

# Publications Ethics and Publication Malpractice Statement

This statement is mainly based on the [Code of Conduct and Best Practice Guidelines for Journal Editors](#) (Committee on Publication Ethics, 2011).

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## Editors' responsibilities

### Publication decisions

The Editor is responsible for deciding which of the papers submitted to the journal will be published. Manuscripts will be evaluated exclusively on the basis of their academic merit (importance, originality, study's validity, clarity) and its relevance to the journal's scope and without regard to the author's race, gender, sexual orientation, ethnic origin, religious belief, political philosophy or institutional affiliation. The Editor-in-Chief has full authority over the entire editorial content of the journal and the timing of the publication of that content.

### Confidentiality

The Editor and any editorial staff must not disclose any information about a submitted manuscript to anyone other than the corresponding author, reviewers, or potential reviewers.

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Editors and editorial board members will not use unpublished information disclosed in a submitted manuscript for their own research purposes without the author's explicit written consent. Privileged information or ideas obtained by editors as a result of handling the manuscript will be kept confidential and not used for their personal advantage. Editors will recuse themselves from considering manuscripts in which they have conflicts of interest resulting from competitive, collaborative or other relationships/connections with any of the authors, companies or institutions connected to the papers; instead, they will ask another member of the editorial board to handle the manuscript.

### Publication decisions

The editors ensure that all submitted manuscripts being considered for publication undergo blind peer review by at least two reviewers who are expert in the field. The Editor-in-Chief is responsible for deciding which of the manuscripts submitted to the journal will be published, based on the validation of the work in question, its importance to researchers and readers, the reviewers' comments, and such legal requirements as are currently in force regarding libel,

copyright infringement and plagiarism. The Editor-in-Chief may confer with other editors or reviewers in making this decision.

## **Ethics**

Editors shall take reasonable steps to identify and prevent the publication of papers where research misconduct has occurred. The journal or the editors will never encourage such misconduct or knowingly allow such misconduct to take place. If the journal or editors are made aware of any allegation of research misconduct the articles shall be removed from the journal while the allegations are investigated. The Editor will always be willing to publish corrections, clarifications, retractions and apologies when needed.

## **Duties of Reviewers**

Peer review assists editors in making editorial decisions and, through editorial communications with authors, may assist authors in improving their manuscripts.

## **Promptness**

Any selected referee who feels unqualified to review the research reported in a manuscript or knows that its prompt review will be impossible should notify the editor and withdraw from the review process.

## **Objectivity**

Reviews should be conducted objectively and observations formulated clearly with supporting arguments so that authors can use them for improving the manuscript. Personal criticism of authors is not permitted.

## **Disclosure and conflict of interest**

Any invited referee who has conflicts of interest resulting from competitive, collaborative or other relationships or connections with any of the authors, companies or institutions connected to the manuscript and the work described therein should immediately notify the editors to declare their conflicts of interest and decline the invitation to review so that alternative reviewers can be contacted. Unpublished material disclosed in a submitted manuscript must not be used in a reviewer's own research without the express written consent of the authors. Privileged information or ideas obtained through peer review must be kept confidential and not used for the reviewer's personal advantage. This applies also to invited reviewers who decline the review invitation.

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Authors of original research reports should present an accurate account of the work performed as well as an objective discussion of its significance. Underlying data should be represented accurately in the paper. A paper should contain sufficient detail and references to permit others to replicate the work. Fraudulent or knowingly inaccurate statements constitute unethical behaviour and are not acceptable.

## **Data access and retention**

Authors could be asked to provide the raw data of their study together with the paper for editorial review and should be prepared to make the data publicly available if practicable. In any event, authors should ensure accessibility of such data to other competent professionals for at least ten years after publication (preferably via an institutional or subject based repository or other data centre) provided the confidentiality of the participants can be protected and legal rights concerning proprietary data do not preclude their release.

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Authors should ensure that they have written and submit only entirely original works, and if they have used the work and/or the words of others, that this has been appropriately cited. Publications that have been influential in determining the nature of the work presented in the manuscript should also be cited. Plagiarism in any form constitutes unethical publishing behaviour and is not acceptable.

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Papers describing essentially the same research should not be published in more than one journal or primary publication. Authors should not submit for consideration, a manuscript that has already been published in another journal. Submission of a manuscript concurrently to more than one journal is unethical publishing behaviour and is unacceptable. Manuscripts which have been published as copyrighted material cannot be submitted. In addition, manuscripts under review by the journal should not be resubmitted to copyrighted publications. However, by submitting a manuscript, the author(s) retain the rights to the published material. In case of publication they permit the use of their work under a CC-BY license which allows others to distribute, remix, tweak, and build upon work, even commercially, as long as the original author is credited you for the original creation. This is a highly accommodating license for maximum dissemination and use of licensed materials.

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## **Authorship of the paper**

Authorship should be limited to those who have made a significant contribution to the conception, design, execution, or interpretation of the reported study. All those who have made significant contributions should be listed as co-authors. The corresponding author ensures that all contributing authors and no uninvolved persons are included in the author list. The corresponding author will also verify that all co-authors have approved the final version of the paper and have agreed to its submission for publication.

## **Peer Review**

Authors are obliged to participate in the peer review process and cooperate fully by responding promptly to editors' requests. In the case of a first decision of "revisions necessary" authors should respond to the reviewers' comments systematically, point by point, and in a timely manner, revising and re-submitting their manuscript to the journal by the deadline given.

## **Disclosure and conflict of interest**

All authors should include a statement disclosing any financial or other substantive conflicts of interest that may be construed to influence the results or interpretation of their manuscript. All sources of financial support for the project should be disclosed.

## **Fundamental errors in published works**

When an author discovers a significant error or inaccuracy in his/her own published work, it is the author's obligation to promptly notify the journal editor or publisher and to cooperate with the editor to retract or correct the paper in the form of an erratum.

## **Permanent availability and preservation**

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