University of Salford MANCHESTER

Good Practice in Authorship of Research Publications User Guide

Version Number 1.0

Effective from 01 April 2016

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Research & Enterprise

1.0 Purpose

This User Guide is intended to support best practice in the identification, participation and recognition of all authors.

It is the responsibility of all research organisations and individual researchers to publish the results of their research in an ethical and timely manner, and in a way which recognises the contribution of all collaborators in the research in an appropriate way[1]. Authorship of research publications is an important issue. While authorship brings professional benefit and increases the reputation of researchers and organisations, it also conveys responsibility and accountability for the quality and integrity of the work included in the publication[2]. The status of author should therefore be reserved for those who deserve credit and can take responsibility for the work.

See Related Documentation section for policy and procedure which is directly related to this User Guide.

2.0 Scope

This User Guide applies to all University of Salford authors, co-authors and contributors to research publications. This includes academic staff, contract research staff, under- and post-graduate students and professional services staff. The conventions outlined in this User Guide may also be used to inform attribution of other research outputs.

This User Guide is not intended to be a guide for good practice in the preparation of research publications.

3.0 User Guide Statements

3.1 Principles of authorship of research publications

Definition of authors

There is no overarching definition or convention on authorship, however the guidance of the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) is widely accepted as best practice in determining authorship of research publications. The ICMJE recommends that authorship be based on the following four criteria[3]:

1. Substantial contributions to the conception or design of the work; or the acquisition, analysis or interpretation of data for the work; AND
2. Drafting the work or revising it critically for important intellectual content; AND
3. Final approval of the version to be published; AND
4. 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.

All those designated as authors should meet all four criteria for authorship, **and** all who meet the four criteria should be identified as authors. Those who do not meet all four criteria should be acknowledged. The criteria are **not** intended for use as a means to disqualify colleagues from authorship who otherwise meet authorship criteria by denying them the opportunity to meet

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[1] Code of Practice for Research: promoting good practice and preventing misconduct. UK Research Integrity Office, September 2009

[2] Authorship: why not just toss a coin? Strange, K. *Am J Physiol Cell Physiol* (2008) 295(3):C567-C575

[3] Defining the role of authors and contributors. ICMJE (2015). http://www.icmje.org/recommendations/browse/roles-and-responsibilities/defining-the-role-of-authors-and-contributors.html

criteria 2 or 3. Therefore all individuals who meet criterion 1 should have the opportunity to participate in the review, drafting and final approval of the manuscript[3]. As a matter of good practice, all authors should be prepared and able to present/defend the published work as if they were first author. **It is important to note that all authors may be held accountable for the integrity of the paper, including any plagiarism or fraud which may later be identified, even if they were not aware of, and/or did not actively contribute to any misconduct.**

Authorship should not be allocated to honorary/gift or "guest" authors. Honorary/gift authors are those who do not meet accepted authorship criteria but are listed as a personal favour or in return for payment. Guest authors are those who do not meet accepted authorship criteria but are listed because of their seniority, reputation or supposed influence[4].

The ICMJE does not state what is meant by a substantial contribution, however it can reasonably be defined as those who have made a significant practical and intellectual contribution to the development and conduct of the research and drafting of the manuscript[2]. This may include under- and post-graduate students and technical and other staff.

Non-author contributors

Contributors who do not meet the criteria for authorship as above should be acknowledged, and their contributions should be specified3. Agreement to be acknowledged should be given by the contributor.

Author order

There are no guidelines regarding the number of authors in any research publication, provided the above criteria for authorship are met, and it is important to note that practice varies between subject disciplines and journals. The following conventions are often used for author position, however authors should ensure that they are aware of the conventions and definitions that relate to their field or chosen journal at an early stage in the research process:

- **First Author:** This is the person who has made the largest contribution to the paper, including the development and conduct of the research and has led the drafting of the manuscript.
- **Last/Senior Author:** This has been described as the person who generally directs, oversees and guarantees the authenticity of the work reported[5].
- **Corresponding/Lead Author:** This is the person who has responsibility for communicating with and addressing the concerns and questions of editors, reviewers and readers, and is therefore often the first or last author. This person may also agree the author order with the co-authors, in accordance with the conventions of the discipline and/or journal.

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[4] Wager E & Kleinert S (2011). Responsible research publication: international standards for authors. A position statement developed at the 2nd World Conference on Research Integrity, Singapore, July 22-24, 2010. Chapter 50 in: Mayer T & Steneck N (eds) *Promoting Research Integrity in a Global Environment*. Imperial College Press / World Scientific Publishing, Singapore (pp309-16)

[5] Put my name on the paper: reflections on the ethics of authorship. McKneally M. *J Thorac Cardiovasc Surg*(2006). 131:517-519

- **Co-Authors:** These are often ordered according to the relative contribution each has made to the development and conduct of the research and drafting of the manuscript. Where there is no clear difference, authors should be listed in alphabetical order.

Changes in authorship

Research is a dynamic process, and appropriate authorship of a research publication may change as the project or manuscript progresses. Authors may be added (e.g. due to increased scope or more significant contribution) or removed (e.g. due to a change in the project which reduced the contribution or the contributor relocated before a significant contribution could be made), or the authorship order may be revised (e.g. due to differences between the expected and actual contribution or delegation of responsibility to other authors)[6].

3.2 Responsibilities

Authors

- Ensure and agree appropriate authorship at the commencement of the research work and throughout the research, analysis and manuscript preparation processes.
- Discuss, communicate and agree changes in authorship.
- Be accountable for the validity and accuracy of all work and data included in the publication.
- Prepare and submit the publication.
- Check for plagiarism or fraud in conduct of the research or preparation of the publication.
- Review and agree final version of the publication.
- Gain permission for acknowledgements
- Check and comply with subject and journal authorship conventions and requirements.
- Undertake all required revisions to the publication.
- Ensure that the publication meets all relevant intellectual property rights, open access, and open data requirements.
- Resolve authorship disputes.

Research Centres

- Establish and maintain a research culture which embodies the principles and practices outlined in this guidance.

University

- Provide and maintain appropriate guidance and training on good practice in authorship.
- Promote a supportive research culture.
- Provide a regulatory and governance framework to address misconduct in authorship and research.
- Take disciplinary action over any suspected or alleged abuses of authorship in accordance with the University's Procedure for Considering Allegations of Misconduct in Research.

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[6] A Graduate Student's guide to determining authorship credit and authorship order. American Psychological Association Science Student Council (2006)

3.3 Good practice in author attribution

- Discuss and agree the expected roles, contribution and responsibilities, including authorship, of all collaborators at the very start of the research process. Formal authorship agreements may be advised for large, multidisciplinary or multinational collaborations where authorship conventions may differ.
- Review and update the roles, contribution and responsibilities, including authorship, at regular intervals throughout the research project.
- Discuss and agree the authorship list and position at the start of the data analysis and manuscript drafting process.
- Allocate tasks and responsibilities to all authors at the start of manuscript drafting.
- Ensure engagement to allow all significant contributors the opportunity to fulfil all the criteria of authorship.
- Discuss and agree any changes to the author list and/or order with all authors, including those who are to be removed from the list.
- Ensure all authors, including under- and post-graduate students and early career researchers are respected and credited appropriately, regardless of their status.
- Provide information on the contribution of each author.

3.4 Unacceptable practice in author attribution

Unwarranted exclusion or misrepresentation in designation of authorship is a serious matter which may lead to reputational harm of those responsible and to the institution, may restrict future collaboration and may harm colleagues and students. Research Councils UK define such practice as unacceptable research conduct[7] and, as such, may result in misconduct or disciplinary proceedings under the University's Procedure for Considering Allegations of Misconduct in Research. Such conduct includes (but is not restricted to):

- Deliberate denial of authorship, either by excluding a person who meets the criteria for authorship, or denying a contributor the opportunity to draft the paper, revise it critically for important intellectual content or to approve the final content.
- Deliberately changing the focus of the paper with the sole or main purpose of excluding an author.
- Removing authors from the author list without prior communication and discussion.
- Excluding or downgrading more junior researchers from publications to which they have made a significant contribution.
- Including 'gift' or 'guest' authors who have not made a significant contribution to the experimental work and manuscript preparation.
- Submitting and/or publishing papers without the knowledge, permission and contribution of all authors. This could also include publishing research data online without the knowledge or permission of all authors.
- Practicing mutual or reciprocal inclusion of authors on each other's publications where there is no significant contribution.
- Using acknowledgements misleadingly and without permission to incorrectly imply contribution or endorsement.

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[7] RCUK Policy and Guidelines on Governance of Good Research Conduct. February 2013.

- Not acknowledging those who have made a contribution to the experimental work or manuscript preparation.

4.0 Related Documentation

4.1 University Policy

The following documents can be found on the University Policy & Procedure pages http://www.salford.ac.uk/about-us/corporate-information/governance/policies-and-procedures or under 'P' via the Staff Channel A-Z index.

- Procedure for Considering Allegations of Misconduct in Research (Research section) under development

4.2 External Resources

International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) http://www.icmje.org/recommendations/browse/

RCUK Policy and Guidelines on Governance of Good Research Conduct http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/Publications/researchers/grc/

UK Research Integrity Office (UKRIO) http://ukrio.org/

Document Control Information				
Owner: Associate Director Research & Enterprise				
Revision History incl. Authorisation (published versions)				
Author	**Summary of Changes**		**Version**	**Authorisation (Role/Board: Date)**
J. Cresswell	Final approved version		V1.0	Research & Enterprise Committee: 17/02/2016
Author to complete formal assessment with the following advisory teams:				
Equality Analysis (E&D, HR) [Equality Initial Assessment form](#)		1. *This is mandatory. May 2016 See EA at next page.*		
Legal implications (LPG)		2. *N/A*		
Information Governance (LPG)		3. *April 2016. Support with policy templates.*		
Student facing aspects (QEO)		4. *N/A*		
UKVI Compliance (Student Admin)		5. *N/A*		
Review Due	2 years by April 2018 (maximum review period of 3 years)			
Document Location	University Policy & Procedure pages http://www.salford.ac.uk/about-us/corporate-information/governance/policies-and-procedures			

University of Salford MANCHESTER	**Inclusion and Equality Assessment (V2.1 May 2016)**			
Proposal Title	Good Practice in Authorship of Research Publications User Guide	**Key aims & purpose**	To promote and improve communication and practice in authorship of research publications	
Committee / Board		**Meeting date**		
Contact name & details	Name: Dr Joanne Cresswell	**Assessment date**	5th May 2016	
	Phone: ext 56355	**Consultee details**		
	Email: j.e.cresswell@salford.ac.uk			

To comply with the Equality Act 2010 we are required to consider the possible consequences of decisions the University makes on people from different groups. *For more information about the Equality Act follow this link:* *http://www.ecu.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/external/psed-specific-duties-for-england-sept11.pdf*

		Yes	No	Notes
1.	Is it likely that this proposal will affect people who have protected characteristics (*age, disability, gender reassignment, religion and belief, race, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity and marriage and civil partnership*) who are employees, students, service users or other stakeholders, or the wider community?	Yes		It applies to all researchers and academics who write/contribute to research papers. The Guide provides good practice advice to avoid misunderstanding between contributors to papers.
2.	Could this proposal support the university to meet the following three requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty?			
	a) Does it support the University to…*eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the Equality Act 2010?*	Yes		It supports best practice in the identification, participation and recognition of all authors.
	b) Does it enable the University to…*advance equality of opportunity between different groups of people?*	Yes		
	c) Does it help the University to…*foster good relations between different*	Yes		Guidance applies to all researchers and

		Yes	No	Notes
	groups of people?			will be promoted via Research Centres and PGR teams.

To comply with the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 Universities are under a legal duty to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. *For further information about the duty follow this link:*
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/445916/Prevent_Duty_Guidance_For_Higher_Education__England__Wales_.pdf

		Yes	No	Notes
3.	Is this proposal likely to contain or increase risks that people may be drawn into terrorism?		No	
	Is a separate risk assessment required?		No	
4.	**Equality Assessor Recommendations and Notes:** • Need to consistently promote this guidance to all staff carrying out research on a regular basis.			
5.	**Please select an outcome:**		✓	**Notes**
	a) No major change to is required:		✓	No amends necessary
	b) The proposal will be adjusted (as above) and submitted for decision:			
	c) The proposal will be continued without change and monitored.			
	d) The activity will be stopped and the policy will be removed:			
	e) Further assessment is required:			