

Pursuant to Article 7 paragraph 2 of the Act on the Establishment of the University of Zadar (OG 83/02), Article 57 of the Act on Scientific Activities and Higher Education (OG 123/03, 198/03, 105/04, 174/04 and 2/07 – Decision of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Croatia, 46/07, 45/09, 53/11, 94/13, 139/13, 101/14 – Decision and Ruling of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Croatia, 60/15 – Decision of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Croatia and 131/17) and Article 54 of the Statute of the University of Zadar (amalgamated text, February 2018), the Senate of the University of Zadar, at its 10th session in the academic year 2017/2018, held on 17 July 2018, adopted this

CODE OF ETHICS

FOR AUTHORS, EDITORS AND REVIEWERS

OF PUBLICATIONS BY THE UNIVERSITY OF ZADAR

Amalgamated text

TERMINOLOGY

Author

An author is a creator who has participated to a sufficient degree in research and reporting on results. There are many definition of authorship, but in many scientific areas, that given by the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) is accepted. It bases authorship on four criteria:

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 authors should meet all four criteria. Those who do not may be mentioned as associates in the acknowledgements.

Editor

An editor is an expert in the scientific or artistic field in which he or she works, and is the steward of the contents or partial contents of the publication being edited.

Editorial board

The editorial board is a group of experts in the scientific or artistic field in which they work, who have particular tasks in the procedure of editing the publication. Their joint aim is to ensure the excellence of the publication.

Reviewer

A reviewer is an expert in the scientific or artistic field, who performs the task of objective, critical evaluation, or peer review of the paper proposed for publication.

Publisher

The publisher is the legal entity which initiates and prepares the publication.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is using or adopting others' ideas or work and presenting them as one's own. It is a form of intellectual dishonesty and is completely unacceptable in the academic community.

Open access

Open Access means unrestricted, free, and undisturbed online access to digital scientific information that allows scientific information to be read, stored, distributed, searched, reached, indexed and/or used in any other legal way. *Unrestricted* in this context means free of any restrictions and terms imposed upon its access and use. (Croatian Open Access Declaration).

Manuscript originality

Manuscript originality refers primarily to three elements: the hypothesis and/research issues, the methods used, and the results gathered.

Peer review

Peer review is the process during which a work by an author or group of authors is subjected to objective, critical appraisal by two or more experts of a similar or higher competence in the particular scientific or artistic area.

I INTRODUCTORY PROVISIONS

The Code of Ethics for Authors, Reviewers and Editors of Publications by the University of Zadar is intended to ensure a set of minimum standards to which authors, reviewers and editors of university publications must adhere.

This Code affirms general ethical guidelines whose purpose is to protect, direct and promote responsible and ethically-based conduct and action by all participants in the publishing activities of the University of Zagreb, in accordance with basic ethical principles and the highest ethical standards in scientific and expert work.

II GENERAL PROVISIONS

AUTHORS

Article 1

Authors who report on their scientific research are obliged to present their work in the proper manner, in accordance with the customs of scientific and academic communication, and in the context of previous research, providing an objective discussion of its significance and importance. Authors are also obliged to describe the methods applied and present their results in a clear, unambiguous manner. Their works should include sufficient details and references so that others can check their work. Deceitfully or deliberately presented false statements amount to non-ethical conduct and are unacceptable. Reports and expert articles must also be precise and objective, and works which include editorial opinions must also be clearly indicated.

Article 2

Authors may be requested to submit information regarding their work for the purposes of editorial review, and must allow access to such information (for example, to an institutional repository) and store it after publication.

Article 3

As a rule, authors should publish the results of their own scientific research, and if they have used the work or words of others, must quote or cite them precisely. The way in which borrowed parts of text or illustrations are cited or mentioned must be in accordance with the rules of the profession or journal. Plagiarism in all forms is non-ethical, unacceptable conduct.

Article 4

Authors are obliged to produce permission from the bearer of authorial rights to publish graphic additions (illustrations, photographs, tables, charts, diagrams and similar material protected by laws regarding authorial rights). Material protected by authorial rights may only be reproduced with the appropriate permission.

Article 5

Submitting the same manuscript or partially overlapping contents simultaneously to several journals or primary publications is non-ethical, unacceptable conduct in publishing. An author should not submit for consideration an article which has already been published elsewhere. Publishing some types of articles (for example, translation) in one or more

journals is occasionally justified, assuming that primary publication is referenced in the repeat publication. The authors and editors of the journals concerned must give their consent to secondary publication which may be based on the same data and interpretation as in the primary document.

Article 6

It is always essential to mention the work of others properly. Authors must cite sources which have an essential influence on the contents of their research and manuscript. Information obtained privately, for example in conversation, correspondence or discussion with a third party, may not be used or conveyed without the express written consent of the source, that is, authorisation. Information obtained during the performance of confidential services, such as reviewing a manuscript or submitting a project for financing, may not be used without the express written approval of the author of the work which is the subject of such services.

Article 7

Authorship should be restricted to persons who have made significant contributions to the conception, planning, execution or interpretation of the research. All those who have made significant contributions should be listed as co-authors. If others have participated in essential aspects of the research project, they should be acknowledged or listed for their contributions. The author who submits the work should ensure that all the actual co-authors are acknowledged, and that others who had no part in the actual writing of the work are excluded. All co-authors should have seen and authorised the final version of the work and agreed to presenting it for publication.

Article 8

Authors are expected to react professionally and promptly to editors' and reviewers' comments. If an author decides to withdraw a manuscript which has already been sent for review, or is unwilling to accept the reviewers' suggestions, the editorial board and publisher must be informed immediately.

Article 9

In their manuscripts, authors should declare any financial or other conflict of interest which may affect the results or interpretation of their works. All the organisations which have supported the research should be clearly listed, along with all sources of financing and their potential role in the conduct of the research and processing and publishing of its results. If the source of financing is not clearly highlighted, it is assumed that the financial costs of the research and production of the manuscript will be borne by the author. Examples of potential conflicts of interest which must be declared include employment, consultations, shareholding, honoraria, paid expert opinions, submitting and registering patents, deeds of gift, and

other sources of financing. Potential conflicts of interest should be declared at the earliest possible opportunity.

Article 10

If an author discovers a significant error or inaccuracy in the published work, he is obliged without delay to inform the editorial board or publisher and cooperate with them to recall or correct the work. If the editorial board is informed by a third party of a significant error in the published work, the author must without delay recall or correct the work, or provide the editorial board with proof of the accuracy of the original work.

EDITORS

Article 11

Editors are responsible for the overall content of the publication, which means they must try to meet the needs of readers and authors, follow well-defined editorial procedures to ensure the quality of the published material, and promote freedom of expression. Editors should refrain from considering a manuscript when there is conflict of interest due to competition, collusion, or a relationship with or connection to any other author, commercial association or institution regarding the manuscript. Editors must ensure the integrity of academic documents and publish corrections, explanations, retractions or apologies as necessary.

Article 12

The editorial board must actively seek the opinions of authors, readers, reviewers and members of the editorial board on ways of improving the publication. It is the duty of the editorial board to support initiatives which will minimise violations of scientific and publishing integrity, and to understand and teach researchers about the provisions of publishing ethics. Editorial policies may be adjusted to take into consideration new expert and scientific understandings about peer review, editing and publishing, and the effects of editorial policies on the conduct of authors and reviewers.

The editorial board must inform the publisher in a timely manner of the need to assure the appropriate resources, including the occasional involvement of other experts (for example, designers, lawyers, etc.). Editors must assess systematically the effects of their instructions to authors and reviewers and revise them as necessary, stimulating responsible behaviour and discouraging dishonourable conduct.

Article 13

The editorial board must take all appropriate steps to ensure the quality of published material. They must have access to systems for detecting false information (for example, inappropriate manipulation of graphics, or copying or paraphrasing texts without citing the original) and

use them regularly, or in cases of doubt. They must encourage the application of a standardised style of citing literature and other sources of information and other standards of reporting commonly accepted in the international community concerned with the relevant scientific field. They should not demand that an author cite publications for which work has been proposed.

Article 14

The editorial board is obliged to protect the confidentiality of information gathered during research or professional interaction (for example, between doctors and patients, researchers and responders to surveys, etc.). Therefore, it is almost always necessary to obtain written consent for publication from persons who may recognise themselves, or be recognised by others in the work (for example, from case studies or photographs). Publishing personal data without express consent is only allowed when public interest takes priority over potential damages, if it is impossible to obtain consent, or if it can be assumed that a reasonable person would not object to publication. The policy for publishing personal data must be made public and explained to authors. Consent to participation in research or treatment is not the same as consent to the publication of personal data, photographs or quotations.

Article 15

The editorial board must try to ensure that research is carried out and published in accordance with the appropriate internationally acknowledged guidelines (for example, the Helsinki Declaration on clinical trials, the AERA and BERA guidelines on research in education, etc.). They must seek guarantees that all research conducted on people and animals has been approved by the relevant bodies (for example, the Ethics Commission). However, editors must weigh the fact that such approval does not guarantee ethical research.

Article 16

If they suspect authors or reviewers of dishonesty, or if this is proven to them, editors must act, regardless of whether the work has already been published. They should not simply reject manuscripts which arouse concern or suspicion in terms of intellectual dishonesty. An ethical approach means investigating such cases, wherever possible, and regardless of the demands of the procedure and effort involved. It is recommended that the COPE diagrams (Committee on Publication Ethics) are followed (available on the Ministry of Science and Education website:

URL: <https://mzo.hr/sites/default/files/migrated/eticki-postupnik-za-urednike.pdf>).

Editors should first seek answers from those whose conduct is suspicious. If they are not satisfied, they should make enquiries with the relevant employer, institution or body, making every effort to investigate the alleged act of intellectual dishonesty as thoroughly as possible.

Article 17

False, inaccurate or deceptive statements must be corrected immediately and duly emphasised. Editors should follow international guidelines on retraction, for example, the COPE guidelines. They must take all necessary steps to reduce the publication of works in which errors are repeated, or the presentation of unregistered clinical trials.

Article 18

Editors should encourage open access publication of scientific research, for example, by storing publications in institutional, national and international repositories.

Article 19

Regarding matters of intellectual property, editors must cooperate with the publisher when considering potential violations of the laws and conventions on intellectual property rights. In this, they may use tools to detect plagiarism in submitted manuscripts (software which detects similarities between texts) as part of the regular editorial process, whenever doubt arises. Editors should support authors whose authorial rights have been violated, or who are the victims of plagiarism.

Article 20

The editorial board should encourage and be ready to consider well-argued criticism of the published work, and give the author of the criticised material the opportunity to respond. They need not rule out the publication of works which report negative results. They should be open to research which questions the results of previously published works.

Article 21

The editorial board must respond immediately to complaints and ensure the means for dissatisfied plaintiffs to take their complaints further. This mechanism must be clearly described in documents and contain the information that unresolved issues will be forwarded to COPE. The editorial board is advised to follow the procedures in the COPE flowcharts when dealing with complaints.

Article 22

Commercial interests should not be allowed to affect editorial decisions. The editorial board must define the potential rules of advertising in relation to the contents of the publications and publishing sponsored appendices (for example, papers from scientific meetings, etc.). To this end, it is useful to make public the sources of revenues through which the publication is financed, including sponsored appendices, fees for additional pages, etc. It is also imperative that sponsored appendices undergo the same review procedure as other works. The

acceptance of published sponsored appendices must be based on academic quality and interest to readers, and such decisions must not be the result of commercial considerations. Reprints must take the form of the original publication, unless corrections are necessary, and these must be clearly denoted.

Article 23

The editorial board must have developed systems for managing internal conflicts of interests and those concerning employees engaged in editing, writing, reviewing, etc. There should be a declared procedure for handling manuscripts by the main editor, employees, or members of the editorial board, in order to ensure an unbiased approach to reviewing. To this end, it is necessary to avoid all conflicts of interest (financial, academic, family-related, and others) in the editor-editorial board-reviewer-author chain.

Relations between authors and editors

Article 24

Each journal should issue instructions to authors. These instructions from the editorial board should be clearly listed and explain to authors what is expected of them, including the criteria for authorship and associate status, following the standards which are applied within the scientific field.

Article 25

Authors should have access to the criteria, flowchart and description of the review procedure, and the editorial board should be ready to justify any departure from these. The editorial board may not change decisions already taken regarding the acceptance or rejection of a work, unless it has been established that there are serious problems in connection with a submitted work.

Article 26

The editorial board must ensure that there are appropriate reviewers for submitted works, that is, individuals who are able to evaluate the work and who are not in any conflict of interest. In doing so, the editorial board must defer to the requests of authors regarding exceptions in terms of certain persons, if their demands are clearly elucidated and implementable.

Article 27

The decisions of the editorial board regarding acceptance or rejection of a work must be based on the work's importance, originality and clarity, the validity of the research, and its

relevance to the area covered by the publication, regardless of the author's gender, gender orientation, religious convictions, national affiliation, citizenship, political convictions, etc.

Article 28

In scholarly journals, information on the date of submission and acceptance of the work must be published alongside the work.

Article 29

The instructions to authors must include a mechanism for authors to appeal against decisions made by the editorial board.

Relations between editors and reviewers

Article 30

The editorial board must select two or more persons who have the relevant expert competences to evaluate the manuscript, give them clear instructions on how to conduct the review procedure, and bear the responsibility for its objectivity and timely completion.

Article 31

Instructions to reviewers should be revised regularly and contain links to the relevant documents (for example, the COPE recommendations, etc.). It is not recommended that instructions to reviewers consist solely of forms on which the reviewers write their own assessments of the manuscripts and propose its classification, but should contain detailed descriptions of the criteria for publication. If reviewers are expected to fill in forms, the instructions should include clear explanations of each reviewing element, including the criteria for categorising the work.

Article 32

The editorial board should give clear guidelines to reviewers, stating what it required of them, including mentioning the confidentiality of material sent for review. When accepting the role, reviewers should declare any potential conflict of interest. Privileged information or ideas acquired during the review procedure must be kept confidential and may not be used for personal gain.

Article 33

Editors are encouraged to publish a preliminary overview of the work, to assess whether the work is suited to the topical journal, to assess the scholarly relevance of the manuscript, and to check the originality of the manuscript using tools to detect similar publications.

Article 34

The editorial board must protect the identity of the reviewers, unless the review procedure is open, in which case the reviewer may choose to reveal his or her identity or not.

Article 35

Reviewers are encouraged to comment on various ethical issues related to potentially dishonest research presented in the manuscript (for example, the non-ethical design of the research, the lack of data on patient consent, the protection of the subjects of the research (for example, animals), the inappropriate handling or presentation of research data, etc.). Reviewers are also encouraged to comment on the originality of the manuscript and the danger of redundant publication or plagiarism.

Article 36

The authors must be sent the reviewers comments in full, except for the parts intended solely for the editorial board.

Article 37

The editorial board acknowledges and declares in different ways the contribution of reviewers and encourages academic and scholarly institutions to respect the activities of reviewers and recognise their work as an important part of scholarly contribution.

Article 38

The editorial board must ensure reviews are fair, unbiased, and completed in a timely manner, and that the confidentiality of submitted manuscripts is preserved during peer review and publication. To this end, editors and reviewers should undergo ongoing training on the latest guidelines, recommendations and examples of the best practice in the review procedure and journal management, and systematically keep abreast of research in the area of scholarly publication and its technological development. They should master the methods of peer review which are most relevant to the scholarly publication and scientific community which it addresses, respecting current practice in the most advanced circles, and apply what they have learned to improve their peer review. Difficult cases should be reported to COPE, particularly when they do not include COPE diagrams, or when there are suspicions regarding the occurrence of intellectual dishonesty.

Article 39

The editorial board should adopt appropriate measures in cases of ethical complaints against submitted manuscripts or publications. Such measures may include contacting the authors of manuscripts or published works and dealing with complaints or claims with due diligence, and if there is insufficient reaction to complaints, may include approaching the competent institution or academic community, publishing corrections, retractions, expressions of concern, or other appropriate responses. Each reported case of non-ethical conduct must be investigated, even if it comes to light many years after publication.

Relations between editors and readers

Article 40

Readers should be informed about the sources of financing of research or other scientific activities, whether the investors had any role in the research or publication, and if so, of what kind. The parts of the publication which have not undergone review should be clearly marked.

Article 41

The editorial board should master systematically a procedure which encourages the accuracy, comprehensiveness and clarity of research reporting, including technical editing and the use of appropriate guidelines and regulations (for example, CONSORT), particularly when the work concerns research in biomedicine and related fields.

Article 42

The editorial board should require from all authors a signed declaration which confirms that they accept authorship and responsibility for their work. The editorial board may caution readers regarding individual authorship and contributions, transparently listing contributions and discouraging inappropriate conduct in assigning authorship, such as persons who made a significant contribution to the work, but who are not listed as authors (ghost authors), or those who are listed, but who did not contribute sufficiently to the work to be named as authors (guest authors).

Article 43

The editorial board must acquaint readers with the steps taken to ensure that works published by members of the editorial board or others connected with their publication are objective and evaluated in an unbiased manner.

Relations between the main editor and members of the editorial board

Article 44

Main editors should give new members of the editorial board instructions on what is expected of them and inform existing members regularly of new editorial policies and other relevant changes.

Article 45

Members of the editorial board must have at their disposal clear guidelines regarding their expected functions and duties, which may include representing the journal, supporting and promoting publications, previewing and reviewing manuscripts, examining manuscripts, accepting the writing of introductions, reviews and comments on works in their narrow scientific field, and participating in and contributing to editorial board meetings. At least once a year, the members should be invited to evaluate management, deliver comments and suggestions to improve the publication or the work of the editorial board, and receive information on any changes in the policies of the journal/publication, along with future challenges.

Relations between the editor and publisher

Article 46

The relationship between editors and publishers is often complex, but should be firmly founded on the principle of editorial independence. Editors must make decisions about works to be published on the basis of quality and suitability, without interference from the publisher.

Article 47

Editors must be in regular contact with the Office for Publishing Activities.

REVIEWERS

Article 48

The task of the reviewer is to assess a received manuscript critically but constructively, and to provide a list of detailed comments and suggestions, with explanations, regarding the research conducted and the way in which it is presented in the work.

Article 49

The reviewer helps the editor make editorial decisions and, by communicating with the editor and author(s), helps improve the quality of the work. Peer review is a necessary, integral part of formal scholarly communication and lies at the heart of the scholarly method.

Article 50

If reviewers are selected, but feel they are not qualified, have other reasons for not wanting to review the manuscript, or know that they will not be able to complete the review on time, they should inform the editor and withdraw from the review procedure.

Article 51

Since there are increasingly frequent examples of the application of new research methods in scientific research, the editorial board must ensure that reviewers are competent to evaluate the manuscript and the research methods it contains.

Article 52

Each manuscript received for review, and the review itself, must be treated as confidential documents. They should not be shown to others, published, or discussed with others, without the permission of the editorial board.

Article 53

Reviews must be objective. Personal criticism directed at the author is inappropriate.

Article 54

Reviewers should clearly express their opinions stating their arguments.

Article 55

Reviewers should be aware of important published works not cited by the author. Any claim that an observation, deduction or argument has been published earlier must be accompanied by a citation. Reviewers must also alert the editor to major similarities or overlaps between the manuscript under review and any published work of which they are personally aware. Reviewers should not unjustifiably suggest that authors cite their works.

Article 56

The unpublished material in the submitted manuscript may not be used by the reviewer for his own research without the express written consent of the author. Confidential information

or ideas acquired from the review process must be kept confidential and cannot be used for personal gain.

Article 57

Reviewers should not agree to review a manuscript if it involves a potential conflict of interest (see Instructions for Proposing Reviewers).

Article 58

Reviewers should respect the deadline given for their review.

III FINAL PROVISIONS

Article 59

All authors, editors and reviewers collaborating on publications by the University of Zadar must respect the provisions of this Code of Ethics.

Article 60

In order to ensure that the basic principles of this Code are respected, it is the right and duty of each person involved in the publishing activities of the University of Zadar to acquaint themselves with its contents.

It is the right and duty of each person involved in the publishing activities of the University of Zadar to report any breach or potential breach of the Code to the Ethics Commission of the University of Zadar.

If it is proven that a person submitting an unfounded report was aware of its unfoundedness, this in itself shall be considered a breach of the Code of Ethics and is sanctionable.

Article 61

The language used in the Croatian version of this Code of Ethics which is grammatically gendered is neutral and applies equally to males or females.

Article 62

This Code of Ethics enters into force on the day of its adoption.

Zadar, October 5th, 2018

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N.B. This document is based (among others) on the COPE Guidelines on Good Publication Practice (1999), COPE Code of Ethics (2003), COPE Best Practice Guidelines(2007), COPE Code of Conduct and Best Practice Guidelines for Journal Editors (2011), Principles of Transparency and Best Practice in Scholarly Publishing (2014), Recommendations on Publication Ethics by the World Association of Medical Editors (WAME), Financial Theory and Practice, Ethical Guidelines for Publishing Journals (http://www.ijf.hr/download_file.php?file=eticke-smjernice.pdf), Libri & Liberi, Ethical Conduct and Guidelines for Editing for Publishing Journals (http://www.librietliberi.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Eti%C4%8Dki-postupnik_LL_2015.pdf); Code of Ethics of the Board for Ethics in Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Croatia, and the Code of Ethics of the University of Zadar.