

QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY BELFAST

GUIDELINES ON AUTHORSHIP AND PUBLICATION

1. Authorship Criteria

The issue of authorship is important in the context of good research practice. Authorship practices may differ across disciplines. In some areas of arts and humanities sole authorship may be the norm whilst in areas such as the sciences, having several authors involved in a publication is common. Although authorship practices and the order of authorship may vary, the University supports an approach based on the 'Vancouver Guidelines' (ICMJE Recommendations for the Conduct, Reporting, Editing and Publication of Scholarly Work in Medical Journals, 2013) with authorship credit based on all four of the following criteria being met:

- (i) Substantial contributions to conception and design, or acquisition of data, or analysis of interpretation of data;
- (ii) Drafting the article or revising it critically for important intellectual content;
- (iii) Final approval of the version to be published;
- (iv) Agreement to be accountable for all aspects of the work in ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved.

The above criteria are not intended to be used to deny authorship to those who deserve credit and individuals who meet the first criterion should have the opportunity to participate in the review, drafting and final approval of the article or manuscript.

It should be noted that the acquisition of funding, collection of data, or general supervision of the research group, alone, does not justify authorship. Each author should have participated sufficiently in the work to take public responsibility for appropriate portions of the content. The practices of honorary/gift authorship or ghost authorship are unacceptable.

2. Acknowledgements

All contributors, who do not meet the criteria for authorship, should be listed in an acknowledgements section. All those named in the acknowledgements section should be aware of their inclusion.

3. Authorship Disputes

In order to minimise authorship disputes occurring it is good practice to discuss authorship, including order of authorship, at the start of projects rather than on submission of the research to a journal or conference. Authorship should be reviewed regularly over the course of the research project, particularly when the contribution of those involved changes.

Where an internal authorship dispute occurs, involving research that is not yet published or presented, researchers should attempt to resolve the dispute at a local level. Where it is not possible for the researchers to resolve the dispute, the matter should be referred to the Head of School or Institute Director to review and mediate an agreed solution. Manuscripts for which there is an unresolved authorship dispute should not be submitted for publication before consulting with the Head of School or Institute Director. Where there is a conflict of interest, an alternative Head of School or

Institute Director or the relevant Faculty Pro-Vice Chancellor should be asked to consider the dispute.

Authorship disputes involving published manuscripts may be considered under the procedures detailed in the University's Regulations Governing Investigation into Allegations of Research Misconduct. An individual or individuals with concerns regarding authorship of published works by a member of the University should raise the issue in writing to their Head of School or the Head of Research Governance.

If an external authorship dispute arises for published works and involves collaborators or contributors from another institution, the procedures for dispute resolution at the lead author's institution should be followed.

4. Publishing Results

Researchers should make every effort to ensure research findings are widely disseminated to both the academic community and where appropriate to the general public. This includes the sharing of negative results as appropriate.

The person with overall responsibility for the research programme should authorise publication of results: authorisation should cover both the content of the publication (integrity of results, adequacy of internal peer review, appropriate protection of intellectual property rights, appropriate authorship) and the intended place of publication.

When publishing, researchers should not misrepresent their work by omitting information that changes the meaning or significance of their findings.

Researchers must not manipulate or alter images to create misleading results. Researchers must be honest and transparent regarding any approaches used for image editing, adjustment or enhancement.

In the context of communicating academic information it is always good practice to use as clear and accurate language as possible, without recourse to unnecessary jargon. This is essential when communicating information to a lay audience.

Work should normally be published as a coherent entity rather than being artificially divided into a number of smaller parts. This does not necessarily preclude preliminary publication where appropriate, such as in letter format, or presentation at conferences, but caution should be exercised that redundant or duplicate publication does not result.

Redundant or duplicate publication, which is a publication that overlaps substantially with one already published elsewhere (in print or electronic media), is not good practice and should be avoided. There may be exceptions to this, such as a publication of a complete report that follows the publication of a preliminary report, or a paper presented at a meeting but not published in full or that is being considered for publication in a proceedings or similar format. When submitting a manuscript, the author should always make a full statement to the editor about all submissions and previous reports that might be regarded as redundant or duplicate publication of the same or very similar work. The author should alert the editor if the work includes subjects about which a previous report has been published. Any such work should be referred to and referenced in the new paper. Researchers should be aware that journals may have differing approaches with regard to results made available in pre-print articles and should always check with the journal that they intend to submit to that a pre-print article would not render the publication redundant.

Researchers are encouraged to communicate their results to as wide an audience as possible. In this context secondary publication may be justified and can be beneficial. For example, publication in another language or publication of a more accessible and widely disseminated report, might be appropriate. In this situation the approval should be with the editors of the publication outlets involved and the editor concerned with secondary publication informed.

More detailed guidance on the issues of redundant or secondary publication is available in the guidance to authors provided by academic journals or, for instance, in the 'Vancouver Guidelines' (ICMJE Recommendations for the Conduct, Reporting, Editing, and Publication of Scholarly Work in Medical Journals: Overlapping Publications) or by the Committee of Publication Ethics (COPE).

The University supports the freedom to publish research findings. However, there may be occasions when a legitimate request for deferral of publication is made. An example of this would be when collaborating with an industrial partner, who may wish publication to be deferred until adequate protection of any intellectual property has been arranged. The University would expect the period of deferral requested to be no longer than necessary.

There may be occasions when an external funder of research exerts pressure in an attempt to suppress results, for example to conceal results they perceive to be detrimental to their interests. In this situation the University will take whatever action it deems necessary to counter any attempt at suppression. Any issues regarding the suppression of results by external funder should be raised with the Head of School or Institute Director in the first instance.

When negotiating contracts with external funders due regard should be given to the right to publish the results. It is the responsibility of the Research and Enterprise Directorate, on behalf of the University, to negotiate the best position possible with regard to publication and for the researchers to comply with the contractual requirements.

Where applicable, researchers must make all research outputs available on the University's Institutional Repository or other open access system. This is particularly relevant for Research Council UK funders, other funders and future REF commitments. Many research funders (eg Research Councils UK) advocate open access to research publications. Depending on the funding stipulations this may or may not include open access to research data. Researchers must be aware of, and comply with, any funding requirements with regards to open access and data management. Further guidance can be found in the University's [Open Access Publications Policy](#).

The University itself places importance on appropriate protection of Intellectual Property Rights, and researchers should refrain from any form of publication or disclosure until it is clear that any necessary protection has been secured.

Researchers must ensure that all publication and presentation of material arising from research is correct and accurate. If it subsequently becomes clear that this is not the case, the researcher must take appropriate steps to correct the information, and if necessary make a retraction, in all outlets the information has appeared in. Where appropriate, funding or external agencies should also be informed. The UK Research Integrity Office has issued [Guidance for Researchers on Retractions in Academic Journals](#).

5. Pure

Pure is the University's Current Research Information System and links to the Research Portal/Institutional Repository. Academic and research staff must ensure that details of publications in Pure are accurate. In particular, researchers must ensure that information on the publication status is up to date (eg in press, published). The [University's Pure User Policy](#), [Research Portal Policy](#) and [Puresupport webpage](#) provide further information and guidance on the use of Pure.

6. Conflicts of Interest

In order to ensure transparency it is necessary to disclose any conflicts of interest that may be present in the research. It is essential for individuals to adhere to the Conflict of Interest Policy for any journal that they are publishing in. Considerations should include the financial relationships such as employment, consultancies, stock ownership, honoraria, paid expert testimony or personal relationships that may have biased the work. It is the responsibility of those involved in the research to identify and declare any conflicts of interest, whether legal, ethical, moral, financial, personal or other nature, so that it does not become a complicating or actionable issue. Further information can be found in [the University's Register of Interests Policy](#).

7. References and Further Information

Committee on Publication Ethics. 2011. *Code of Conduct and Best Practice Guidelines for Journal Editors*.

(http://publicationethics.org/files/Code%20of%20Conduct_1.pdf)

Committee on Publication Ethics. 2012. *Cooperation between research institutions and journals on research integrity cases: guidance from the Committee on Publication Ethics*.

(http://publicationethics.org/files/Research_institutions_guidelines.pdf)

Committee on Publication Ethics. 2013. *Ethical Guidelines for Peer Reviewers*.

(<http://publicationethics.org/files/Peer%20review%20guidelines.pdf>)

International Committee of Medical Journal Editors. 2013. *Recommendations for the Conduct, Reporting, Editing, and Publication of Scholarly Work in Medical Journals*.

(<http://www.icmje.org/icmje-recommendations.pdf>)

Queen's University Belfast. *Register of Interest Policy*.

(<http://www.qub.ac.uk/home/RegistrarsOffice/RegisterofInterests/>)

Queen's University Belfast. *Regulations Governing Investigation into Allegations of Research Misconduct*.

(<http://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/ResearchEnterprise/ResearchGovernanceandEthics/ResearchGovernanceandIntegrity/#Regulations>)

Queen's University Belfast. *Pure User Policy*

(<http://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/ResearchEnterprise/ResearchPolicy/PureSupport/PurePolicies/>)

Queen's University Belfast. *Research Portal Policy*

(<http://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/media/Media,357378,en.pdf>)

Queen's University Belfast. *Open Access Publications Policy*

[\(http://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/InformationServices/TheLibrary/OpenAccess/\)](http://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/InformationServices/TheLibrary/OpenAccess/)

UK Research Integrity Office. 2010. *Guidance for Researchers on Retractions in Academic Journal*.

<http://www.ukrio.org/wp-content/uploads/UKRIO-IN-01-Guidance-for-researchers-on-retractions-in-academic-journals1.pdf>)

Wiley. 2014. *Best Practice Guidelines on Publishing Ethics: A Publisher's Perspective*. Second Edition.

<http://exchanges.wiley.com/medialibrary/2014/03/17/8440af20/Best%20Practice%20Guidelines%20on%20Publishing%20Ethics%202ed.pdf>)