

RTU Press Publication Ethics Guidelines

Publications of RTU academic and research personnel reflect the process and outputs of their research and it is of utmost importance that the publications are grounded and trustworthy. The process of publishing involves several parties each having an important role in ensuring the quality of publication. RTU Press is committed to maintaining high standards of publication ethics. Authors, editors, and reviewers are expected to adhere to the basic principles of publishing ethics at each stage of publishing from submitting to final publishing.

The aim of RTU Press is to ensure that the parties involved in the publishing process adhere to RTU Press Publication Ethics Guidelines and, if relevant, declare conflict of interest.

RTU Press Publication Ethics Guidelines are based on adherence to ethical principles set out in “Latvian Council of Science Code of Researcher’s Ethics”, “RTU Code of Ethics of Students and Personnel” and in Codes of Conduct and Best Practice Guidelines of Committee of Publication Ethics (COPE).

RTU Press Publication Ethics Guidelines set out the duties and responsibilities of editors, reviewers, authors and RTU Press and set out the process of dealing with cases of unethical behaviour or undisclosed conflicts of interest.

RTU Press Publication Ethics Guidelines are approved and monitored by RTU Ethics Committee (nominated by the Rector of RTU) which provides consultancy and investigates the cases compromising intellectual and ethical standards as well as takes the decisions in accordance with the principles set out in the legal acts of the Republic of Latvia.

1. Duties and responsibilities of Editor-in-Chief of a scientific journal

1.1. Editor-in-Chief ensures that

- 1.1.1. the journal has clearly defined principles of publishing ethics: the requirements regarding authorship, reviewing process, ethical guidelines, principles of disclosure of conflict of interest;
- 1.1.2. information on principles of publication ethics is accessible for authors and reviewers;
- 1.1.3. editors do not allow cases of plagiarism, self-plagiarism, redundant publication and “salami slicing” and see to the authorship issue of papers;
- 1.1.4. authors, editors and reviewers adhere to the principles of publishing ethics and norms set out in “Latvian Council of Science Code of Researchers’ Ethics”, “RTU Code of Ethics of Students and Personnel” and in Codes of Conduct and Best Practice Guidelines of Committee of Publication Ethics (COPE);
- 1.1.5. authors, editors and reviewers declare conflict of interest.

1.2. Editor-in-Chief should make honest and objective decisions.

The evaluation of manuscript and the decision on publishing should not be biased and influenced by personal reasons (professional, political, ideological, etc.). Possible financial and non-financial conflict of interest should be assessed and the editor should abstain from the evaluation of the manuscript.

1.3. Editor-in-Chief has the authority to reject a manuscript on grounds of the declared conflict of interest of author, reviewer, or in case the manuscript does not adhere to the of RTU Press Guidelines of Publication Ethics.

1.4. If the Editorial Board of a journal receives a complaint about ethical misconduct the Editor-in-Chief should follow the procedures set out in the RTU Press Guidelines of Publication Ethics and investigate the complaints even if the manuscript has been accepted for publication. Editor-in-Chief should keep all documentation related to the complaints.

1.5. Editor-in-Chief ensures that the selected peer reviewers are free from disqualifying conflict of interests. The publication should not be reviewed by the tutor of a promotional work or by a co-author.

2. Duties and responsibilities of peer reviewers (of journal articles, books and teaching materials)

2.1. Peer reviewer should

- 2.1.1. assess the academic content, the obtained research results, author's competence and the scientific significance of the manuscript, and clearly communicate critical comments without being hostile;
- 2.1.2. ensure that the review is based on the merits of the work and not influenced either positively or negatively, by any financial, or other conflicting considerations or by personal biases (professional, political, religious or ideological);
- 2.1.3. declare all potential conflicting interests and decline to review the manuscript if he/she is not able to be objective;
- 2.1.4. notify the editor or publisher if he/she has concerns about ethical aspects of the work or is aware of similarities between the text of the submitted manuscript to another published article;
- 2.1.5. respect the confidentiality and avoid to use the submitted manuscript for his/her personal benefit;
- 2.1.6. only agree to review manuscripts which he/she has the subject expertise required to carry out a proper assessment and decline to review if he/she does not have the respective competencies.

3. Ethical guidelines for Authors

3.1. All authors submitting to a RTU Press journal are expected to adhere to the following ethical guidelines:

- 3.1.1. Authors should adhere to national and international copyright laws and the RTU Press Publication Ethics Guidelines.
- 3.1.2. Publishing of a manuscript should be agreed with the project manager or leader of the research group and all co-authors.
- 3.1.3. Using text of publication of another author without reference to the author is qualified as plagiarism and violation of copyright.
- 3.1.4. Tables, figures or extensive quotations should be reproduced only with appropriate permission from the author or publisher, should be properly acknowledged with reference to the source.
- 3.1.5. When quoting scientific discoveries, its primary source should be acknowledged. The same research can be used only if the primary source is cited.
- 3.1.6. Repeated publishing of previously published work is unethical. It does not relate to inclusion in literature overviews.
- 3.1.7. Authors should ensure that their research is original and has not been published before. Submitting of manuscripts to multiple publishing or simultaneous publishing is considered unethical.
- 3.1.8. On submission of the manuscript authors should present information about all related and similar publications, including translations, published with other publishers.
- 3.1.9. Researchers should ensure that only those individuals are rewarded with authorship who have made real and creative and substantial contribution to the research work. Colleagues who have provided technical assistance (e.g. doing standard analysis using standard methods) or to the publication (e.g. prepared figures or did editing) should be listed in the Acknowledgement section. Acknowledgement should be given also to individuals whose comments during the preparation of the manuscript have helped to interpret the results of the research.
- 3.1.10. Authors should declare all possible financial and/or non-financial conflicts of interest.

4. Responsibilities of RTU Press

- 4.1. RTU Press is fully committed to ethical publication practice and organizes its work to detect:
 - plagiarism;
 - self-plagiarism (text recycling of a previously published text);
 - redundant publication;
 - “salami publication”;
 - wrong information about authorship;
- 4.2. RTU Press monitors the procedure of editors, reviewers and authors declaring possible financial and non-financial conflict of interests in order to ensure the transparency of the publishing process.
- 4.3. In cases when RTU Press receives complaints or report on ethical misconduct, Head of RTU Press should investigate the complaints and report even if the manuscript has already been accepted for publishing. RTU Press should keep all documents related to complaints.

5. Dealing with cases of suspected misconduct

- 5.1. In the case of a suspected misconduct, it has to be reported to the Editor-in-Chief of the respective journal or to RTU Press. The reporter should provide grounded proof about the misconduct for it to be investigated.
- 5.2. Initial investigation is performed by Editor-in-Chief together with RTU Press. Confidentiality should be observed during the process of collecting of confirming proof.
- 5.3. In case of minor misconduct investigation is not necessary. In any case of discovered misconduct, the author should be given the opportunity to present the explanation.
- 5.4. In case of a serious breach the Editor-in-Chief of the scientific journal in consultation with RTU Press, decides whether to notify the employer of the author or to involve outside experts in further investigation.
- 5.5. In case of serious misconduct Editor-in-Chief of the journal in consultancy with RTU Press submits the proof of the facts for investigation at RTU Ethics Committee and recommends to take the following steps:
 - 5.5.1. Author or reviewer is given the notice about the misconduct and receives warning in writing;
 - 5.5.2. The scientific journal publishes a notice about the occurred misconduct;
 - 5.5.3. A letter of notice is sent to the employer of the author or reviewer;
 - 5.5.4. The employer of the author or reviewer is sent a letter announcing that the publication is deployed from the scientific journal and the databases indexing it;
 - 5.5.5. Editor-in-Chief in consultancy with RTU Press sets the period of time by which the respective author’s manuscripts will not be accepted for publishing;
 - 5.5.6. A report on the misconduct and consequences is sent to the respective professional organisation and higher institutions for further investigation and action.