



PUBLICATION ETHICS AND PUBLICATION MALPRACTICE STATEMENT

The Malaysian Journal of Medical Sciences (MJMS) 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 Chief Editor (valid from 1st November 2012)

The Chief Editor of MJMS should be responsible for everything published in the MJMS. The Chief Editor 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 Chief Editor 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 Chief Editor'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 MJMS allows authors to appeal against Editorial decisions by allowing additional peer reviewer to review and give their final conclusion These communications will be done

outside of the Manuscript Central processing via email or mail. This FINAL decision will be non-appealable.

The Chief Editor 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 Chief Editor 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 Chief Editor should not overturn decisions to publish submissions made by the previous Editor unless serious problems are identified.

Relations with reviewers

The Chief Editor 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 or mail when they are officially invited by Universiti Sains Malaysia Press via Manuscript Central.

The Chief Editor should have systems to ensure that peer reviewers' identities are protected- unless they have an open review system that is declared to authors and reviewers.

The peer-review process

The Chief Editor and the editorial staff shall ensure that material submitted to MJMS remains confidential while under review.

The Chief Editor and the editorial staff should ensure that the peer-review process is fair and unbiased.

Complaints

The Chief Editor 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 Chief Editor 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 Chief Editor 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

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

The Chief Editor should seek assurances that all research has been approved by an appropriate body (e.g. research ethics committee, institutional review board). However, The Chief Editor should recognise that such approval does not guarantee that the research is ethical.

Protecting individual data

The Chief Editor 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.

Pursuing misconduct

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

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

The Chief Editor 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 Chief Editor should make all reasonable efforts to ensure that a proper investigation is conducted; if this does not happen, The Chief Editor 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

Whenever it is recognised that a significant inaccuracy, misleading statement or distorted report has been published, it must be corrected promptly and with due prominence.

If, after an appropriate investigation, an item proves to be fraudulent, it should be retracted. The retraction should be clearly identifiable to readers and indexing systems.

Relations with journal owners and publishers

The relationship of the Chief Editor 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 Chief Editor 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 Chief Editor 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 Chief Editor 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

The Chief Editor and the editorial staff should have systems for managing their own conflicts of interest as well as those of their staff, authors, reviewers and Editorial board members.

Intellectual property

The Chief Editor may adopt systems for detecting plagiarism (e.g. software, searching for similar titles) in submitted items (either routinely or when suspicions are raised). The Chief Editor 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).