



University of  
**Salford**  
MANCHESTER

# **Good Practice in Authorship and Dissemination of Publications User Guide**

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### 1.0 Purpose

This User Guide is intended to enable those involved in research and scholarship to understand their responsibilities in relation to the authorship and dissemination of research and scholarly publications.

It is the responsibility of all research organisations and individual researchers to publish the results of their research in an ethical and timely manner, using appropriate publication channels to reach their target audience(s), and in a way which appropriately recognises the contribution of all collaborators in the research.<sup>1</sup> This Guide will therefore outline best practice for the identification, participation and recognition of all authors; for recognising institutional affiliation(s); and for selecting journals or publishers.

Authorship of publications is an important issue: it brings professional and reputational benefits for authors and organisations, while also conveying responsibility and accountability for the quality and integrity of the work included in the publication.<sup>2</sup> The status of author should therefore be accorded fairly to those who deserve credit and can take responsibility for the work.

All authors of publications (staff and research students) are expected to have an ORCID<sup>3</sup> identifier connected with their profile in the University of Salford Institutional Repository (USIR)<sup>4</sup> to ensure they can be clearly identified and credited as an author. Accurate use of institutional affiliations is also essential for the University to be credited for its research outputs, to enable accurate reporting, and to evidence authors' credentials.

The authors' choice of journal or publisher can affect the accessibility, reach, and impact of a publication, as well as having individual and institutional reputational value. Yet the academic publishing landscape is complex and can be challenging to navigate, especially as the transition to open access brings transformation.<sup>5</sup> This Guide offers some initial guidance to help authors to make informed choices about open access publishing options, and to avoid fraudulent or 'predatory' publishers.

<sup>1</sup> Code of Practice for Research: promoting good practice and preventing misconduct. UK Research Integrity Office, September 2009

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

<sup>3</sup> An ORCID (Open Researcher and Contributor ID) is a unique 16-digit code that distinguishes a researcher from every other researcher even where they share a name. <https://www.salford.ac.uk/library/research/get-an-orcid>

<sup>4</sup> USIR is the University's open repository where all authors (staff and postgraduate research students) upload copies of their research publications. These are retained securely for the long-term and, if possible, are made openly available.

<sup>5</sup> UKRI is a member of cOAlition S, which will implement a major open access initiative from 2020: 'Plan S'. <https://www.coalition-s.org>

## 2.0 Scope

This User Guide applies to all University of Salford authors, co-authors and contributors to research and scholarly publications. This includes academic staff, contract research staff, under- and postgraduate 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 publications, nor does it cover alternative dissemination channels beyond academic publishing (e.g. social media, press). Support with writing for publication and other modes of research dissemination is offered within the researcher development programmes coordinated by Research & Knowledge Exchange.

See Section 4.0 below for policy and procedures directly related to this User Guide.

## 3.0 User Guide Statements

### 3.1 Principles of authorship

#### 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 publications. The ICMJE recommends the following four criteria to determine which contributors should qualify as authors:<sup>6</sup>

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 (see 'Non-author contributions' below). Individuals who have made a substantial contribution (meeting criterion 1) should have the opportunity to participate in the review, drafting and final approval of the manuscript in order to meet all four criterion, and therefore be credited as an author.<sup>3</sup> This may include students and technical or other staff. Senior researchers are expected to ensure that junior researchers and those with less publishing experience have opportunities to develop as authors.

Decisions about authorship must be made with full attention to equality and inclusion, to ensure that individuals or groups are not disadvantaged on the basis of protected characteristics. This might mean, for example, taking steps to ensure that researchers going on maternity leave are not disadvantaged in terms of their authorship status on publications resulting from research to which they have substantially contributed.

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<sup>6</sup> 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>

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.<sup>7</sup>

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.<sup>2</sup> This may include under- and postgraduate students and technical and other staff.

### **Non-author contributors**

Contributors who do not meet the above criteria for authorship should be acknowledged, and their contributions specified.<sup>3</sup> Agreement to be acknowledged should be given by the contributor.

### **Author order**

There are no guidelines regarding the number of authors included on any 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 of the project:

- **First Author:** This is the person who has made the largest contribution, including developing and conducting the study, and has led on drafting the manuscript.
- **Last/Senior Author:** This has been described as the person who generally directs, oversees and guarantees the authenticity of the work reported.<sup>8</sup>
- **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.
- **Co-Authors:** These are often ordered according to the relative contribution each has made to the development and conduct of the work and drafting of the manuscript. Where there is no clear difference, authors should be listed in alphabetical order.

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<sup>7</sup> Wager E & Kleinert S (2011). Responsible research publication: international standards for authors. A position statement developed at the 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 (pp.309-16).

<sup>8</sup> Put my name on the paper: reflections on the ethics of authorship. McKneally M. *J Thorac Cardiovasc Surg* (2006). 131:517-519

Research has demonstrated that inequality exists within academic publishing, showing, for example, an ongoing gender gap in first authorship within a number of scientific disciplines.<sup>9</sup> It is therefore important to ensure that, where the order of authors indicates a hierarchy of contribution, decisions about the order of authors are fair and inclusive.

### **Changes in authorship**

Research is a dynamic process, and appropriate authorship of a publication may change as the project or manuscript progresses. Authors may be added (e.g. due to a more significant contribution) or removed (e.g. if the contributor relocated before a significant contribution could be made), or the authorship order may be revised (e.g. due to differences between expected and actual contribution or delegation of responsibility to other authors).<sup>10</sup>

## **3.2 Responsibilities**

### **Authors**

- Ensure and agree appropriate authorship at the commencement of the project 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 in the publication.
- Select and agree the most appropriate journal/publisher, ensuring that the chosen publisher meets expected standards of publication practice and ethics. See 3.6 below.
- 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 requirements.
- Ensure that the publication meets all relevant open access and open data requirements, including preserving any essential underpinning research data for an appropriate length of time (a recommended minimum of 10 years). See 4.0 below for policies.
- Ensure that accurate author and affiliation information is provided upon submission, including their unique ORCID identifier. See 3.3 below.
- Resolve authorship disputes.

### **Schools and Research Centres**

- Establish and maintain a research culture which embodies the principles and practices outlined in this guidance.
- Ensure that early-career researchers, including postgraduate research students, undertake training and receive high-quality advice on authorship and dissemination.

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<sup>9</sup> Holman L, Stuart-Fox D, Hauser CE (2018) 'The gender gap in science: How long until women are equally represented?' *PLoS Biology* 16(4): e2004956. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pbio.2004956> & Elsevier (2017), Gender in the Global Research Landscape Report <https://www.elsevier.com/research-intelligence/campaigns/gender-17>

<sup>10</sup> A Graduate Student's guide to determining authorship credit and authorship order. American Psychological Association Science Student Council (2006)

## University

- Provide and maintain appropriate guidance and training on good practice in the authorship and dissemination of publications.
- Promote a supportive and inclusive research culture.
- Provide an institutional repository to preserve and make available research outputs.
- 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 Policy and Procedure for Dealing with Allegations of Misconduct in Research.

### 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 project or 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 project.
- Discuss and agree the authorship list and position at the start of the data analysis and manuscript drafting process.
- Discuss and agree the allocation of 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 postgraduate students and early career researchers, are respected and credited appropriately, regardless of their status.
- Register for a unique ORCID identifier through the institutional repository (USIR). An ORCID will ensure consistent, accurate credit is received by the author and their institution(s) across the course of their career, including if they change their name.<sup>11</sup>
- 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. UK Research and Innovation follows Research Councils UK in defining such practice as unacceptable research conduct<sup>12</sup> and, as such, may result in misconduct or disciplinary proceedings under the University's Policy and Procedure for Dealing with Allegations of Misconduct in Research. Such conduct includes (but is not restricted to):

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<sup>11</sup> <https://www.salford.ac.uk/library/research/get-an-orcid> Authors with an existing ORCID must connect it to their USIR profile.

<sup>12</sup> RCUK Policy and Guidelines on Governance of Good Research Conduct. February 2013, updated April 2017.

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

### **3.5 Good practice in affiliations and acknowledgements**

The World Medical Association's Declaration of Helsinki (2013), a defining document in the literature of research ethics, stipulates: "Sources of funding, institutional affiliations and conflicts of interest should be declared in the publication."<sup>13</sup> This requirement, widely shared by research institutions, funders and policy-makers, ensures that appropriate and accurate credit is given to organisations that support research while also providing transparency in the interests of research integrity.

#### **Institutional affiliations**

- Authors should credit the University of Salford as their institutional affiliation for all publications resulting from research and scholarship conducted at the University, regardless of whether they remain affiliated at the time of submission and/or publication.
- The title of the institution should be listed as follows: University of Salford.
- Where an author is also affiliated to other institutions (e.g. the NHS), other affiliations may be included but must only include institutions where the work was actually conducted. If an author was a current member of staff or student at another institution during the course of the work, this institution can be included as a secondary affiliation.

#### **Acknowledging funding sources**

- All research funders and sponsors should be acknowledged within any funded research publication.

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<sup>13</sup> WMA Declaration of Helsinki (1964; amended 2013) <https://www.wma.net/policies-post/wma-declaration-of-helsinki-ethical-principles-for-medical-research-involving-human-subjects/>

- The acknowledgement should use the funder's specified wording, if provided, or follow the recommended format issued by the Research Information Network (2008): "This work was supported by xxxx [grant number xxxx]." <sup>14</sup>
- In the interests of academic integrity, sponsors and funders should be acknowledged in the appropriate field within the publisher's submission form, or in the acknowledgements section. Sources of funding should not be listed as institutional affiliations.

### 3.6 Disseminating publications

Publishing, disseminating or sharing the outputs of research and scholarship serves above all to communicate the work to the broadest relevant audiences to maximise access, re-use and impact. Scholarly communication takes different forms for different purposes, so a dissemination plan is helpful in identifying the most appropriate dissemination channels, depending on what an author wants to achieve and the audience(s) they want to reach. <sup>15</sup> While the available channels and opportunities to reach new audiences are proliferating, academic journals remain a dominant, and increasingly varied and complex, communication channel, so what follows is a short overview of good practice in journal publishing.

#### Good practice in selecting an academic journal

These practical steps are designed to help authors maximise the reach and impact of a publication and avoid some of the risks and pitfalls in the publishing process:

- Consider the journal's relevance rather than its ranking. Which journal would be the best fit for the work: what is its specialist/ generalist/ interdisciplinary focus; its target audience(s); its reach and reputation within that professional community?
- Junior scholars are encouraged to consult with experienced colleagues within their field(s) regarding their choice of publisher.
- Choose open access. Open access publishing increases the reach of research and scholarship, opening it up to a wider international audience; it also ensures compliance with research funders' policy requirements, including the REF Open Access Policy. Authors can select to make the paper open access on publication via an open access journal, which usually means paying an open access fee; or can make it open access by depositing the author's accepted manuscript (AAM) <sup>16</sup> in the institutional repository as long as the publisher's licence permits this. See the Open Access Policy and the Library's research webpages.
- Go through the Think Check Submit checklist <sup>17</sup> to help ensure that a journal meets the required standards and ethics of academic publishing.
- Be aware of other signs that a journal is credible and ethical, notably:

<sup>14</sup> RIN (2008), 'Acknowledgement of Funders in Scholarly Journal Articles: Guidance for UK Research Funders, Authors and Publishers', p.4 <http://rin.ac.uk/system/files/attachments/Acknowledgement-funders-guidance.pdf>

<sup>15</sup> See, for example, guidance from the National Institute for Health Research: <https://www.nihr.ac.uk/funding-and-support/funding-for-research-studies/manage-my-study/how-to-disseminate-your-research/>

<sup>16</sup> The author's accepted manuscript is the final peer-reviewed version which has been accepted for publication but not yet copy-edited, type-set and proof-read by the publisher.

<sup>17</sup> <https://thinkchecksubmit.org/>



- They are listed in the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ). Note: new journals will not immediately be added to this Directory as the application process takes time.
- They sign up to the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE).
- They are included in recognised academic databases such as Scopus and Web of Science, accessible via the Library catalogue. Note: Google Scholar is not as rigorous in its quality checks.
- They have low rates of self-citation (authors citing their own work).
- Journal rankings which can be found via Scopus, Web of Science etc, can be a useful indicator of the status of a journal, but the statistics behind rankings ('bibliometrics') can be flawed, so such rankings should be used with caution and not as a deciding factor in the choice of journal. Rankings are more widely used in some disciplines (e.g. Business) than in others (e.g. Literary Studies).
- Be cautious of publishers that invite authors to submit to a journal, especially if they charge a fee. This is a common practice of predatory journals. 'Think Check Submit' first.

Any questions or concerns regarding the choice of journal or publisher can be raised with an Academic Support Librarian or the Library's specialist research support team.

### **Good practice for maximising the reach of a publication**

- Choose open access and upload a copy of the author's accepted manuscript to the institutional repository (USIR) as soon as it is accepted.
- Share a link (a Direct Object Identifier or DOI) to an open access version of the publication with any networks and channels that could help it reach the widest possible audience: e.g. Twitter and social media, conferences and talks, press articles and blogs.
- If sharing a publication via a platform such as ResearchGate or Academia.edu, ensure that sharing does not breach copyright (it usually does). The permission to share a version via the institutional repository often does not apply to sites like ResearchGate.
- To reach a broader non-specialist audience, create a plain-language abstract in written or video form, then use a tool such as Kudos.com to help share it.
- Let the University's Press Office team know if a piece of research has the potential to be a public interest story on the website or in the media, ensuring that the link (DOI) is included every time it is mentioned.
- If appropriate and permissible, underpinning research data should be published via a data repository (the University provides the Figshare repository for this purpose) and a link should be provided to enable readers to find one from the other.
- To assess whether dissemination strategies having an effect, it can be helpful to track the reach of publications quantitatively using bibliometrics and/or altmetrics, e.g. How well cited is the paper? Is it being shared via the media or social media? Note that biblio- and altmetrics are easily skewed or misinterpreted, and should be used responsibly in line with advice from the UK Forum for Responsible Research Metrics.<sup>18</sup> The Library's research support team can advise.

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<sup>18</sup> <https://responsiblemetrics.org/>

## 4.0 Related Documentation

### 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.

- Research Code of Practice
- Policy and Procedure for Dealing with Allegations of Misconduct in Research
- Open Access Policy
- Research Data Management Policy

The Library provides advice and support on publication: [www.salford.ac.uk/library/research](http://www.salford.ac.uk/library/research)

### External Resources

Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) <https://publicationethics.org/>

Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) <https://doaj.org/>

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

ORCID <https://orcid.org/>

Plan S <https://www.coalition-s.org/10-principles/>

RCUK Policy and Guidelines on Governance of Good Research Conduct  
<https://www.ukri.org/files/legacy/reviews/grc/rcuk-grp-policy-and-guidelines-updated-apr-17-2-pdf/>

Responsible Metrics Forum <https://responsiblemetrics.org/about/>

Think Check Submit <https://thinkchecksubmit.org/>

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

Universities UK Concordat to Support Research Integrity  
<https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/reports/Pages/research-concordat.aspx>

| <b>Document Control Information</b>  |   |                |   |
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| E. Smith   | Scope expanded to encompass all scholarly publications.<br>Sections 3.5 and 3.6 added to advise on institutional affiliations, publisher selection, and use of ORCID IDs. | V2.0           | Research & Enterprise Committee: 13/11/2018 |
| J. Cresswell   | Final approved version  | V1.0           | Research & Enterprise Committee: 17/02/2016 |
| <b>Author to complete formal assessment with the following advisory teams:</b>                                       |   |                |   |
| Equality Analysis (E&D, HR)  | 1. <i>Completed, discussed with Tara Leach in Inclusion and Diversity, and final version submitted, 5.2.19.</i>   |                |   |
| Legal implications (LPG)   | 2. <i>N/A</i>   |                |   |
| Information Governance (LPG)   | 3. <i>April 2016. Support with policy templates (V1.0).</i>   |                |   |
| Student facing procedures (QEO)  | 4. <i>N/A</i>   |                |   |
| UKVI Compliance (Student Admin)  | 5. <i>N/A</i>   |                |   |
| <b>Consultation:</b>   |   |                |   |
| Staff Trades Unions via HR<br>Students via USSU<br>Relevant external bodies (specify)                                | N/A   |                |   |
| <b>Review:</b>   |   |                |   |
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| University of Salford Policy pages <a href="http://www.salford.ac.uk/policies">http://www.salford.ac.uk/policies</a> |   |                |   |
| <b>The owner and author are responsible for publicising this policy document.</b>                                    |   |                |   |