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Research Authorship Code of Practice

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1. Introduction

All researchers, including research students, should disseminate their research in a timely fashion, and through as effective a means as possible. We have a responsibility to those who invest in research, an ethical responsibility to society, and both institutional and personal self-interest in having our research output reach where it will have impact. Authorship establishes accountability as well as credit.

Individual Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT) researchers have a responsibility to ensure their names are included in publications of research to which they have contributed. This ensures they are credited with the work they have done, allows them to take responsibility for this output, and evidences the originality of their contribution. Publication and authorship must be approached in a responsible, open, honest, fair, and accurate manner. Joint authorship, common in many disciplines, can bring significant benefits once based on good practice principles.

This code of practice outlines the principles and practices governing authorship of research outputs at DkIT, in alignment with national and international standards, including the Higher Education Authority's (HEA) Principles of Good Practice in Research (2022)¹, the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity (2023)², and the National Policy Statement on Ensuring Research Integrity in Ireland (2024)³.

¹ <https://hea.ie/policy/research-policy/hea-principles-of-good-practice-in-research-within-irish-higher-education-institutions/>

² https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/guidance/european-code-of-conduct-for-research-integrity_horizon_en.pdf

³ <https://www.iua.ie/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/National-Policy-Statement-on-Ensuring-Research-Integrity-in-Ireland-Dec-2024.pdf>

2. Scope

This Code of Practice applies to all:

- Staff of DkIT, both academic and support, including those in the campus companies and research centres;
- Research students and research graduates of the institute in reference to the output of research undertaken as part of a programme in DkIT, or under the auspices of DkIT separate to thesis preparation, including cases where a student is submitting a thesis by publication;
- Research output, including journal articles, books, chapters, conference abstracts, reports, web-based publications, creative works and other scholarly outputs.

This code of practice does not apply to matters of intellectual property, patents, copyright or research theses. For legal status for films, broadcasts and artistic works, refer to copyright rules in all relevant jurisdictions as well as Ireland⁴.

2. Authorship Criteria

All named authors must have made a substantial intellectual contribution to the research that is presented in the publication. Entitlement to authorship only exists where all the conditions below are met. Any person, including research students, research assistants, research officers, technical officers, and other support staff can be considered for authorship of a paper, provided their contribution was substantial and intellectual in nature.

According to the ICMJE⁵ and COPE⁶ recommendations, an individual is eligible for authorship if they have:

⁴ <https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2000/act/28/section/22/enacted/en/html>

⁵ International Committee of Medical Journal Editors at <https://www.icmje.org/recommendations/browse/roles-and-responsibilities/defining-the-role-of-authors-and-contributors.html>

⁶ COPE Council. COPE Discussion Document: Authorship. September 2019. <https://doi.org/10.24318/cope.2019.3.3>

1. Made a significant intellectual contribution: e.g., substantial contributions requiring intellectual effort include conceiving the original idea, designing the study, collecting, analysing, and interpreting the data;
2. Drafted the manuscript or revised it critically for important intellectual content;
3. Approved the final version to be published; and
4. Agreed to be accountable for all aspects of the work, ensuring questions related to accuracy or integrity are appropriately investigated and resolved.

Contributions such as data collection, technical support, or administrative assistance do not qualify for authorship but should be acknowledged appropriately. Authorship rights flow from the substance of intellectual input. To have provided materials, data that has already been published, routine technical support, or to have simply made measurements do not constitute intellectual input. Technical editing is not considered a substantial intellectual contribution.

Any individual who is an author, consistent with this definition, must be named as such. This is particularly important for protection of research students and researchers on temporary contracts. To exclude any such individuals (even with their consent) fails to give due credit and conflicts with principles of openness by masking the involvement of individuals.

Specific journals may have detailed authorship rules. These should be complied with, in addition to this code of practice.

3. Authorship Rights

Authorship rights flow from what an individual does in respect of a publication, not from whom they are. Many journals encourage transparency by publishing author contribution statements.

- Being a named supervisor does not merit authorship if no intellectual contribution was made to the research described in the specific article. Contexts in which supervisors and research students collaborate to undertake and publish research may justify shared authorship by meeting the criteria set above.
 - Acquisition of funding, without contributing intellectually to the research work published, does not merit authorship rights.
 - Ghost, gift, or honorary authorship is not acceptable. Being the Head of School, a Head of Department, Director of the Research Centre or Group, provision of funding towards the project in which the research was carried out, or funding the publication do not, of themselves, merit authorship rights.
 - It is not permitted to include a high status 'legitimizing' author, who has not contributed to the specific research.
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4. Authorship Order and Credit

Authorship issues, including allocation of publication credit through position in the author list, should be agreed by all authors at an early stage in the process of preparing a publication, and reviewed periodically. The order of authorship should reflect the relative contributions of each author, as agreed upon by all parties involved. In disciplines where authorship order is significant, it should be determined collaboratively and transparently. The contribution of a research student in any multiple authored paper, that substantially derives from their thesis, is expected to be appropriately reflected in assignment of publication credit.

Allocation of credit must ensure inclusion of researchers at all career stages. It is recognised that local researchers from low-income and middle-income countries (LMICs) are often excluded from authorship lists. DkIT principles of research integrity include a commitment to fairness and inclusion. Recognising the value of context provided by local researchers, DkIT authors are expected to ensure inclusive practices are upheld when agreeing authorship for publications, by appropriately recognising the contribution of local and early-stage researchers. Publication credits are assigned to all those who have contributed to a publication in proportion to their contribution and, according to discipline. This may be reflected in the order in which authors are listed. DkIT researchers must become familiar with the norms in their discipline regarding interpretation of the order of authors.

5. Authorship Agreement and Documentation

Publishing is viewed as a key component of research training, which can help students to develop key skills, maintain motivation, benefit from external feedback, and improve employment and funding opportunities. From the outset, supervisors should make research students aware of expectations regarding publishing and discuss authorship at an early stage.

In cases where a student has not published work in a timely way, a supervisor may be named as an author, provided they have had intellectual input and write the manuscript. In these cases, the student should be consulted regarding the decision to publish, given the opportunity to review the manuscript and should be listed as an author.

Authorship roles and order should be discussed and agreed upon at the outset of a project and revisited periodically. Written records of these agreements should be maintained and updated as necessary to reflect changes in contributions. A sample authorship agreement template is provided in the appendix, which may provide a useful guide for structuring authorship discussions and agreements.

6. Acknowledgement of non-Authors

Individuals who contribute to the research, but do not meet the criteria for authorship, should be acknowledged in the manuscript. This includes technical staff, administrative support, and others who provided significant assistance. Support, other than direct intellectual contribution, must be acknowledged fairly and with permission, if an individual is to be named. DkIT should receive appropriate acknowledgement, where the work was conducted at DkIT, even where an author has since left the institute. All other relevant institutional, organisational or funding affiliations must also be declared or acknowledged for each author.

An increasing number of journals require statements regarding patient and public involvement (PPI) in research to be published. Researchers who have not adopted PPI measures during their research can still seek PPI by inviting members of the public or relevant patients or service users to provide feedback on publication drafts. Further information on PPI can be located at www.PPInetwork.ie

Journal guidelines should be followed on the formatting of PPI statements.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

For multi-authored papers, a designated author will be identified, and agreed by all co-authors, to undertake specific responsibilities as outlined in this code of practice. A 'Corresponding Author' will be identified and agreed by all co-authors to correspond on their behalf with the publisher. The Corresponding Author should ensure they will have email access for the duration of the publication process, and beyond, as well as availability to address queries as they arise. Only institutional email addresses should be used by corresponding authors, not personal email addresses. Students graduating before publication should be aware that access to their institutional email address is discontinued upon programme completion and should make alternative arrangements if taking the role of Corresponding Author close to the end of their programme of study. In many disciplines both lead and corresponding author roles are undertaken by the same author, the person who will make the most substantial contribution to the publication (i.e. a lead author). The designated or 'corresponding' author should ensure that all:

- Named authors have consented to be named;
- Named authors have approved the final version of the paper or report;
- Named authors have approved the order of author's names;
- Relevant authors are included;
- Authors are aware of publication changes that occur through the peer review process.

- They (the corresponding author) can be reached by email throughout the duration of the review and publication process, to respond to queries and authorise final publication.

All authors must satisfy themselves that:

- They can legitimately claim ownership of a significant aspect of the reported research;
- Their co-authors are happy for them to do so;
- They can defend those aspects of the research for which they are responsible.

It is the responsibility of all authors to promptly retract a paper or correct results when an error is discovered in published work. All authors are required to ensure that publishing the work is responsible, with awareness of possible impact on vulnerable stakeholders. All authors must ensure compliance with nondisclosure agreements and/or confidentiality provisions applying to specific projects.

8. Dispute Resolution

In cases of authorship disputes, DkIT encourages open dialogue among the involved parties. If resolution cannot be achieved, the matter should be escalated to the relevant Head of School. Where a dispute relating to authorship, publication credit or right to publish arises, in the first instance the designated author will engage all co-authors (including those whose authorship right may be in dispute) in correspondence, with a view to finding a resolution. A record will be kept of all correspondence. No attempt to publish the disputed output can be made at this stage. If the designated author is a student, they may request the advice and assistance of the Head of Research & Graduate Studies or a Head of School (should the dispute include the Head of Research & Graduate Studies) in this exercise.

If such discussions are not successful in a timely manner, the designated author will request intervention by the relevant Head of School or Head of Research & Graduate Studies (where the Head of School is a co-author), to review documentation, discuss with all co-authors and arrive at an agreed solution which will allow publication to proceed.

If this is not successful in a timely manner, the Head of School will request intervention by the Head of Research and Graduate Studies. Having reviewed all documentation and correspondence and received any other information he/she considers relevant, the decision of the Head of Research and Graduate Studies (or a designated Head of School, where the Head of Research & Graduate Studies is a co-author) will be final. If issues relating to authorship or process of paper approval are contested after submission or publication, this is considered under the DKIT Policy on Academic Integrity and Research Integrity. The Head

of Research and Graduate Studies is responsible for ensuring compliance with the Code of Practice.

9. Compliance with Ethical Standards

All authors must adhere to ethical standards in research and publication, including:

- Disclosing any conflicts of interest;
- Avoiding practices such as ghost or guest authorship;
- Ensuring transparency and honesty in reporting research findings.

These standards are in line with the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity (2023)⁷ and the National Policy Statement on Ensuring Research Integrity in Ireland (2024)⁸.

Furthermore, recognising the increasing threat to research security and integrity, DkIT prohibits the practice of 'gift' or 'honorary' authorship to any person or party in return for finance or favours, either provided, promised, or implied. Should authorship be demanded under threat, this should be reported directly and immediately to the Head of Research and Graduate Studies, in confidence.

10. Generative AI and Authorship

Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools, including generative AI, lack the agency and responsibility required for authorship. Consequently, AI cannot be an author. Copyright laws typically require human authorship for copyright protection. Generative AI (GenAI) tools may be used in some limited circumstances during the preparation of a manuscript such as:

- **Language editing:** GenAI can be used to improve the readability and clarity of writing.
- **Content generation in specific contexts:** GenAI can be used to generate text, images, or other prompts for research where the AI is the focus of the study, such as in simulation studies, but the full nature of this should be disclosed in publication submissions.

⁷ https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/guidance/european-code-of-conduct-for-research-integrity_horizon_en.pdf

⁸ <https://www.iua.ie/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/National-Policy-Statement-on-Ensuring-Research-Integrity-in-Ireland-Dec-2024.pdf>

- **Generating prompts for research stimuli:** GenAI can be used to create prompts for research experiments, particularly in areas like natural language processing. Any use of GenAI prompts should be tracked and reported according to publisher requirements.

GenAI must not be used to create or alter research data in a way that misrepresents findings.

Responsible use of GenAI in scholarly publishing requires transparency, accountability, and adherence to specific publisher guidelines. Using GenAI to generate substantial parts of a manuscript without proper disclosure and human oversight, is not in line with the authorship integrity requirements of DkIT, as outlined in this code of practice. Authors are fully accountable for the content of their publications and must disclose the use of GenAI tools in their work, specifying which tools were used and how they were utilised. Where a publisher has a prescribed format for disclosing use of GenAI, this format should be followed. Where no prescribed format is provided, authors must still disclose use of GenAI, for example:

"During the preparation of this work, the author(s) used [NAME TOOL / SERVICE] in order to [REASON]. After using this tool/service, the author(s) reviewed and edited the content as needed and take(s) full responsibility for the content of the publication."

Some journals may require authors to submit additional materials, such as prompts and outputs from GenAI tools, for review purposes.

Different publishers have different policies regarding the use of GenAI tools and the disclosure of their use. **Authors should carefully review and comply with the specific guidelines of the journal they are submitting to regarding GenAI usage.**

11. Training and Awareness

The Research Office at DkIT provides training on research integrity and authorship practices for all researchers and postgraduate research students. Researchers are encouraged to familiarise themselves with discipline-specific guidelines and the above institutional code of practice related to authorship.

12. Contact Information

For further information or guidance on authorship matters, please contact the Research Office at researchoffice@dkit.ie.

Appendix: Authorship Agreement Template

This agreement is intended to help establish and maintain clear expectations regarding authorship. It should be considered a *living document* that is used and revisited during meetings and revised as needed.

Working Title of Manuscript:

[Write title here]

Authorship Criteria

Authorship norms vary across fields and disciplines. Authors included on this manuscript should satisfy the following 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.

Authorship Order

Please list authors in the order they will appear on the publication, adding rows as necessary.

Name	Author Position	As author, I commit to... (e.g., writing the first draft, designing the tables, writing the methods section, corresponding with journal)	Date
1	First Author		
2	Second Author		
3			
4	Senior Author		

Publication Goal

Intended Journal
First Choice

Second Choice
Third Choice

Submission Goal

This manuscript will be submitted to the intended journal on:
MM/DD/YYYY

Next Deliverables and Deadlines

Identify key deliverables and deadlines, adding rows as needed.

	Date	Deliverable(s) (e.g., first draft, feedback on draft, second draft)	Person responsible
1			
2			
3			

Upon submission (not acceptance) of the manuscript, please email a copy of the completed form to:

[Insert contact details for the person leading on the publication preparation]

Useful Additional Resources

COPE Council. COPE Discussion Document: Authorship. September 2019.

<https://doi.org/10.24318/cope.2019.3.3>

© 2019 Committee on Publication Ethics (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0) <https://publicationethics.org>

International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) (2026) Defining the role of authors and contributors. [Online] Available at:

<https://www.icmje.org/recommendations/browse/roles-and-responsibilities/defining-the-role-of-authors-and-contributors.html>

Taylor & Francis (2017) Co-authorship in the Humanities and Social Sciences A global view A white paper from Taylor & Francis. [Online] Available at:

<https://authorservices.taylorandfrancis.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Coauthorship-white-paper.pdf>

Taylor & Francis (2026) Defining authorship in your research paper. [Online] Available at:

<https://authorservices.taylorandfrancis.com/editorial-policies/defining-authorship-research-paper/>

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