

## Ethical Guidelines for Journal Publication

### AUTHORS

#### *Authorship*

- Only individuals that have contributed significantly to the conception, design, execution or interpretation of the research should be listed as authors. Other individuals that have participated in certain aspects of the research should be acknowledged.
- If professional writers employed by pharmaceutical companies, medical agencies, or other parties have written the manuscript, their names should be included and any conflicts of interest declared.
- The corresponding author should ensure that all appropriate co-authors are included on the manuscript, that they have approved the final version of the manuscript and that they have agreed to its submission for publication.
- All authors must share responsibility and accountability for the content of their manuscript and, upon acceptance, all authors must sign a Licence to Publish prior to publication of the paper.

#### *Hazards and ethical approval*

- Authors should identify any unusual hazards inherent in the use of any chemicals, procedures or equipment involved in the work.
- Work involving the use of animal or human subject requires full compliance with local, national, ethical and regulatory guidelines and formal documented approval from an appropriate institutional committee.
- Informed consent should be sought for experiments involving human subjects. When participants are unable to give informed consent, research should follow international guidelines or an appropriate institutional committee should decide if this is ethically acceptable.

#### *Reporting standards*

- Authors should present an accurate account of the research performed and an objective discussion of its significance. Fabrication and falsification of data or fraudulent or inaccurate statements constitute unethical behaviour. Authors may be asked to provide raw data for editorial review and should retain data for a reasonable time after publication.
- Manuscripts should contain sufficient details and references to permit others to replicate the work.
- While criticism of the work of another scientist may be justified, under no circumstances is personal criticism appropriate. Manuscripts must not contain any defamatory material.

#### *Originality and plagiarism*

- Authors should ensure that the written work is original. Plagiarism in all its forms, including the unreferenced copying or paraphrasing of others' published or unpublished ideas and results, or the submission of a complete paper under new authorship, constitutes unethical behaviour.
- If large amounts of other people's written or illustrative material are used, written permission must be sought and acknowledged.

#### *Acknowledgement of sources*

- Authors should give recognition via correct reference and citation to published work that has been influential in determining the nature of the research.

- Information obtained privately must not be used or reported without explicit written permission from the source.
- Information obtained in the course of confidential services, such as reviewing manuscripts or grant applications, must not be used without the explicit written permission of the author of the work.

#### *Multiple, redundant or concurrent publication*

- Authors should not submit manuscripts describing essentially the same research to more than one publication concurrently. Authors should disclose details of related or similar papers in press or recently published.
- Republication of a paper is only acceptable under certain conditions, for example, following translation into another language. The primary reference must be cited in the secondary publication and authors should declare the original source at the time of submission.
- Previous publication of the research as an abstract or within the proceedings of a conference does not preclude subsequent submission for publication, but authors must ensure that the submitted work is substantially different from the previously published version, which should be acknowledged and disclosed upon submission.
- Authors should avoid fragmentation of their work into multiple manuscripts.

#### *Conflicts of interest*

- Authors should declare and publicly disclose relevant conflicts of interest that might be construed to influence the results or interpretation of their research. They may be personal, commercial, political, academic or financial (including employment, consultancies, stock or share ownership, honoraria, paid expert testimony, patent applications or registrations, and grants or other funding).

#### *Suggesting reviewers*

- Suggestions from authors as to who might act as reviewers are useful, but there is no obligation on editors to use those suggested. Authors may also suggest reviewers that should not be selected, due to potential conflict of interest or bias.

#### *Errors in published work*

- Authors that discover a significant error or inaccuracy in their own published work should notify the journal editor or publisher and cooperate in the correction or retraction of the work as appropriate.
- If the editor or publisher learns that a published work contains a significant error, authors should cooperate in the prompt correction or retraction of the paper, or provide evidence of correctness.

## **REVIEWERS**

#### *Timeliness*

- Reviewers should process manuscripts with reasonable speed and efficiency, adhering to the journal's deadlines for peer review if possible.
- Selected reviewers that feel unqualified to review the manuscript, or who know that its prompt review will not be possible, should notify the editor as soon as possible.

#### *Confidentiality*

- Any manuscripts received for review must be treated as confidential documents. The manuscript should not be shown to, disclosed to, or discussed with others. In special cases reviewers may ask the advice of their colleagues on specific sections of the manuscript, but only after disclosing the names of those colleagues to the editor and obtaining the editor's permission.
- Reviewers are not permitted to use unpublished data, information, interpretation or discussion from submitted manuscripts in their own work, unless they have first obtained the author's written permission. Privileged information or ideas obtained through peer review must be kept confidential and not used for personal advantage.

### *Objectivity*

- Manuscripts should be considered objectively and judged on their merits, without regard to the race, religion, nationality, sex, seniority or institutional affiliation of the author. Whilst the review of a manuscript may justify criticism of the work, personal or malicious criticism of the author is never appropriate.
- Reviewers should not agree to review submitted manuscripts in which they have conflicts of interest resulting from competitive, collaborative or other relationships with any of the authors, companies or institutions involved that could reasonably be thought to bias the review.
- Reviewers should express their views clearly, using evidence to support their arguments.

### *Notification of errors or potential misconduct*

- Reviewers should identify relevant published work that has not been cited by the author. Any statement that an observation, derivation or argument has been previously reported in the published literature must be accompanied by the relevant citation.
- Reviewers should notify the editor in confidence if they notice any substantial similarity or overlap between the submitted manuscript and other published work, or if they suspect misconduct of any kind, including falsification of data.

## **EDITORS AND EDITORIAL STAFF**

### *Selection of appropriate reviewers*

- Editors and editorial staff will consider the use of an author's suggested reviewers, but retain the right to use reviewers of their own choice.
- Editors and editorial staff will not use reviewers that an author has requested not to be consulted, unless the editor reasonably considers there to be a significant over-riding interest in doing so.

### *Timeliness*

- Editors and editorial staff will process manuscripts with reasonable speed and efficiency, and notify authors of any unexpected delays in the review process if possible.

### *Confidentiality*

- Editors and editorial staff will treat submitted manuscripts as confidential documents. Until a publication decision has been made, details of the manuscript will not be disclosed to anyone other than reviewers, potential reviewers, editorial advisers and the publisher without the written permission of the author.
- Editors and editorial staff are not permitted to use unpublished data, information, interpretation or discussion from submitted manuscripts in their own work, unless they have first obtained the author's written permission. Privileged information or ideas obtained through peer review must be kept confidential and not used for personal advantage.

### *Objectivity*

- Manuscripts will be considered objectively and judged on their merits, without regard to the race, religion, nationality, sex, seniority or institutional affiliation of the author.
- Editors will recuse themselves from considering submitted manuscripts in which they have conflicts of interest resulting from competitive, collaborative or other relationships with any of the authors, companies or institutions involved. In such circumstances, including cases in which the editor is a named author, the manuscript will be passed to another editor or editorial adviser.
- Studies reporting negative results will not be excluded.

### *Publication decisions*

- The editor is solely and independently responsible for making the final decision regarding acceptance or rejection of a manuscript, but may confer with other editors,

- reviewers or editorial advisers in making this decision. The editor may reject a manuscript without review if considered inappropriate for the journal.
- Publication decisions will only be made with reference to the manuscript's importance, originality, clarity and relevance to the journal. The editor may be guided by the journal's editorial policy and constrained by legal requirements regarding libel, copyright infringement and plagiarism.
  - Editors will deal fairly with an author's appeal against the rejection of a submitted manuscript.

*Notification of errors or potential misconduct*

- Where misconduct on the part of an author or reviewer is suspected, or ethical complaints have been received concerning a submitted manuscript, the editor will coordinate with the publisher, author and reviewer to investigate the complaint as appropriate. The editor may also consult with relevant institutions and research bodies.
- An editor presented with convincing evidence that the substance or conclusions of a published paper are erroneous will coordinate with the publisher and author in the correction or retraction of the work as appropriate. In extreme cases the paper may be withdrawn and removed from the publication record.
- Where an allegation of misconduct has been upheld, the editor reserves the right to notify the author or reviewer's institution and to apply sanctions of a defined duration in respect of that individual's involvement with the journal. The editor will comply with data protection regulations as appropriate.

**FURTHER READING**

All Pharmaceutical Press journals are members of the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE). Further information on good publication practice can be found at [www.publicationethics.org.uk/guidelines](http://www.publicationethics.org.uk/guidelines).

*Other resources*

- World Association of Medical Editors – [www.wame.org](http://www.wame.org)
- International Committee of Medical Journal Editors – [www.icmje.org](http://www.icmje.org)
- CONSORT Group – [www.consort-statement.org](http://www.consort-statement.org)
- EQUATOR Network – [www.equator-network.org](http://www.equator-network.org)