

Asia Pacific Journal of Mathematics

PUBLICATION ETHICS AND PUBLICATION MALPRACTICE STATEMENT

Our ethic statements are based on [COPE's Principles of Transparency and Best Practice in Scholarly Publishing](#), the International Mathematical Union's Committee for Electronic Information Communication (CEIC) Recommendations on Information and Communication: [Best Current Practices for Journals](#) and additional criteria of [DOAJ](#), [OASPA](#) and [Scopus](#).

[Download the PDF version here.](#)

1. Research Integrity

We uphold the high standards publication and expect research published by Asia Pacific Academic to abide by the principles of COPE in promoting integrity in scholarly research and its publication.

These principles cover:

honesty in all aspects of research;

scrupulous care, thoroughness, and excellence in research practice;

transparency and open communication;

care and respect for all participants and subjects of research.

In addition to the general principles above, our journal editorial teams also provide specific guidelines and policies for authors on research integrity and ethics appropriate to their subject matter and discipline. Anyone who believes that research published by Asia Pacific Academic has not been carried out in line with these Research Publishing Ethics Guidelines, or the above principles, should raise their concern with the relevant Editor or email contact@apacific.org. Concerns will be addressed by COPE guidelines where possible and/or by escalating the matter to OAE Ethics Committee if necessary.

2. Editorial Process

2.1 Editorial independence

We are committed to editorial independence and strive in all cases to prevent this principle from being compromised through conflicts of interest, fear, or any other corporate, business, financial or political influence. Our editorial processes reflect this commitment to editorial independence. We do not discriminate against authors, Editors, or peer reviewers based on personal characteristics or identity.

All articles published by Asia Pacific Academic are assessed by our independent Editorial Boards. Editorial office staff are not involved in decisions to accept manuscripts. When making a decision, we expect the academic Editor (the Editor-in-Chief or an Editor) to make it based solely upon:

The suitability of selected reviewers;

Adequacy of reviewer comments and author response;

Scientific excellence and originality;

Overall scientific quality of the paper.

We do not tolerate abusive behavior or correspondence towards our staff and others involved in the publishing process on our behalf. If anyone involved in this process engages in such behavior we have the right to take action to protect others from this abuse. This may include, for example, withdrawal of a manuscript from consideration or challenging abusive peer review comments.

2.2 Process

Asia Pacific Academic operates a rigorous single-blind peer review with at least two independent reviewers, followed by a final acceptance/rejection decision by the Editor-in-Chief. The Editor-in-Chief is responsible for the academic quality of the publication process, including final decisions and approval of Guest Editors, Special Issue topics, and new Editorial Board members. A summary of the editorial process can be found at <http://apjm.apacific.org/editorial-workflow/>.

3. Peer-Review Policy

3.1 Acceptable manuscript types

The following types of articles submitted to Asia Pacific Academic will be peer-reviewed: Research Article, Review Article. Other submitted articles are not usually peer-reviewed. For any questions or comments about the peer-review process, please contact the Managing Editor. Regarding questions about a specific manuscript, authors can contact the Editor who is handling the manuscript directly.

3.2 Online review system

All submitted manuscripts are processed in our online manuscript system at <http://msyst.apacific.org/index.php/apjm>, which follows international publishing standards specified by COPE. Peer reviewers can download articles and upload their review comments. For any technical problems met in the process, reviewers can contact the Managing Editor directly.

3.3 Criteria for publication

In general, every accepted manuscript means the paper must be of high quality, which should have originality, provide strong evidence for its conclusions, and be of great importance to researchers and interesting to readers in the related field.

Editorial office encourage commentary on published research as necessary to advance scientific discourse, which may also involve challenges, clarifications, etc.

All manuscripts will be uploaded to the most trusted plagiarism checker iThenticate for similarity check. Normally, the similarity rate of a manuscript should not exceed 20%.

3.4 Review process

Topics fall within the target journal's scope;

Acceptable quality after the pre-check by the Editor-in-Chief and the Editors;

Ethical code and approval have been provided if any;

Copyright permissions of cited Tables or Figures have been provided if any;

The similarity rate of a manuscript should not exceed 20%, especially no similarity in the sections of Abstract, Results, and Discussion;

Language is used in scientific writing and readable.

Only the papers that meet our editorial criteria can be sent for formal peer-review. Submissions of insufficient interest or poor quality will be rejected promptly by Editors without undergoing external review.

Typically, two review reports are required for each manuscript in external review. In the case of the two review reports that are highly controversial, the third review report will be collected. In these review reports, reviewers are expected to provide the Editors with a decision together with detailed comments and provide the authors with specific suggestions on revision.

Based on reviewers' comments, after careful consideration, the Editor-in-Chief will make possible decisions as below:

Accept: with/without editorial revision.

Accept after minor revisions: If reviewers approve a paper's quality only with several minor suggestions, the paper will be basically accepted after revision based on the reviewers' comments. Authors are usually given a week to revise their paper.

Reconsider after major revisions: If reviewers propose the suggestion of major revision or raise essential questions on a paper, the authors will be required to provide a point-to-point response or provide a rebuttal if authors cannot agree with some of reviewers' comments. Usually, only one round of major revisions is allowed, and whether the paper will be accepted would depend on the revisions. Authors will be required to resubmit the revised form within two weeks or one month if additional experiments are needed. If the author cannot complete the supplementary experiment within one month, we suggest that the author complete the experiment and submit the revised version as a new submission. The revision will be returned to the reviewers for further review.

Reject: The Editor-in-Chief will explain detailed reasons to the authors (e.g., lack of novelty or significant technical problems).

Reviewers' criticisms will be taken seriously. When reviewers disagree with each other, or the authors claim their research is misunderstood, we will further ask for advice from related reviewers or additional reviewers.

We respect reviewers' willingness or unwillingness to review subsequent revisions. Also, the Editor will not send revisions to reviewers if the authors have not addressed the comments seriously.

3.5 Reviewer selection

Reviewer selection is very critical in the publication process. When selecting a reviewer, we consider many factors, including expertise, reputation, recommendations, and our previous experience of reviewers. A reviewer who is quick, responsible, and can provide useful comments for papers is preferred and will be added in our reviewer database. Meanwhile, authors can request that the Editors exclude one or two individuals or laboratories. The Editors will seriously consider their requests and usually respect them, but Editors make the final decision on the choice of referees. In the process, we keep in mind the confidentiality of manuscripts.

General reviewer criteria of Asia Pacific Academic are as follows:

Having Ph.D. degree and institutional email;

Having research interest related to the manuscript topic;

Having no conflicts of interest with authors after Editor's preliminary investigation;

Having publications in internationally recognized academic journals in recent five years.

The peer-review process is single-blind peer review for Asia Pacific Academic. We do not release reviewers' identities to authors or other reviewers unless they voluntarily sign their comments to the authors. Generally, we ask reviewers not to identify themselves to authors in their review reports without the Editor's knowledge. We avoid any attempt by authors to identify the reviewers. Asia Pacific Academic also supports double-blind peer-review and open review in the future.

3.6 Time control

Asia Pacific Academic is committed to rapid manuscript processing and publication. An efficient editorial process is a valuable service both to our authors and to the scientific community. We therefore ask reviewers to submit their review report promptly within an agreed period. If reviewers need a longer delay than previously expected, we will keep the authors informed promptly or will find alternatives if necessary.

3.7 Qualified review report

Peer-review is to provide the Editors with helpful information to make a decision and help the authors strengthen their manuscript by revision suggestions to be acceptable for publication or explain to the authors the major weaknesses of their manuscript resulting in rejection so that the authors may understand the rejection decision and can improve their manuscript accordingly and publish elsewhere.

We expect reviewers to assess a manuscript from the various aspects below:

1. Summarize the highlights of the manuscript;
2. State the flaws if any which are not acceptable for publication and provide detailed information;
3. Others:

Evaluate the originality and significance. Are the conclusions original? Are research results useful for most researchers in the related field?

Assess the abstract, introduction, conclusion, and references. Is the abstract clear? Is the introduction appropriate? Is the conclusion reliable? Are the references cited appropriately?

Assess the data and methodology. Is the approach valid? Are the data and methodology detailed and available to be reproduced by other researchers?

Indicate the parts of the manuscript which are out of your research field and you are unable to assess professionally.

Assess the appropriate use of statistics and treatment of uncertainties.

Reviewers need to provide detailed point-to-point improvement advice if the above problems exist so that the authors can improve their manuscript accordingly. Reviewers can contact the Editor for guidance if having any questions.

3.8 Reviewing review reports

Editors review each report of reviewers and ensure its validity before sending it to the authors. We seriously value reviewers' comments to Editor when making a decision on the paper. According to the policy, we normally transmit all comments of reviewers to the authors. However, we may edit a report to remove offensive language or comments that reveal confidential information on some occasions. We strongly expect reviewers to state their opinion on a paper without offensive statements and review their articles in the way you expect them to treat yours. Reviewers are required not to recommend authors to cite their publications when it is not clearly indicated that the citing can improve the article's quality, which may also reveal the reviewers' identities. Authors should take an objective view on criticisms to their manuscript.

3.9 Ethics and security

Asia Pacific Academic Editors may ask for advice about submitted manuscripts not only from professional reviewers but also on any aspect of a paper that raises concerns, like ethical issues and threats to security. In such circumstances, advice will usually be sought simultaneously within the peer-review process. The final decision on whether to publish is made by the Editor-in-Chief of the journal involved.

4. Open Access

Asia Pacific Journal of Mathematics is an open access journal, registered in Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ).

5. Publication Ethics and Publication Misconduct Statement

Asia Pacific Academic strictly complies with the editorial guidelines by COPE on the statement of publication ethics and publication misconduct. According to the best practices of publication ethics by COPE, the responsibility and right of authors, reviewers, the Editor-in-Chief, the Editors, the Editorial Board members and in-house Editors in the publishing process are clarified.

5.1 Author's responsibilities and rights

1. The authors should guarantee the originality, authenticity, accuracy, and repeatability of the data in the submissions. If necessary, the path of data sources should be provided to make it convenient for scholars to conduct repeated experiments or for further use.
2. The authors should guarantee that the submissions have not been submitted to other journals or officially published in other journals in the corresponding period. Serious problems with publica-

tion ethics, such as duplicate submission and duplicate publication, should be avoided.

3. If a manuscript involves human body, animal, or plant experiments, it is imperative to get timely permission from relevant institutions (e.g., Ethics Committee, Institutional Review Board, etc.); if it involves the personal information of subjects, the corresponding informed consent shall be obtained, respecting the subjects' privacy; if it involves clinical trials, it shall register with the Public Clinical Registration Center (refer to Research Ethics and Consent for details); and if it involves copyright issues, explicit permission shall be obtained from the corresponding publishing institutions or individuals (refer to Copyright and License to Publish for details). The relevant data shall be submitted to the Journal Office with the manuscript.
4. The authors should clarify the conflicts of interest (Asia Pacific Academic requires the authors to state clearly any possible economic or non-economic conflict of interest in the manuscript; refer to Conflicts of Interest Policy for details).
5. When serious data errors are found in published papers, the authors should inform the Journal Office in a timely manner. When necessary, they shall cooperate with the Journal Office to issue a statement of Correction or Retraction.
6. All authors of a manuscript have the right to track the real-time progress in manuscript processing. They can formally submit complaints to the corresponding Journal Office or Editor-in-Chief if they have any objection to the manuscript processing process.
7. It should be affirmed that all authors listed in the manuscript have made great contributions to the research. Regarding the misconduct of false contribution or publication, plagiarism, etc., once it is found, the original authors have the right to safeguard their legitimate rights reasonably by informing the corresponding Journal Office, and providing detailed data to make it convenient for the Journal Office to contact relevant departments or institutions for investigation. If the evidence is irrefutable through investigation, the Journal Office will directly reject or withdraw the manuscript and publicize the handling result. In terms of those who seriously violate publication ethics, the Journal Office will inform their affiliations and will never accept their submissions.

5.2 Reviewer's responsibilities and rights

1. The reviewers should review and evaluate manuscripts in an objective, fair, and timely manner. They should not discriminate against the authors in terms of their nationality, race, etc., and the malice of slander should be avoided. They should respect the authors' contributions and help improve the quality of manuscripts.
2. Before a manuscript is officially published, the reviewers should not copy or keep the data in the manuscript for their own use or plagiarize the research methods and research ideas so as to protect the confidentiality of the manuscript.
3. The reviewers should pay careful attention to the potential conflicts of interest and remind the authors of them in a timely manner.
4. The reviewers should reasonably avoid their possible conflicts of interest with the authors and inform the Journal Office to avoid the possibility of an unfair evaluation.
5. In the case of finding any academic misconduct, the reviewers should timely inform the Journal Office or Editor-in-Chief, and they have the right to learn about the progress and results of the investigation.

5.3 Editor-in-Chief's responsibilities and rights

The Editor-in-Chief is the key leader of Asia Pacific Academic and is mainly responsible for its scientific quality. The Editor-in-Chief should guarantee the originality, and significance, take the academic value as the criteria for evaluating manuscripts and reasonably avoid improper publications for commercial purposes. The Editor-in-Chief's responsibilities include:

Determining the journal's aims and scope;

Inviting distinguished researchers to join the Editorial Board;

Suggesting topics for Special Issues;

Inviting first-rate manuscripts to the journal;

Being active in the editorial process by conducting initial reviews, organizing peer-review, and making final decisions on submissions;

Promoting the journal among peers and at conferences;

Providing advice for input or feedback regarding new regulations on the journal.

To reward the Editor-in-Chief for his contributions to the journal, OAE provides the Editor-in-Chief with a certain amount of fund each year to support the Editor-in-Chief's academic activities. The initial term for the Editor-in-Chief position is four years and it can be renewed.

5.4 Editor's responsibilities and rights

The Editors of Asia Pacific Academic are mainly responsible for organizing peer-review for manuscripts assigned by the Editor-in-Chief. They need to control the peer-review process and help the authors improve their manuscripts by collecting valuable review reports to comply with the best practice guidelines of COPE. The detailed responsibilities of the Editors include:

Inviting reviewers for manuscripts assigned by the Editor-in-Chief and collecting valuable review reports;

Communicating with authors to revise their manuscripts based on reviewers' comments;

Sending revisions to the Editor-in-Chief asking for final decisions;

Inviting first-rate manuscripts to the journal;

Assisting the Editor-in-Chief to conduct an initial review in the case of a conflict of interest;

Promoting the journal among peers or at conferences;

Providing advice for input or feedback regarding new regulations on the journal.

The initial term for an Editor is the same as that of the Editor-in-Chief, and it can be renewed. An Editor can step down from the position at any time if he/she overloaded by the requests.

5.5 Editorial Board member's responsibilities and rights

Reviewing one or two manuscripts per year;

Helping promote the journal among peers or at conferences;

Helping edit a Special Issue on a topic related to his or her research interests;

Providing advice for input or feedback regarding new regulations on the journal.

The initial term for Editorial Board membership is the same as that of the Editor-in-Chief and it can be renewed. An Editorial Board member can step down from the position at any time if he or she feels overloaded by the requests.

5.6 In-house Editor's responsibilities

In-house Editors are consisted of Managing Editor, Assistant Editor, Language Editors, and Production Editors. Their responsibilities and rights are described below:

5.6.1 Managing Editor

Pre-checking submissions from the perspectives of originality, suitability, structure and formatting, conflicts of interest, authors' background, etc. Poorly prepared manuscripts may be rejected at this stage;

Assigning the submissions which passed the pre-check to the Editor-in-Chief to initial review;

Overseeing the editorial process to comply with the best practice guidelines of COPE;

Assisting the Editor-in-Chief in managing other journal issues like communicating with the Editors and the Editorial Board members to keep the journal operating as per the established plan;

Promoting the journal by launching conferences cooperation, attending workshops, etc.

5.6.2 Assistant Editor

The Assistant Editor is mainly responsible for assisting in completing the responsibilities of the Managing Editor mentioned above.

5.6.3 Language Editors

Asia Pacific Academic provides a free English editing service for all accepted manuscripts. Language Editors are responsible for polishing the language of submissions assigned to them. An additional fee will be charged to authors if very extensive English corrections must be made during the revision stage

5.6.4 Production Editors

Production Editors are responsible for the work of pre-release online and production of accepted submissions. The production work includes copy editing, format conversion, proofreading, and on-line publication, etc.

5.7 Publication misconduct and handling policies

5.7.1 misconduct

Misconduct includes but is not limited to data fabrication, plagiarism, authorship impropriety, breach of ethical and legal regulations, misappropriation of others' ideas, etc. Asia Pacific Academic has summarized some most common forms of misconduct in order to help authors avoid those inappropriate behaviors.

Data falsification – It ranges from fabrication to deceptive selective reporting of findings and omission of conflicting data, or willful suppression and/or distortion of data.

Plagiarism – It includes the appropriation of the language, ideas, or thoughts of another without crediting their true source, and representation of them as one's own original work.

Image manipulation – It refers to the changes to images that can create misleading results when research data are collected as images. Inappropriate image manipulation is one form of fabrication or falsification.

Authorship impropriety – It refers to improper assignment of credit, such as excluding other authors, including individuals as authors who have not made a definite contribution to the work, or submitting multi-authored manuscript without the concurrence of all authors.

Breach of ethical and legal regulations – It includes but is not limited to serious or substantial, repeated, willful violations of applicable local regulations and laws involving the use of funds, care of animals, human subjects, investigational drugs, recombinant products, new devices, or radioactive, biologic, or chemical materials.

Misappropriation of others' ideas – Scholars can acquire novel ideas from others during the process of reviewing grant applications or manuscripts. Improper use of such information can constitute fraud. Substantial appropriation of such material constitutes misconduct.

Violation of generally accepted research practices – Serious deviation from accepted practices in proposing or carrying out research, improper manipulation of experiments to obtain biased results, deceptive statistical or analytical manipulations, or improper reporting of results.

Inappropriate behavior related to misconduct – It includes unfounded or knowingly false accusations of misconduct, failure to report known or suspected misconduct, withholding or destruction of information relevant to a claim of misconduct and retaliation against persons involved in the allegation or investigation.

5.7.2 how to identify it

1. Asia Pacific Academic uses Crossref. It can conduct duplicate checking on each manuscript through iThenticate to avoid the misconducts of suspected plagiarism, duplicate publication, etc.
2. Asia Pacific Academic provides MESAs, an independent manuscript processing system. It can support authors to conduct self-inspection according to the checklist. In the case of any misconduct of suspected plagiarism, duplicate publication, etc., the system will automatically inform the Editorial Board of the journal.
3. Asia Pacific Academic uses the forensic tools for examination of images and samples provides by Office of Research Integrity.
4. Asia Pacific Academic encourages anyone, including readers, authors, reviewers, Editorial Board members, etc., to inform against suspected misconduct according to the relevant regulations by WAME, COPE, and ICMJE and timely inform the journal's Editor or the publisher.
5. It is the informant's responsibility to provide sufficient evidence and information to make it convenient for Editors or publishers to contact relevant departments for further investigation.

5.7.3 how to avoid it

1. Asia Pacific Academic provides information, enhance awareness, and list the contributions of authors.
2. Asia Pacific Academic ensures the disclosure of conflicts of interest and provide guidance on authorship and signature.
3. Asia Pacific Academic sets the function of commenting on articles to encourage readers to discuss the articles published online.
4. The expectation of confidentiality is explained to reviewers.
5. The Quality Control Committee and the Ethics Committee are established for Asia Pacific Academic.

5.7.4 how to handle it

Asia Pacific Academic takes all allegations of potential misconduct seriously and deals with them case-by-case on the basis of the COPE Guidelines. If there is misconduct suspicion, it may be necessary for the Editors to contact and share content of manuscript with third parties, such as authors' institutions and ethics committees. Any questions, you may email to Asia Pacific Academic: contact@apacific.org

1. For the suspected misconduct identified by the plagiarism detecting system, the Managing Editor will send the detecting results to the parties concerned and seek the formal response from them. After the investigation of relevant institutions or departments, the Managing Editor will take the following appropriate measures to handle irrefutable academic misconduct.

Handling results for reference (with the punishment degree from mild to severe, one or more handling methods can be adopted in accordance with specific conditions):

1. Inform and educate the parties concerned.
2. Give warnings to the parties concerned.
3. Publicize the academic misconduct.
4. Inform the affiliations of the parties concerned or the persons in charge.
5. Reject or withdraw the manuscript and inform the relevant database administrator to withdraw the publication records. For specific statements, please refer to the policies in Corrections and Retractions.
6. Within a certain period of time, the parties concerned are forbidden to submit manuscripts, publish articles, or participate in other relevant academic activities in the journal and other journals subordinate to the same publishing house.
7. If the circumstance is severe, the Managing Editor will inform the relevant departments or institutions, who will permanently record their misconduct on publication ethics.
8. When the Managing Editor, the Assistant Editor, the Editor-in-Chief or an Editor receives a written report against academic misconduct, one or more of the following are performed:
9. Contact the informant to provide sufficient evidence and information.
10. Seek a direct response from the parties accused.
11. Contact relevant organizations or regulatory agencies to assist in the investigation in the case of receiving insufficient response.
12. If necessary, on the premise of avoiding conflicts of interest with the parties concerned, an investigation team composed of the Editor-in-Chief or an Editor of the journal and at least one Editorial Board member in cooperation should be established to carry out an investigation.
13. The investigation team will inform the parties accused to officially start the investigation.
14. Adopt different handling methods according to different situations:
15. formally informing both parties if it is not identified as misconduct;
16. proposing relevant suggestions to the Editors according to the severity of circumstances if it is identified as misconduct, and formally informing both parties of the handling results.

Asia Pacific Academic handles misconduct according to the flowcharts by COPE. If there is any objection to the handling methods, a further appeal can be submitted to the publisher at

contact@apacific.org.

5.8 Investigation of questionable research practices

Concerns about questionable research practices may be raised through the use of screening software or by editors, peer reviewers, or third parties. COPE has flowcharts for responding to concerns that have been raised by third parties directly or indirectly. Sometimes further investigation may require disclosing the third party's identity. If so, the individual should be informed and give approval before their identity is disclosed.

Regardless of whether the concern arose from screening, editors, peer reviewers, or third parties, potentially questionable research practices that have specific, detailed evidence to support the claim or concern should be investigated appropriately, whether they are raised anonymously or otherwise.

The Asia Pacific Academic Editorial Office should address potential cases of data fabrication, falsification, plagiarism, image manipulation, unethical research, biased reporting, authorship issues, redundant or duplicate publication, and potential conflicts of interest.

In instances where an investigation cannot be conducted by the publishing team, for example, if it relates to issues that may have occurred which would be difficult for the journal to source the necessary information to investigate (i.e. data fabrication, authorship issues, unethical research, etc.), Asia Pacific Academic will request investigations by research institutions, employers, funders, or the relevant national statutory body. However, for some cases of questionable research practices (for example, plagiarism or image manipulation), which can be assessed by the journal, it is appropriate for these cases to be investigated and acted upon by Asia Pacific Academic's publishing team. The Asia Pacific Academic Editorial Office should ensure that the relevant parties are kept informed; this includes the authors and their institutions and/or funders.

Cases of suspected questionable research practices should be handled following established processes, for example, those presented in the COPE Flowcharts.

Sample letters from COPE (login required) and Sample Correspondence for Editors from Council of Science Editors may be useful.

Cases should be handled at a speed that allows appropriate care to be taken.

Investigations may lead to Retractions, Withdrawals, Expressions of Concern, or other outcomes.

6. Authorship and Contribution

Authorship credit of Asia Pacific Academic should be solely based on substantial contributions to a published study, as specified in the following four criteria:

1. Substantial contributions to the conception or design of the work, or the acquisition, analysis, or interpretation of data for the work;
2. Drafting the work or revising it critically for important intellectual content;
3. Final approval of the version to be published;
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 who meet these criteria should be identified as authors. Contributors who do not meet all the four criteria (like only involved in the acquisition of funding, general supervision of a research group, general administrative support, writing assistance, technical editing, language editing, proof-reading, etc.) should be acknowledged in the section Acknowledgement in the manuscript rather than being listed as authors.

If a large multiple-author group has conducted the work, the group ideally should decide who will be the authors before the work starts and confirm authors before submission. All authors of the group named as authors must meet all the four criteria for authorship.

6.1 Corresponding author(s)

Asia Pacific Academic does not require all authors to sign the letter of their submission, nor do they impose an order on the list of authors. Submissions taken by Asia Pacific Academic mean that all the listed authors have agreed all of the contents, including the author list and the statement of authors' contributions.

Corresponding author(s) is who takes primary responsibility of communicating with journal Editors during manuscript processing, before and after publication, and typically ensures that all the journal's requirements are properly completed, such as ensuring all authors have agreed to be so listed and have approved the manuscript submitted to the journal, providing details of authorship, ethical committee approval and clinical trial registration documents, and gathering conflicts of interest forms, etc.

Any changes to the author list after submission, such as a change in the order of the authors or the deletion or addition of authors, must be approved by every author. Asia Pacific Academic Editors are not in a position to investigate or adjudicate authorship disputes before or after publication. Such disagreements, if they cannot be resolved amongst authors, should be directed to the relevant institutional authority. No change is allowed on authorship after official acceptance of manuscripts.

The primary affiliation for each author should be the institution where the majority of their work is done. If an author has subsequently moved, the current address may also be stated. Asia Pacific Academic remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.

Corresponding author is also expected to be responsible for the following with respect to data, code and materials:

ensuring that data, materials, and code comply with transparency and reproducibility standards of the field and the journal;

ensuring that original data/materials/code upon which the submission is based are preserved following best practices in the field so that they are retrievable for reanalysis;

confirming that data/materials/code presentation accurately reflects the original;

foreseeing and minimizing obstacles to the sharing of data/materials/code described in the work.

At submission, corresponding author must clearly identify any material in the manuscript (such as figures or tables) that has been published previously elsewhere and confirm that written permission from authors of the prior work and/or publishers has been well obtained for the re-use of such material. After acceptance, corresponding author is responsible for the accuracy of all content in the proof, including the names of coauthors, addresses and affiliations. After publication, corresponding author is the point of contact for queries about the published paper. It is their responsibility to inform all co-authors of any matters arising in relation to the published paper and to ensure such matters are dealt with promptly. Authors of published manuscripts have a responsibility to inform the journal immediately if they become aware of any aspect that requires correction.

Corresponding authors are advised to provide their ORCID (Open Researcher and Contributor ID) when submitting a manuscript. This information is also visible once the manuscript is published online.

6.2 Co-first authorship

When two authors contribute equally to a work, authors can indicate dual first authorship with an asterisk on the manuscript title page and a short note “Drs. XXX and XXX contributed equally to this article.”.

6.3 Group authorship

Asia Pacific Academic permits the use of group names in the case where some large groups designate authorship by a group name, with or without names of individual authors. When submitting a manuscript authored by a group, the corresponding authors should specify the group name if one exists, and clearly identify the group members who can take credit and responsibility for the work as authors.

6.4 Statement of authors' contributions

Asia Pacific Academic requires authors to make a statement of authors' contributions to specify the contribution of each author at the end of their manuscript. The details vary: some disciplines produce manuscripts that comprise discrete efforts in detail, whereas some operate as a group at all stages. We also encourage authors to list anyone who does not meet the criteria for authorship in an Acknowledgments section in their publication, for example, to recognize the contributions of anyone who provided research or writing assistance. COPE also provides extensive resources on authorship and authorship disputes, and we encourage anyone involved in editorial decisions to familiarize themselves with these resources. We support our Editors in dealing with any authorship disputes, including escalating or seeking advice on cases with COPE.

6.5 Deceased authors

If the submitted article contains a deceased author, or the author dies during the review process, a footnote or similar form should be added to the published version of the article. Please use the "†" symbol and footnotes to illustrate the situation. The co-author should guarantee the contribution and potential conflict of interest of the deceased author. If the deceased author is a corresponding author, another co-author should be nominated as the corresponding author. Please note that according to the law, copyright is regarded as personal property. If the author has not signed a copyright transfer agreement or license or has not authorized a co-author to act on his behalf in writing, he needs to obtain a copyright license from the author's successor.

6.6 Author name changes after publication

If the author wishes to change their name after publication, the Editorial Office will consider such requirements under reasonable circumstances. If changes are made, they should be recorded and corrected with the article. All authors should be informed of any changes that may affect them and, where appropriate, seek advice from all authors on the wording of the correction statement. The Editorial Office will strictly follow the COPE guidelines (How to handle authorship disputes: a guide for new researchers) to handle it and respect the author's wishes, but at the same time ensure that the published articles have transparent and reliable records.

6.7 Authorship disputes

The Editorial Office will refer to the COPE Flow Chart and "How to spot authorship problems" to deal with the authorship disputes, if any. If the author cannot resolve the dispute independently, they usually need to submit it to the relevant authorities.

6.8 Editors and journal staff as authors

The Editorial Office staff or Editorial Board members (including Editors-in-Chief) are not involved in the processing of their own academic work. Their submissions are assigned and revised by at least two independent reviewers. Decisions are made by other Editorial Board members who do not have a conflict of interest with the authors.

7. Conflicts of Interest

7.1 Asia Pacific Academic's Conflicts of Interest Policy

It is the responsibility of every academic to maintain the transparency and credibility of the research publication. Improving the transparency and legitimacy of the publishing system allows us to effectively share important information, thereby improving our understanding of academic knowledge. Asia Pacific Academic requires authors to declare any competing financial and/or non-financial interests in their submitted manuscripts.

7.2 Definition of conflicts of interest

Conflicts of interest refer to a situation where an author cannot handle things from an objective stand because of various relationships. Asia Pacific Academic's conflicts of interest include financial and non-financial interests which could undermine the objectivity, integrity and value of a publication.

7.2.1 financial conflicts of interest

Funding Support: Authors need to disclose funding support that may gain or lose through this publication, as well as the funder's role in the conception, design, data collection and analysis, decision to publish, and preparation of the manuscript.

Employment: Recent (while engaged in current research project), present or anticipated employment by any organization that may gain or lose financially through this publication.

Personal financial interests: Stocks, shares, consultation fees and other forms of remuneration that may gain or lose financially through the publication; Patents or patent applications whose value may be affected by the publication.

It is difficult to define a detailed threshold that will refer to financial interest, so we suggest authors declaring all possible conflicts of interest of their research manuscripts, avoiding embarrassing the authors once the article is published online without declaration.

7.2.2 non-financial conflicts of interest

No-financial conflicts of interest usually refer to personal or professional relations with organizations and individuals. It mainly includes but is not limited to the following situations: unpaid membership in a government or non-governmental organization, unpaid advisory position in a commercial organization, acting as an expert witness. We suggest authors declaring any unpaid roles or relationships that may affect the publication process.

7.3 Conflicts of interest policy for authors

Asia Pacific Academic requires authors to declare any possible financial and/or non-financial conflicts of interest at the end of their manuscript and in the cover letter, as well as confirm this point when submitting their manuscript in the submission system. If no conflicts of interest exist, authors need to state “The authors declare no conflicts of interest”. We also recognize that some authors may be bound by confidentiality agreements, in which cases authors need to state “The authors declare that they are bound by confidentiality agreements that prevent them from disclosing their competing interests in this work.”

Declaration of each manuscript in peer review is fully open to reviewers and subsequently fully open to readers when the manuscript is online published after acceptance.

7.4 Conflicts of interest policy for reviewers

Asia Pacific Academic suggests reviewers avoid reviewing manuscripts in which significant conflicts of interest exist. However, under the situation that Editors are well informed of any related interests and the existing interests do not affect the conclusion of the manuscript, reviewers may still evaluate it and give their comments. Editors will consider the interests when weighing their recommendations.

7.5 Conflicts of interest policy for Editors

Editors of Asia Pacific Academic are required to declare any interests that may impact their editorial practices and to exclude themselves if the conflicts of interest would have a significant effect on the editorial processing.

8. Duplicate Publication

Manuscripts submitted to Asia Pacific Academic must be original, and should not be published or under consideration for any other journals. Authors are required to declare it clearly in the cover letter in any case where there is the potential for overlap or duplication. Any overlapping publications should be cited. Asia Pacific Academic uses Crossref and uses iThenticate to detect possible plagiarism. Any suspected cases of covert duplicate manuscript submission will be handled as outlined in the COPE Guidelines and the Editor may contact the authors’ institution if any misconduct exists.

However, a complete report following publication of a preliminary report, such as a letter to the Editor, a preprint or an abstract or a poster displayed at an academic conference, and a paper presented at an academic conference but unpublished in full, or being considered for publication in proceedings or similar format, are usually considered as exceptions to this rule. Press reports of scheduled meetings are not usually regarded as breaches of this rule, but they may be if additional data tables or figures enrich such reports.

9. Citation

Authors should ensure that where material is taken from other sources (including their own published writing), the source is clearly cited and that where appropriate permission is obtained.

Authors should not engage in excessive self-citation of their own work.

Authors should not copy references from other publications if they have not read the cited work.

Authors should not preferentially cite their own or their friends', peers', or institution's publications.

Authors should not cite advertisements or advertorial material.

In accordance with COPE guidelines, we expect that "original wording taken directly from publications by other researchers should appear in quotation marks with the appropriate citations". This condition also applies to an author's own work. COPE have produced a discussion document on citation manipulation with recommendations for best practice.

10. Embargo Policy

Submitted and accepted articles must remain privileged documents and must not be released to the press or the public, in any format including print, television, internet, etc., until the manuscript appears online either as ahead of print or as a final publication. Asia Pacific Academic allows authors to post their manuscripts on not-for-profit preprint servers, or to discuss it at scientific conferences, but these should not be discussed with the media.

11. Confidentiality

Asia Pacific Academic adheres to COPE Guidelines and treats manuscripts confidentially during the editorial processing. The Editors will not share manuscripts with third parties except in cases of suspected misconduct. Please refer to Misconduct Policy for more details. Once a manuscript is rejected for publication, all the copies of the manuscript will be deleted from the editorial system. In case the Editor needs to retain certain manuscripts rejected, they should get permission from the authors in advance.

Asia Pacific Academic adopts a single-blind peer review process for Asia Pacific Academic, which means the identities of reviewers are not revealed to authors or anyone else unless reviewers permit. Reviewers are also required to respect the confidentiality rules and not distribute or misappropriate any information of the manuscript, during or after the peer-review process. If reviewers want to involve another person in the review process, they should contact the Editors first for permission, provide the name of the person who would assist the review process, and ensure the confidentiality is maintained.

12. Copyright and License to Publish

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13. Availability of Data and Materials

To maintain the integrity, transparency and reproducibility of research records, authors are encouraged to make their experimental materials and research data freely available to readers, either by publishing the supportive information as supplementary information in the journal or by depositing datasets into publicly available data repositories. The information, indicating where the data and materials of their works can be found, must be included in the manuscript as a declaration of Availability of Data and Materials. Authors who are unable to share their data must state that data will not be shared, and specify the reason accordingly.

14. Publication Permanency

To ensure permanent access to publications, articles published in Asia Pacific Academic will be archived in the National Library of New Zealand (Te Puna Mātauranga o Aotearoa).

15. Corrections, Retractions, Withdrawals, and Expressions of Concern

15.1 Corrections

Asia Pacific Academic Editors encourage readers and authors to notify them if they find errors, especially errors that could affect the interpretation of data or information presented in an article. When an error is identified:

The Editorial Office will work with authors and the publisher to correct important published errors.

The Editorial Office will consider retraction when errors are so fundamental that they invalidate the findings.

Corrections arising from errors within an article should be distinguishable from retractions and statements of concern relating to questionable research practices.

Corrections should be included in indexing systems and linked to the original article.

Corrections should be free to access.

The format the correction will take can depend on the article's stage of publication. For example, for those articles which have been published on an Early View service (or equivalent), which is the online Version of Record before inclusion in an issue, corrections may be made directly to the article online. In these cases, an audit trail must be added to highlight what changes have been made to the online version of the article since its initial publication and the date these changes were made.

For those articles which have been published in an issue, a corresponding correction statement should be published and linked to the original article. In these cases, the changes should usually not be made directly to the article.

15.2 Retractions

Asia Pacific Academic is committed to playing its part in maintaining the integrity of the scholarly record, therefore on occasion, it is necessary to retract articles. Articles may be retracted if:

There is major scientific error which would invalidate the conclusions of the article, for example where there is clear evidence that findings are unreliable, either as a result of misconduct (e.g. data fabrication) or honest error (e.g. miscalculation or experimental error).

Where the findings have previously been published elsewhere without proper cross-referencing, permission or justification (i.e. cases of redundant publication).

Where there are ethical issues such as plagiarism (appropriation of another person's ideas, processes, results, or words without giving appropriate credit including those obtained through confidential review of others' manuscripts) or inappropriate authorship (e.g., "guest" authorship; see COPE discussion document 'What constitutes authorship?').

Where unethical research has been reported.

In order to ensure that retractions are handled according to industry best practice, and in accordance with COPE guidelines, Asia Pacific Academic adopts the following retraction process:

Asia Pacific Academic follows the recommendations of the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) for retraction. Potential Retractions are thoroughly investigated by the Editorial Office with the support of the Editorial Board and final approval by the Editor-in-Chief. Other persons and institutions will be consulted as necessary, including university authorities, or experts in the field.

15.3 Withdrawals

Accepted Articles

An Accepted Article is the uncorrected, unedited, non-typeset version of an article published on Asia Pacific Academic journal website. While an Accepted Article will have been allocated a Digital Object Identifier (DOI), it does not constitute the Version of Record as it will not yet have been formally published and does not yet carry complete bibliographic information. Therefore, where an Accepted Article is to be retracted because, for example, it contains errors, has been accidentally submitted twice or infringes a professional ethical code of some type, it may be deleted and replaced with a withdrawal statement.

Even in the above circumstances, bibliographic information about the deleted article should be retained for the scientific record, and an explanation given, however brief, about the circumstances of its removal.

Online Version

It is Asia Pacific Academic's policy to strongly discourage withdrawal of the Online Version in line with the International Association of Scientific, Technical and Medical Publishers guidelines on retractions and preservation of the objective record of science. Therefore, deletion of the Online Version is rare, and Asia Pacific Academic will only consider it in limited circumstances, such as the following:

Where there has been a violation of the privacy of a research subject; or

Where there are errors to which a member of the general public might be exposed and if followed or adopted, would pose a significant risk to health; or

Where a clearly defamatory comment has been made about others in the relevant field or about their work.

15.4 Expressions of Concern

Editors of Asia Pacific Academic may consider issuing an Expression of Concern if they have well-founded concerns and feel that readers should be made aware of potentially misleading information contained in an article. However, Expressions of Concern should only be issued if an investigation into the problems relating to the article has proved inconclusive, and if there remain strong indicators that the concerns are valid. See COPE case: Data manipulation and institute's internal review.

On very rare occasions, an Expression of Concern may be issued while an investigation is underway but a judgement will not be available for a considerable time. However, in such cases there must be well-founded grounds to suggest that the concerns are valid.

In all cases, editors should be aware that an Expression of Concern carries the same risks to a researcher's reputation as a retraction, and it is often preferable to wait to publish a retraction until

a definitive judgement has been achieved by an independent investigation. See COPE case: Handling self-admissions of fraud.

16. Appeals and Complaints

If authors do not agree with any decision made in editorial handling, they can submit a formal appeal to the editorial office, explaining their reasons. The issue will be soon dealt with according to the COPE Guidelines.

17. How to raise a concern

Anyone who believes that research published by Asia Pacific Academic has not been carried out in line with these principles should raise their concerns with the relevant Editor or email contact@apacific.org.