

**Education in  
Medicine Journal**



# **Publication Ethics**

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Publication Malpractice  
Statement

**Education in Medicine Journal (EIMJ)** is committed to upholding the highest standards of publication ethics. We take all possible measures against publication malpractice as advised by Universiti Sains Malaysia as the university responsible for academic integrity. This ethic statements are based on COPE's Best Practice Guidelines for Journal Editors.

## **General Duties and Responsibilities of the Editor-in-Chief**

The Editor-in-Chief (EIC) of EIMJ should be responsible for everything published in the EIMJ. The EIC should:

- Strive to meet the needs of readers and authors;
- Constantly improve the journal in the aspect of research and development publications to the scientific committee;
- Ensure the quality of the material they publish. Publication decision should be supported with Evidence Based Medicine and the respectful reviewers;
- Champion freedom of expression;
- Maintain the integrity of the academic record;
- Preclude business needs from compromising intellectual standards;
- Always be willing to publish corrections, clarifications, retractions and apologies when needed;
- Screen the quality of peer reviewers.

## **Relations with Readers**

The readers should be informed about who has funded research and on the role of the funders in the research, if any. Acknowledgements should be written in detail.

## **Relations with Authors**

The EIC should take all reasonable steps to ensure the quality of the material they publish, recognising that journals and sections within journals will have different aims and standards.

The EIC's decision to accept or reject a paper for publication should be based only on the paper's importance, originality, and clarity, and the study's relevance to the remit of the journal as well as recommendations via the comments from peer reviewers as well as tight plagiarism criteria practice by the Universiti Sains Malaysia.

A description of peer review processes should be published for submitted articles, and the Editor should be ready to justify any important deviation from the described processes when requested by mail.

The EIMJ allows authors to appeal against Editorial decisions by allowing additional peer reviewer to review and give their final conclusion. These communications will be done via email or mail. This FINAL decision will be non-appealable.

The EIC should publish guidance to authors on everything that is expected of them. This guidance should be regularly updated and should refer or link to this code. This will be named as Guideline for Authors.

The EIC should not reverse decisions to accept submissions unless serious problems are identified with the submission such as issues of copyright, intellectual property rights and plagiarism.

A new EIC should not overturn decisions to publish submissions made by the previous Editor unless serious problems are identified.

## **Relations with Reviewers**

The EIC should publish guidance to reviewers on everything that is expected of them. This guidance should be regularly updated and should refer or link to this code. The peer reviewer guidelines is given by email attachment when they are officially invited by Universiti Sains Malaysia Press.

## **Peer Review**

All submissions will undergo a rigorous double-blind peer-review evaluation process before the final decision is made. At all stages of the review process, until the decision to accept has been taken, authors' and reviewers' identities are concealed from each other. The EIC and the editorial staff shall ensure that material submitted to EIMJ remains confidential while under review and ensure that the peer-review process is fair and unbiased.

## **Complaints**

The EIC should follow the procedure set out in the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) flowchart on complaints, where applicable subject to Universiti Sains Malaysia's rules and regulations and laws governing them.

The EIC should respond promptly to complaints and should ensure there is a way for dissatisfied complainants to take complaints further.

## **Encouraging Debate**

Cogent criticisms of published work should be published unless the EIC have convincing reasons why they cannot be. Authors of criticised material should be given the opportunity to respond.

Certain studies that challenge previous work published in the journal should be given an especially sympathetic hearing. Those studies reporting negative results should not be excluded.

## Encouraging Publication Concerning Research and Integrity

All research must have been carried out within an appropriate ethical framework. Articles conducting any animal or clinical studies should contain a statement in accordance with the animal and human ethics committee.

The EIC should ensure that research material they publish conforms to internationally accepted ethical guidelines.

The EIC should seek assurances that all research has been approved by an appropriate body (e.g. Research Ethics Committee, Institutional Review Board). However, the Editor-in-Chief should recognise that such approval does not guarantee that the research is ethical.

## Protecting Individual Data

The EIC and the editorial staff should protect the confidentiality of individual information (e.g. that obtained through the doctor-patient relationship). It is therefore almost always necessary to obtain written informed consent from patients described in case reports and for photographs of patients.

## Relations with Journal Owners and Publishers

The relationship of the EIC to publishers and owners is often complex but should in each case be based firmly on the principle of Editorial independence. Notwithstanding the economic and political realities of their journals, the EIC should make decisions on which articles to publish based on quality and suitability for readers rather than for immediate financial or political gain.

## Commercial Considerations

The Editor-in-Chief should have declared policies on advertising in relation to the content of the journal and on processes for publishing supplements.

Misleading advertisements must be refused, and the EIC must be willing to publish criticisms, according to the same criteria used for material in the rest of the journal.

Reprints should be published as they appear in the journal unless a correction is to be added.

## Conflict of Interest

A Declaration of Conflicting Interests policy refers to a formal policy a journal may have to require a conflict of interest statement or conflict of interest disclosure from a submitting or publishing author. Conflicts of interest arise when authors, reviewers, or editors have interests that are not fully apparent and that may influence their judgements on what is published. They have been described as those which, when revealed later, would make a reasonable reader feel misled or deceived.

### Reviewers

To ensure that the review process is free of conflicts:

- Editors should ensure that reviewers are free of conflict of interest with respect to an author.
- Reviewers are required to disclose any potential conflict of interest when refereeing an article.
- Minor conflicts do not disqualify a reviewer from reporting on an article but will be taken into account when considering the referees' recommendations.

### Authors

All authors and co-authors are required to disclose any potential conflict of interest when submitting their article.

### Editors

Editors should not make any editorial decisions or get involved in the editorial process if they have any conflict of interest (financial or otherwise) for a submitted manuscript.

When editors submit their own work to their journal, a colleague in the editorial office should manage the manuscript and the editor/author should recuse himself or herself from discussion and decisions about it.

## Intellectual Property

The EIC may adopt systems for detecting plagiarism (e.g. software, searching for similar titles) in submitted items (either routinely or when suspicions are raised). The EIC shall support authors whose copyright has been breached or who have been the victims of plagiarism and be prepared to defend authors' rights and pursue offenders (e.g. by requesting retractions or removal of material).

## Pursuing Misconduct

The EIC have a duty to act if they suspect misconduct. This duty extends to both published and unpublished papers.

The EIC should not simply reject papers that raise concerns about possible misconduct. They are ethically obliged to pursue alleged cases.

The EIC should first seek a response from those accused of misconduct. If they are not satisfied with the response, they should ask the relevant employers or some appropriate body (perhaps a regulatory body) to investigate.

The EIC should make all reasonable efforts to ensure that a proper investigation is conducted; if this does not happen, the EIC should make all reasonable attempts to persist in obtaining a resolution to the problem. This is an onerous but important duty.

## Ensuring the Integrity of the Academic Record

EIMJ follows the guidelines of the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) <https://publicationethics.org/guidance>. The Journal strive to ensure the integrity of our publication. Whenever it is found that a material inaccuracy, misleading statement, or misrepresentation has been published, it must be corrected promptly. If, after proper investigation, the item is found to be fraudulent, it should be retracted. The retraction should be clearly identifiable to readers and indexing systems.

## Corrections

The Journal takes every effort in publishing a final article that is error-free and asks authors to commit to the same. It is expected that the final version of the article can be relied upon as accurate and complete. Authors are provided with a set of page proofs that must be checked carefully for content and correct layout before published.

If happened, errors in published article may be identified in the form of a corrigendum or erratum when the EIC considers it is appropriate to inform the journal readership about a previous error and makes a correction to the error in the published article.

## Retractions

Retractions are considered when there are significant errors in the article that make the conclusions invalid. Retractions are also made in cases where there is evidence of malpractice in publication such as plagiarism, duplication of publication, or unethical research. Please refer to the [COPE retraction guidelines](#) for details.

## Editorial Expressions of Concern

The [COPE Retraction Guidelines](#) describe when journals could use expressions of concern. For example, editors should consider an expression of concern if:

- They receive inconclusive evidence of research or publication misconduct by the authors
- There is evidence that the findings are unreliable but the authors' institution will not investigate the case
- They believe that an investigation into alleged misconduct related to the publication either has not been, or would not be, fair and impartial or conclusive
- An investigation is underway but a judgement will not be available for a considerable time

COPE advises that [expressions of concern](#) should be linked to the article and state the reasons for the concern. If more evidence becomes available the expression of concern could be replaced by a retraction notice or an exonerating statement, depending on the outcome.