



THE AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY

Research Policy

<i>Policy No. ORGS/001-2013</i> AUTHORSHIP POLICY	
<i>Last updated :</i> January 2008	<i>Revised with feedback from University Research Council</i> February 2012
<i>Contact Office:</i> Office of the Dean of Research & Graduate Studies	<i>This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies of the Aga Khan University:</i> Publications, Research Misconduct, Code of Good Research Practice and Intellectual Property Rights
<i>Approving Authority:</i>	University Research Council: May 10, 2013
<i>Endorsed by</i>	Academic Council: January 30, 2014

Policy created: May 2003

POLICY STATEMENT

This policy will explicitly determine authorship for scientific or humanities disciplines for scholarly publication, i.e. developing manuscripts, applying for grants, making presentations, and other electronic or non-electronic communications. This policy is applicable to all publications including, but not limited to review articles, case reports, and abstracts for scholarly publication.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Authorship of scholarly, scientific or research publication is recognised to be the most significant indicator of academic merit at universities. Recommendations for merit and promotion are normally made on the basis of the number and quality of scholarly publications in peer-reviewed journals. In this context, the immense pressure to publish can at times lead to conflict and confusion regarding appropriate authorship credit.
- 1.2 Many reputable institutions across the world have provided guidelines related to claims of authorship. The International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) has developed guidelines recommending that to qualify as an author, one should have made:

- “1) substantial contributions to conception and design, acquisition of data, or analysis and interpretation of data;

- 2) drafting the article or revising it critically for important intellectual content; and
- 3) final approval of the version to be published. Authors should meet conditions 1, 2, and 3.”

- 1.3 ICMJE also states that: “Each author should have participated sufficiently in the work to take public responsibility for appropriate portions of the content. One or more authors should take the responsibility for the integrity of the work as a whole, from inception to published article.”
- 1.4 Some journals request that one or more authors, referred to as “guarantors”, be identified as the persons who take responsibility for the integrity of the work as a whole, from inception to published article, and publish that information.

The American Psychological Association (APA) publication manual offers similar guidelines widely referred to in the fields of Social Sciences and Education. These guidelines also reserve authorship for those who have made a substantial contribution, and thus “receive primary credit and hold primary responsibility for the published work”. Substantial contribution is defined to include formulating the problem or hypothesis, developing the research design, organising and conducting analysis, interpreting the results, or writing a major portion of the paper. Supportive functions, such as advising on statistical analysis, collecting or entering data, or conducting routine observations are recommended for acknowledgement, and *possibly* authorship, depending upon the extent of the contribution and importance to the project.

- 1.5 In general, internationally accepted guidelines for authorship in Medicine and the Social Sciences recommend that authorship is based on substantial contribution to the research study.

2.0 Objectives

- 2.1 This Policy explicitly seeks to establish authorship requirements.
- 2.2 The policy should be followed by individuals associated or affiliated with the Aga Khan University and other collaborators and Partner universities to resolve authorship disputes.

3.0 Modification

- 3.1 These guidelines will be reviewed periodically and modified as and when necessary.

4.0 Authorship

- 4.1. An author is an individual who has made substantial intellectual contributions to a scientific investigation.
- 4.1.1. A substantial intellectual contribution would require an individual to have significantly participated in one or more of the following activities, i.e., formulating the research problem, designing the study, implementing the study, interpreting and/or analysing the results, writing and/or reviewing the research paper, and responding to critique.

- 4.2. Authorship issue/order should be discussed early in the phase of their work. Authors should have read the manuscript before print and must be prepared to take responsibility for the data, its interpretations, and conclusions made in it.
- 4.3. For multiple authors, the order of names normally should reflect the contributions made by each of them, with the most significant contributor listed as the first author, and so on. All authors must be ready to submit written documentation of their specific contributions.
- 4.4. The first author is not necessarily the Principal Investigator (PI), but an individual who is responsible for the conception and design of the study.
- 4.5. The Corresponding Author should have a permanent position within the University. The Corresponding Author should be decided through consensus between authors and will be responsible for communication with editors, journals, and other authors. The Corresponding Author will keep all other authors informed in case of revisions made in the manuscript before it is finally published.
- 4.6. In collaborative research projects resulting in publications, authors should have read, consulted and complied with the University's research policies and guidelines.
- 4.7. Individuals who are not members of the research group, but make substantial contributions to the writing of a paper may be credited for authorship according to the criteria for authorship as set out in section 4.2 and 4.3.
- 4.8. Gift¹, Ghost², or honorary authorship is not acceptable. *Please see 4.2 and 4.3.*

Definition: Ghost/Gift/Guest author is someone who is listed as an author without qualifying for authorship and also someone whose name is included without permission, but meant to acknowledge.

5.0 **Acknowledgement**

- 5.1. Team members who may not have made substantial contributions to the paper, but have made substantial contributions to the research, should be mentioned in the acknowledgement note.
- 5.2. Data collectors and those who provided laboratory/field/secretarial support, such as providing technical assistance or involvement in data collection, or helped in typing the manuscript should not claim authorship, but should be acknowledged, with their permission for their work. Field workers, or secretarial/administrative staff may be acknowledged with permission.
- 5.3. All sources of funding must be acknowledged appropriately, whether internal or external funding.
- 5.4. "*Work undertaken at Aga Khan University*" should be clearly specified if an author submits a manuscript and publishes after leaving AKU or a student who has left the programme after graduation.

6.0 **Students / Residents**

- 6.1 Students are encouraged to publish their approved theses or dissertations work.
- 6.2 In those cases where a student explicitly chooses not to engage in the preparation of their thesis or dissertation research for publication, their supervisor may choose to prepare the work themselves and will provide appropriate authorship credit to the student in recognition of his/her contribution to the research study.
- 6.3 The order of authors is decided in mutual agreement by the supervisor and/or the principal investigator. *See 4.2 and 4.3.*
- 6.4 A student will not be the Corresponding Author.
- 6.5 Under no circumstance should anyone affiliated with AKU, whether as employee, student, or volunteer, publish data owned by AKU, or AKU faculty without permission from the owner of the data.

7.0 **Ethical Approval**

- 7.1 No manuscript can be submitted for publication if ethical approval or exemption of the study has NOT been obtained. The PI of the study should obtain ethical approval or exemption (where applicable) for the study.

8.0 **Copyright Transfer**

- 8.1 Copyright of a manuscript is transferred to a journal when the Lead Author or Corresponding Author signs a copyright form on behalf of all authors. The manuscript, and all contained content are no longer the property of authors and no part of the manuscript (including figures, tables, etc.) can be submitted or published by any author without prior approval of the publisher.

9.0 **Dispute Resolution**

- 9.1 The PI should resolve any disputes over order of the authorship in collegial consultation with the other investigators.
- 9.2 If a dispute or concern arises with respect to authorship, the following steps may be taken for resolution:
- a) Resolve the dispute within the research team.
 - b) Speak with the research team leader or PI for an amicable resolution. If a discussion with the PI does not resolve the problem, several avenues of dispute resolution within the relevant departments may be approached in the following order:
 - Research Supervisory Committee of the department,
 - Chair of the department,
 - Dean or Director, as appropriate,
 - Dean of Research and Graduate Studies, or
 - Provost (whose decision will be final and binding on all parties).

- 9.3 If a paper is in the process of being published, and the above methods do not resolve the dispute, a letter indicating a conflict of interest may be sent to the Publisher.
- 9.4 The most desirable and effective approach in determining authorship is through mutual agreement, preferably at the beginning of the project/study. Agreements on authorship credit and order may be reviewed during the course of the project if necessary.

10.0 Plagiarism

- 10.1 Plagiarism is defined as the unauthorized use of, or close imitation of, the language and/or thoughts of another author and the representation of their work as one's own.
- 10.2 Plagiarism may occur with or without intent. However, copying is absolutely unacceptable, and will be appropriately dealt with University's policy on "Research Misconduct". Examples of repercussions may include, but are not limited to, removal from the research project, permanent removal from a research team, and/or retraction of published papers. It is the responsibility of the Corresponding Author to check for plagiarism before submitting manuscript to the Publisher.

Specimen Text for "Acknowledgements": (*Adapted from: The Wellcome Trust and NIH Grants Policy Statement*)

Example 1

'This work was supported by The Aga Khan University Research Council Grant [grant number].'

Example 2: *If more than one funder or grant was involved, then the suggested text is:*

'This work was supported by the University Research Council grant of the Aga Khan University [grant number], [grant number]; The Wellcome Trust UK [grant number]; another funder [grant number]; etc.'

Example 3: *If study was supported by an NIH grant*

„This project was supported by NIH Research Grant # D00 TW000000 funded by the Fogarty International Center“

Suggested references for reading on next page

Suggested Readings

- 1) Ahmed SM, Maurana CA, Engle J, Uddin DE, Glaus KD. A method for assigning authorship in multi-authored publications. *Fam Med* 1997; 29(1): 42-4.
- 2) American Psychological Association. 4th Ed, 1994. Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association. Washington, DC: USA.
- 3) Diguisto E. Equity in authorship: a strategy for assigning credit when publishing. *Soc Sci Med*, 1994; 38(1): 55-58.
- 4) Erlen JA, Siminoff LA, Sereika SM, Sutton LB. Multiple authorship: Issues and recommendations. *J Professional Nurs*. 1997; 13(4): 262-70.
- 5) Hemmings, A. Great ethical divides: Bridging the gap between institutional review board and the researchers. *Educational Researcher*, 2005; 35(4): 12-18.
- 6) *Intellectual Property Policy and Guidelines*. Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania (August 2011).
- 7) *Intellectual Property Rights Policy*. Kenyaatta University, Nairobi: Kenya (May 2010).
- 8) *Intellectual Property Rights Policy*. Aga Khan University (June 2005).
- 9) International Committee of Medical Journal Editors. Guidelines on Authorship. *BMJ*. 1985; 291: 722.
- 10) King CR, McGuire DB, Longman AJ, Carroll-Johnson MR. Peer review, authorship, ethics, and conflict of interest. *J Nursing Scholarship*. 1997; 29(2): 163-7.
- 11) Mowatt G, Shirran L, Grimshaw JM, Rennie D, Flanagan A, Yank V, MacLennan, G et al. Prevalence of Honorary and Ghost Authorship in Cochrane Reviews. *JAMA*. 2002; 287:2769-71.
- 12) Osborne, Jason W. and Holland, Abigail. What is authorship, and what should it be? A survey of prominent guidelines for determining authorship in scientific publications. *Practical Assessment, Research & Evaluation*, 2009; 14(15). Available online: <http://pareonline.net/pdf/v14n15.pdf>.
- 13) Prevalence of Honorary and Ghost Authorship in Cochrane Reviews. *JAMA*. 2002; 287: 2769-71.
- 14) *Research Policy Guidelines*. Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. (August 2011).
- 15) Social Sciences Directory – Editorial and Publishing Policies. http://socialsciencesdirectory.com/index.php/socscidir/pages/view/authors_policies retrieved May 7, 2012.
- 16) Social Sciences Directory ISSN: ISSN 2049-6869.
- 17) *The Little Book of Plagiarism, what is it and how to avoid it*. Islamabad: Higher Education Commission Pakistan. www.hec.gov.pk.
- 18) *University Research Council minutes*: “Students are not eligible to become principal investigator of a study.” October 13, 2011.