

DWU Authorship Guide¹

Guidelines on Authorship supporting the DWU Intellectual Property Policy and Plagiarism and Integrity Policy

(Approved by DWU Academic Board on 18 November 2022)

1. Introduction

This document is a practical guide to deciding on authorship of research outcomes and publications by DWU staff, students and associates. This document is to be implemented in consultation with the DWU Intellectual Property Policy and DWU Plagiarism and Integrity Policy and the related policy documents as mentioned at the end of this document. DWU Authorship Guide aims to facilitate the recognition of significant intellectual or scholarly contribution to research output and reflect that authorship:

- i. must be an honest reflection of contribution to research
- ii. must be assigned relatively, and consistently with the established disciplinary practice
- iii. must be communicated clearly and transparently among contributors of the research.

This guide also aims to help those involved in research to understand and apply best practices in determining and agreeing on authorship.

2. Authorship criteria

In general terms, an author is an individual who:

- has made a significant intellectual or scholarly contribution to research and its output, and
- agrees to be listed as an author.

This section sets out further detail on authorship criteria.

2.1 What is a significant intellectual or scholarly contribution?

¹ Major part of this document is adapted from National Health and Medical Research Council, Australian Research Council and Universities Australia. (2019). Authorship: A guide supporting the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research*. Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra.

While authorship conventions vary across disciplines, a significant intellectual or scholarly contribution should include a combination of two or more of the following:

- conception and design of the project or output
- acquisition of research data where the acquisition has required significant intellectual judgement, planning, design, or input
- contribution of knowledge, where justified, including Indigenous knowledge
- analysis or interpretation of research data
- drafting significant parts of the research output or critically revising it so as to contribute to its interpretation.

Authorship must not be attributed when an individual has not made a significant intellectual or scholarly contribution to research output. As a general rule, all those who have made a significant intellectual or scholarly contribution should be named authors. All named authors must have confidence in the integrity and accuracy of these contributions. If an individual is unwilling to be accountable for their contribution by being named as an author, their contribution should generally not be included in the research output.

Authorship should not be attributed solely based on:

- the provision of funding, data, materials, infrastructure or access to equipment
- the provision of routine technical support, technical advice or technical assistance
- the position or profession of an individual, such as their role as the author's supervisor or head of department ('gift authorship')
- whether the contribution was paid for or voluntary
- the status of an individual who has not made a significant intellectual or scholarly contribution being such that it would elevate the esteem of the research ('guest authorship').

For a person to claim, demand, or accept authorship without having made a significant intellectual or scholarly contribution is against the authorship norms as per the DWU regulations. Similarly, it is against the authorship norms to offer or attribute authorship to someone who has not made a significant intellectual or scholarly contribution.

Students and junior researchers who have made a significant intellectual or scholarly contribution are entitled to authorship, notwithstanding that they may have been more closely supervised.

Sometimes the editor of a significant collective work or anthology of research papers has made contributions analogous to those of authors and, in such cases, similar criteria may apply to 'editor' as to 'author'. However, the term 'editor' should be applied only to a person who has played a significant role in the intellectual shaping of a publication.

2.2 What does it mean to be accountable for the research output?

All listed authors are collectively accountable for the whole research output. An individual author is directly responsible for the accuracy and integrity of their contribution to the output. Authors should have confidence in the accuracy and integrity of the contributions of their co-authors.

3. Discipline-specific guidelines

This section provides some discipline-specific guidelines regarding authorship matters since such norms vary from discipline to discipline.² Together with, and additional to, the general norms given in this document, the discipline-specific guidelines given below are to be applied by the competent authority to any case concerned, about which a decision is made.

3.1 Health Sciences

International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) authorship criteria are widely accepted by biomedical journals.

The ICMJE recommends that an author should meet all four of the following criteria:

- Substantial contributions to the conception or design of the work; or the acquisition, analysis, or interpretation of data for the work; AND
- Drafting the work or revising it critically for important intellectual content; AND
- Final approval of the version to be published; AND
- 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.

(<https://bit.ly/1ruKdnU>)

Council of science Editors (CsE) describes authors as follows:

"Authors are individuals identified by the research group to have made substantial

² Most of this section is taken from COPE Discussion document, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.24318/cope.2019.3.3>, pp 12-13.

contributions to the reported work and agree to be accountable for these contributions. In addition to being accountable for the parts of the work he or she has done, an author should be able to identify which of their co-authors are responsible for specific other parts of the work. In addition, an author should have confidence in the integrity of the contributions of their co-authors. All authors should review and approve the final manuscript" (<https://bit.ly/2Z8btRH>).

3.2 Social Sciences

The American Sociological Association includes the following in its Code of Ethics:

"(a) Sociologists take responsibility and credit, including authorship credit, only for work they have actually performed or to which they have contributed. (b) Sociologists ensure that principal authorship and other publication credits are based on the relative scientific or professional contributions of the individuals involved, regardless of their status. In claiming or determining the ordering of authorship, sociologists seek to reflect accurately the contributions of main participants in the research and writing process. (c) A student is usually listed as principal author on any multiple-authored publication that substantially derives from the student's dissertation or thesis."

(https://www.asanet.org/sites/default/files/asa_code_of_ethics-june2018.pdf)

3.3 Physics

The American Physical Society has recently updated and expanded its Guidelines on Ethics (<https://bit.ly/2NqaLvP>) to include detailed guidance on the ethical conduct and reporting of research.

Ethical Principle on Authorship:

Although there is no universal definition, authorship creates a record of attribution, establishes accountability and responsibility concerning the work, and is vital in establishing careers.

Authors should be able to identify their specific contributions to the work. Authorship should be limited to, and should not exclude, those who have made a significant contribution to the concept, design, execution, or interpretation of the research study.

Recommended Implementation:

1) The award of authorship should balance intellectual contributions to the conception, design, analysis, and writing of the study against data collection, analysis, instrument and software development. Those who have made limited contributions should be listed in the acknowledgements section. If no substantial task directly related to the research can reasonably be attributed to a particular individual, then that individual should not be credited with authorship. It is recommended that each author's contributions be listed in the

acknowledgements section or in a supplementary information file.

2) To avoid disputes over attribution of authorship, it is helpful to decide at the start of writing the paper who will be credited as authors, as contributors, and who will be acknowledged, and validate the choices with the research team.

3) Large collaborations should have clearly defined authorship policies as part of their governance process.

4) All authors must agree to publication of a manuscript and take public responsibility for the full content of their paper. The multidisciplinary nature of much research can make this difficult, but this can be resolved by disclosing and discussing individual contributions.

5) Appropriate processes for reviewing and ensuring the accuracy and validity of reported results should be established for all collaborations.

6) Corresponding and presenting authors should ensure that all co-authors of the work have approved the content of manuscripts and presentations.

3.4 Humanities and other disciplines

Authorship within the humanities, law, and theology is still very much a product of the writing process, and usually by a single individual. Any other form of contribution such as generation of ideas, commenting on a draft, or technical assistance is listed in the Acknowledgements.

Traditions in the humanities also differ from some social and natural sciences disciplines in terms of the relationship between supervisors and students in authorship with respect to graduate work. Frequently, students are sole authors of graduate-related research, and supervisors and committee members are acknowledged for the supervision and mentorship they have provided to the student authors.

4. Responsibilities of researchers

This section provides guidance on the researchers' responsibilities concerning authorship. Researchers should also refer to their institutional policies.

4.1 Ensure appropriate and fair attribution of authorship

The corresponding author has primary responsibility for ensuring that all contributors to the research output are properly recognised regardless of their position or any changes in their position or role. All authors should alert the corresponding author to any author or contributor who may have been inadvertently omitted.

'Ghost authorship'—where an individual such as a research assistant or industry researcher meets the criteria for authorship but is not acknowledged as an author—is not an acceptable practice and is inconsistent with the principles and responsibilities of this guide.

A person who qualifies as an author must not be included or excluded without their written agreement. Each author should provide this written agreement in a timely fashion to the corresponding author.

The corresponding author must keep a record of each written agreement and make it available to the Editor-in-Chief of the publication at DWU.

If an author is deceased, this should be noted in the publication.

4.2 Formalise authorship arrangements

All researchers should discuss authorship at an early stage in the research and throughout the research project. Where there is more than one author, it is good practice to have an authorship agreement in place before the commencement of writing up a research project. An authorship agreement does not need to be a formal legal document. It can be in emails, a transcript of an online discussion or other similar evidence of consensus.

The authorship agreement should include:

- identification of those who will be recognised as the authors of the research output
- a description of the contribution that each author has made (or will make) to the research output
- an indication of the order in which the authors appear.
- identification of at least one corresponding author responsible for communication with the publisher and managing communication between the co-authors.

It is the corresponding author's responsibility to maintain records of the authorship agreement. Where the corresponding author is not from the same institution as other listed authors, authors are encouraged to keep their records.

As a project evolves, it is important to continue to discuss authorship, especially if new people become involved in the research and make a significant intellectual or scholarly contribution.

The corresponding author should retain a record of any agreed changes to the authorship of a research output.

4.3 Acknowledge contributions other than authorship

Contributions to research that do not meet the criteria for authorship should be acknowledged where appropriate; for example, contributions from individuals providing technical support.

It is also good practice to recognise the contribution of research infrastructure.

Researchers intending to publish Indigenous knowledge obtained through sources including unpublished manuscripts, or audio or video recordings, should seek approval from the Indigenous people involved in the project or the community from which that knowledge originates and the individual and collective contributors of the knowledge should be acknowledged, as appropriate.

As a general rule, researchers should obtain permission from named contributors before acknowledging them in research outputs, since acknowledgement may imply a contributor's endorsement of the research output.

4.4 Be accountable for the research output

Although authors are accountable for the whole research output, the responsibilities associated with this accountability are dependent on the extent and type of contribution made.

An author is responsible for ensuring the accuracy and integrity of their direct contribution to the research output. Authors are also responsible for taking reasonable steps to ensure the accuracy and integrity of the contributions of all other co-authors. This means that authors should, where feasible, be able to identify which co-authors are responsible for specific other parts of the work and that they should raise any concerns about the accuracy and integrity of the research before submission or publication.

If an individual does not agree to be accountable for their contribution, the contribution should not be included in the research output.

Following publication, all authors must also ensure that any concerns about the accuracy or integrity of any part of the output are appropriately responded to. This may mean providing all necessary evidence to demonstrate the accuracy and integrity of their contribution, or seeking such evidence from the other co-authors. It may result in correcting the public record by way of erratum or retraction.

If an author is deceased (or cannot be contacted after reasonable attempts have been made), all the co-authors must still have confidence in the accuracy and integrity of that author's contribution. This may require consideration of the underlying data and methodology.

4.5 Approve research output

Authors must approve the research output before its submission for publication and, in doing so, agree to be accountable for it. Authors must also approve the final version before

publication. The final approval process may be coordinated by the publisher, often through the corresponding author.

The corresponding author must keep written records that confirm that approval has been obtained from all authors.

If an author is deceased, or after all reasonable efforts that have been made to establish contact have failed and have been documented, the publication can proceed, provided that there are no grounds to believe that this person would have objected to being included as an author. In such instances, it may be appropriate for an institution to provide a written agreement to include an author.

4.6 Engage in relevant training

Researchers should engage with relevant training and education provided by or through their institution and should seek out other relevant training opportunities when they perceive a knowledge gap.

5. Resolution of disputes

A mechanism for raising concerns and the fair and timely resolution of disputes about authorship at DWU is the University Research Ethics Committee (UREC). UREC is responsible for resolving disputes such as those involving:

- power imbalances between researchers
- researchers who are unwilling to accept authorship and/or accountability for their contribution, obstruct the progress of a research project or output, or fail to cooperate with co-authors
- researchers from multiple institutions.

Researchers must treat fellow researchers and others involved in the research fairly and respectfully. Researchers should follow the established process at DWU to resolve any disputes that arise between authors.

The parties to the dispute should maintain records of agreements reached through direct dialogue or mediation.

6. Breaches of the Norms

Breaches of norms will be addressed through established processes at DWU.

Examples of breaches of the norms that are related to authorship include, but are not limited to:

- crediting authorship to or accepting authorship from individuals who do not meet the criteria for authorship (for example, honorary, gift or guest authorship)
- failing to ascribe authorship to individuals where those individuals meet the requirements of authorship (for example, ghost authorship)
- attributing authorship to individuals without their consent
- publishing research without the final approval of the attributed authors
- failure to comply with an authorship agreement
- making false claims about the authorship in a grant application.

Researchers should be aware that the denial of authorship may raise the potential for plagiarism.

When managing and investigating a potential breach of the norms regarding authorship, DWU through UREC will consider the extent to which each author met their authorship responsibilities.

7. Definitions

Author: An individual who has made a significant intellectual or scholarly contribution to research and its output and who has agreed to be listed as an author.

Corresponding author: The author who is, as agreed by all co-authors, responsible for communication between the publishers, managing communication between the co-authors and maintaining records of the authorship agreement.

Research Output: A research output communicates or makes available the findings of research that may be in hardcopy, electronic or other form. Examples of research outputs include journal articles, book chapters, books, conference papers, reports, datasets, patents and patent applications, performances, videos and exhibitions.

Related Policies

DWU intellectual property policy, Plagiarism and integrity policy, DWU research policy (May 2020), Policy on collaborative research, Policy on ethical practices in research involving human participants, Quality assurance policy, Staff disciplinary policy and procedure, Student disciplinary Policy and process