; the material is to be translated into a different language; the previous work was rejected by another publisher; or the work is part of a series of closely related papers for which there is full cross-referencing. This is considered acceptable if approval is received from the editors of the publication and original sources are acknowledged.

Similarly, work that is intentionally sub-divided into a series of small parts to increase scholarly activity (i.e. fragmented) is not acceptable. Exceptions include: work that covers distinct sub topics; provides further information about specific aspects of the work and enhances scientific communication.

3.2.3 **References, citations and acknowledgments**

Authors should clearly reference, cite and acknowledge all sources used in their work and seek permission from other authors if a significant amount of their work has been used in the publication (see section 3.1.4 on acknowledgments). The over-citation of work which exaggerates the significance of another author's work is also unacceptable.

3.2.4 **Seek guidance and approval to report data to the media**

Research findings should not be reported in the public media before they have been reported to a research audience and sanctioned by the University and all other parties involved in the research.

3.2.5 **Conflicts of interest**

Authors should acknowledge and address any conflicts of interest surrounding authorship or publication. This could include, but is not limited to, any institutional, legal, ethical, financial, moral, or personal conflicts of interest. The University perspective is that conflicts of interests are not necessarily unethical but should be declared and dealt with appropriately. Conflicts of interests should be assessed in conjunction with the relevant sponsor or funder guidance, the University [Research Ethics Policies and Procedures](#) and the [University Statement](#) on declaring conflicts of interest.

3.2.6 **Ethical Responsibilities**

Authors who submit work for publication should always adhere to the highest level of research ethics and standards in line with requirements set out by national regulatory bodies, professional and regulatory research guidance, and the University [Research Ethics Policies and Procedures](#).

3.2.7 **Misconduct**

Authors should be aware of the University [Research Ethics Policies and Procedures](#) with regards to misconduct. The term research misconduct includes: fabrication; falsification; plagiarism; deception; non-compliance; and facilitating misconduct by collusion or concealment.

3.2.8 **Republication and correcting the record**

In cases of re-publication or corrections to original work, all parties should be informed of any alterations and consent should be obtained.

3.2.9 **Funder guidelines**

When submitting work for publication, authors should adhere to the specific guidance, criteria and processes of the relevant body, including conditions regarding the publication of their research and its findings in any open access repositories within a set period.

4. **OTHER**

4.1 **Consistency of name**

Authors should maintain consistency in the presentation of their name and should make all reasonable efforts not to use different variants of their name for publication; although it is recognised that publishers may adopt different practices. Where possible, authors should include their ORCID iD (<http://orcid.org>) when submitting work to a publisher.

4.2 **Institutional affiliation**

The full legal name of 'Sheffield Hallam University' and the full registered address of 'City Campus, Howard Street, Sheffield, S1 1WB' should be consistently stated in all publications.

4.3 **Sheffield Hallam University Research Archive (SHURA)**

Researchers are required to deposit a copy of each research output in the Sheffield Hallam, University Research Archive ([SHURA](#)), an open access repository containing the scholarly outputs and publications of researchers at the University. This must be done within three

months of acceptance by the publisher. SHURA provides a permanent and stable archive for authors and offers the benefits of making research outputs freely available to a global audience. It is important to remember that many funding bodies insist upon open access archiving of research outputs. Making research outputs available in SHURA within three months of acceptance is a UKRI requirement for the Research Excellence Framework. See also the Open Access Publication Policy.

4.4 **Research Data Archive**

All research material to support publications should be retained and stored in the University [Research Data Archive](#) which forms part of the University strategy for assuring integrity in research. This should be stored for a period of at least as long as that required by any sponsor that has funded the research, or otherwise for at least ten years. See also the Research Data Management Policy.

5. **FURTHER INFORMATION**

5.1 **Internal guidance**

- Conflict of Interests: <https://portal.shu.ac.uk/departments/hrd/polproc/pages/conflictofinterests.aspx>
 - Research Data Archive: <https://shurda.shu.ac.uk/>
 - Research Ethics Policies and Procedures: <https://www.shu.ac.uk/research/ethics-integrity-and-practice>
 - SHU Research Archive (SHURA): <http://shura.shu.ac.uk/>

5.2 **External guidance**

- Committee on Publication Ethics (1999) 'Guidelines on Good Publication Practice', COPE, [online]. <https://publicationethics.org/files/u7141/1999pdf13.pdf>
- Council of Science Editors (2009) 'White Paper on Promoting Integrity in Scientific Journal Publications' CSE [online]. http://www.councilscienceeditors.org/wp-content/uploads/entire_whitepaper.pdf
- International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (2008), 'Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals: Writing and Editing for Biomedical Publication', ICMJE [online]. http://www.icmje.org/recommendations/archives/2008_urm.pdf
- Research Council UK (2009) Policy and Code of Conduct on the Governance of Good Research Conduct, RCUK [online]. <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20180201180905/http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/documents/reviews/grc/rcukpolicyguidelinesgovernancegoodresearchconduct-pdf/>
- UK Research Integrity Office (2009), 'Code of Practice for Research: Promoting Good Practice and Preventing Misconduct: Public Consultation Document', UKRIO [online]. <http://ukrio.org/wp-content/uploads/UKRIO-Code-of-Practice-for-Research.pdf>