



Authorship with Integrity

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In recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' spiritual and cultural connection to Country and in continuing ACU's commitment to Reconciliation, I would like to commence the meeting by acknowledging the First Peoples and the Traditional Owners and custodians of the Country where ACU campuses are located.

We respectfully acknowledge our Elders past and present and remember that they have passed on their wisdom to us in various ways. Let us hold this in trust as we work and serve our communities.



What we will cover today

- What is Authorship
- Links to the Code of Conduct
- Responsibilities
- Who should be an Author?
- Authorship order
- Authorship Agreements
- Contractual Arrangements
- Artificial Intelligence use by Authors
- Disagreements

Introduction: Authorship in Research

- **Why it matters:**

- Recognizes intellectual contributions
- Signals expertise
- Shapes careers

- **Benefits:**

- Opportunity to collaborate
- Contribute to a broader body of knowledge
- Strengthen research relationships

- **When done well:**

- Clarifies expectations
- Celebrates diverse contributions

- **Challenges:**

- Ambiguous authorship criteria
- Disciplinary differences
- Misaligned expectations
- Power imbalances
- Complex collaborations

Me re-reading my own paper when it's finally online



- **Essential to the research process**
Publishing ensures your findings contribute to advancing knowledge.
- **Share with the wider community**
Publications make your work accessible and impactful.
- **Recognition and accountability**
They record who developed the research and acknowledge all contributors.
- **Protect reputation and integrity**
Transparent authorship and accurate reporting are critical for credibility.

Authorship is not a gift, it implies taking responsibility and being accountable for the quality and integrity of all of the work included within a publication.

What exactly is Authorship?

COPE:

- the creator or originator of an idea (e.g., the author of the theory of relativity) or the individual or individuals who develop and bring to fruition the product that disseminates intellectual or creative works (e.g., the author of a poem or a scholarly article).

NHMRC:

- A person who “has made a significant intellectual or scholarly contribution to research and its output”

(and importantly, agrees to be listed as an Author)

**Related
Principles**

P1, P2, P3, P4, P6, P7

**Related
Responsibilities:**

**R 15, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25,
26, 27**

**ACU RCoC:
Section 10**

Authorship and *The Code*

R25 *Ensure that authors of research outputs are all those, and only those, who have made a significant intellectual or scholarly contribution to the research and its output, and that they agree to be listed as an author.*

R26 *Acknowledge those who have contributed to the research.*

Defining Authorship

- Research projects can have many contributors, however not everyone should be considered as an Author on a research paper.
- A “significant intellectual or scholarly contribution” must include **two or more** of the following:
 - **Project conception and design**
 - **Data acquisition** requiring substantial intellectual input, planning, or design
 - **Knowledge contribution**, where appropriate (including Indigenous knowledge)
 - **Analysis or interpretation** of research data
 - **Drafting major sections** of the output or critically revising it to shape interpretation

(NHMRC Authorship Guide pg 1)

WHAT IS THE VALUE OF AUTHORIZING YOUR
OWN ARTICLES WHEN YOU CAN HIRE
A SHADOW *GHOSTWRITING* SCHOLAR?



<https://hochstenbach.wordpress.com/2017/02/17/ugent-commission-on-research-integrity/>

Download the
Authorship: A
guide supporting
the *Australian
Code for the
Responsible
Conduct of
Research (2019)*
here



Authorship vs Acknowledgement

BEST PRACTICES FOR ETHICAL AUTHORSHIP

Discuss Authorship Early and Revisit Often

Initiate conversations about authorship roles and order at the start of any research project. As responsibilities evolve, revisit these discussions during major project milestones like data analysis or manuscript drafting. Early clarity avoids late-stage conflict.

Follow Recognized Authorship Guidelines

Align with established standards such as the ICMJE, COPE, and other journal guidelines. Furthermore, use CRediT taxonomy to define roles and promote transparency.

Avoid Ghost, Gift, or Honorary Authorship

Only individuals who meet all authorship criteria should be listed. Avoid including senior personnel who did not contribute directly ("honorary authorship"), Contributors omitted despite meeting the criteria ("ghost authorship"), and Individuals added out of courtesy or expectation ("gift authorship").

Use Written Authorship Agreements

In collaborative or multi-institutional work, document authorship decisions formally. Authorship agreements help manage expectations and serve as a reference if disputes arise later. Keep a record of contributions throughout the project using contribution logs in shared documents and project management platforms.

Acknowledge Non-Author Contributions

Technical staff, language editors, AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT), or administrative personnel should be acknowledged rather than listed as authors unless they meet full criteria. Clarify this in the Acknowledgments section.

- All authors should meet the criteria and importantly, any person meeting who does meet the criteria should be named as an Author.
- Acknowledgement should be used for contributors who do not meet authorship criteria, eg:
 - Provision of funding data, materials, infrastructure or access to equipment
 - Acting as a mentor
 - Conducting routine routine technical support, technical advice or technical assistance
 - Providing materials or skills
- It is a breach of the Code to claim or award authorship without a significant contribution to the research.

(NHMRC Authorship Guide pg 2)

Author Order



“You should spend the next week typing down names of all co-authors on your paper.”

<https://liorpachter.wordpress.com/2018/11/03/the-combinatorics-of-authorship-in-the-biological-sciences/you-should-spend-the-next-week-typing-down-names-of-all-co-authors-on-your-paper/>

To download guidelines on authorship protocols from the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) click this link:



There are no set guidelines regarding but common practice suggests that:

- **First Author:** the person who has made the largest contribution, including developing and conducting the study, and drafting the manuscript.
- **Last/Senior Author:** quite often, this is the most senior person who generally directs, oversees and guarantees the authenticity of the work reported.
- **Corresponding/Lead Author:** the person who has responsibility for communicating with and addressing the concerns and questions of editors, reviewers and readers, and is quite often the first or last author.
- **Co-Authors:** Other authors are typically ordered according to the relative contribution each has made to the development and conduct of the work and drafting of the manuscript.

Where there is no clear difference, authors should be listed in alphabetical order.

(McKneally M. J (2006) Put my name on the paper: reflections on the ethics of authorship. *Thorac Cardiovasc Surg* 131:517-519 and University of Salford, pg 4); UK Research Integrity Office (2025) *Good Authorship Practice*. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.37672/UKRIO.2025.08.goodauthorshippractice>.

Discussing and Documenting Authorship

LET'S TALK...

Start early and revisit often

Discuss authorship at the beginning of the project and throughout its progress.

Authorship agreement

- Recommended when there is more than one author
- Should be in place before writing begins
- Does **not** need to be a formal legal document—emails or meeting notes are sufficient

Keep it updated

Revisit authorship if new contributors join or roles change during the project.

What to include in the agreement

- Names of all authors
- Each author's contribution
- Agreed order of authors (aligned with disciplinary norms and publisher requirements)
- Designation of a **corresponding author** to manage communication with the publisher and co-authors

Responsibilities

- Corresponding author keeps records of the agreement and any changes
- If authors are from different institutions, each should keep their own copy

Help with Authorship agreements

Need Help deciding who should be an Author?

visit CRediT – to help describe the typical contributions made to the production and publication of research output.



The Authorship Integrity Toolkit

Practical resources to support responsible authorship in research

Template Authorship Strategy Agreement

An editable template to define credit for research outputs, support clear discussions, manage expectations, and promote fair authorship practices.

<https://ukrio.org/resources/the-authorship-integrity-toolkit/>



Contributor Role Taxonomy (CRediT)

CRediT identifies 14 specific types of research contributions

1. Conceptualisation
2. Data curation
3. Formal analysis
4. Funding acquisition
5. Investigation
6. Methodology
7. Project administration
8. Resources
9. Software
10. Supervision
11. Validation
12. Visualisation
13. Writing – original draft
14. Writing – review & editing

<https://credit.niso.org/>

Need an Authorship Agreement template?: visit the UK Research Integrity Office and download a free copy of their Authorship Strategy Agreement.

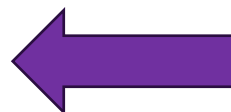


Table: Research output agreement

Advice: As each research output becomes more clearly defined, additional details can be gathered and agreed for that output.

Intended title of output								
Type of output								
Expected place(s) of publication/dissemination								
Expected author order and corresponding author (if relevant)								
Link to agreed authorship criteria (if unavailable, note the agreed criteria here)								
Link to the agreed contributorship model or framework (if unavailable, note the agreed model or framework)								
Expected submitting/corresponding authors (if relevant)								
Date table completed				Click or tap to enter a date.				
Version number								
Name and other useful information (e.g. affiliation, and two email addresses)	Status of contribution (e.g., ongoing, no longer contributing, contribution complete or restarting contribution), including dates	Role in research output	A detailed description of the contribution (note any additional relevant information, including if you are using a criteria framework)	Fulfil the criteria (described above) to be: A. An author B. A contributor C. Acknowledged			Conflicts of interest relevant to this output	I agree to the contents of this table and the material included in Section A of this document*
				A	B	C		
				☐	☐	☐		☐
				☐	☐	☐		☐
				☐	☐	☐		☐

**By ticking this box, you acknowledge and agree to the expectations of research contributors outlined in the table and the materials included in Section A of this document. While this table might be revised as the research evolves, it serves as an accurate record of authorship, contributorship and acknowledgement status at the time of signature (noted by the version number and date).*

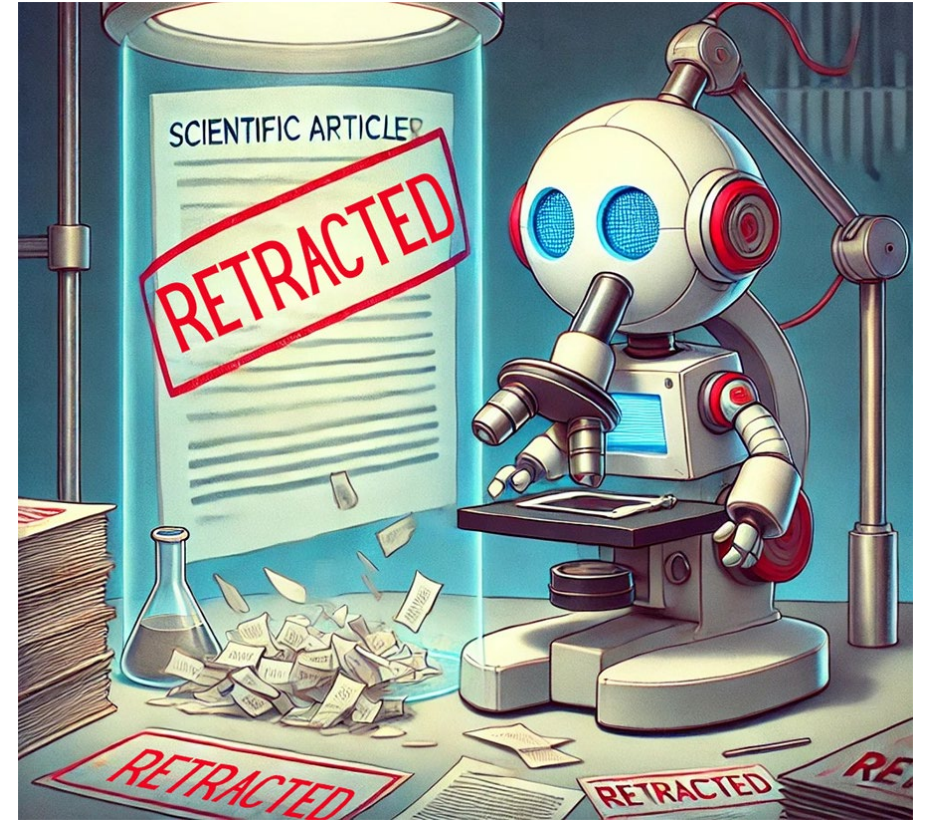
Some things to be aware of.....

Contractual obligations

- Check contracts for publication requirements
- Do you need permissions first?
- Do you need to acknowledge anyone?

Use of Artificial Intelligence

- Serious breach of Integrity to use AI without disclosure.
- clearly state **how AI tools were used**—including writing, code generation, editing, and creating images or videos.
- disclosure should appear in the **methods or acknowledgements** as appropriate.



Breaches of the Code

Potential breaches of the Code that are related to authorship include:

- Giving or accepting authorship from individuals who do not meet authorship criteria (e.g., honorary, gift, or guest authorship)
- Failing to credit individuals who do meet authorship requirements
- Listing authors without their consent
- Publishing research without final approval from all listed authors
- Ignoring or breaching an authorship agreement
- Making false authorship claims in grant applications



<https://croner.co.uk/resources/employee-conduct/employee-code-of-conduct/>

Handling Authorship Disputes

**HEY!
I WROTE THAT!**

Why disputes happen

- Often due to poor communication, misaligned expectations, or differing academic opinions.
- Some cases, however, involve **serious breaches of research integrity** requiring formal investigation.

Step 1: Informal discussions between authors

Step 2: Informal discussions with a Research Integrity Advisor as mediator

Step 3: Formal research integrity investigation

Investigations

- ACU RCoC and Guide to Investigating breaches outlines how a formal complaint would be handled.
- Institutions can review records (notes, data, emails) to determine contributions.
- Publishers focus on **correcting the published record**.

Practical Advice

- **Unresponsive authors:**

Document all attempts to contact them.

Follow institutional and publisher policies if they remain unresponsive.

- **Prevention:**

Agree on an authorship plan early, including steps for handling unresponsive contributors.

- **Serious breaches:**

Listing someone as an author without consent violates research integrity and may break the law.

Follow your agreed Plan!

Resources

- ACU Policy on the use of Generative Artificial Intelligence in Research
- ACU Research Authorship Policy
- ACU Research Code of Conduct
- ACU Research Publication Policy
- Contributor Role Taxonomy (CRediT) visit: <https://credit.niso.org/>
- NHMRC (2018) *The Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, 2018* download at <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/publications/australian-code-responsible-conduct-research-2018>
- NHMRC Authorship: A guide supporting the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research download at <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/attachments/Authorship-Guide.pdf>
- UK Research Integrity Office (2025) *The Authorship Integrity Toolkit* download at: <https://ukrio.org/resources/the-authorship-integrity-toolkit/>

QUESTIONS?

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