

Publication Ethics and Malpractice Statement

The need for clarity on agreed ethical standards for everyone involved in the publishing process (authors, editors, reviewers, and the publisher) is a necessary publication prerequisite for all journals published by Lexxion Verlagsgesellschaft mbH (the publisher).

This statement is meant to be a resource to rely on in case of doubt or dispute.

This Publication Ethics and Malpractice Statement is based on COPE's Best Practice Guidelines for Journal Editors, which is also the reference text if further clarifications and information are needed.

The preparation for the publication of a journal is the charge of its Editorial Team, usually comprised of the Editorial Board, Managing Editors or Editors-in-Chief and Executive Editors. Other Editors may be appointed as necessary.

Editorial Board members are recognised experts in their fields and include academics, legal professionals, scientists, government and EU officials, and other authorities.

1. General Duties of the Publisher

- Journals are accountable for the content published, through their reviewing and checking processes. Therefore they also hold the responsibility for deciding which contributions should be published. This choice is made on the basis of the quality and novelty of the material, and of its integrity in order to meet the needs of readers and authors.
- Lexxion supports equal rights and opportunities; therefore every article submitted is taken into consideration and evaluated for its content, without discrimination on any of the grounds set forth in Article 14 of the European Convention on Human Rights.
- Journals published by Lexxion do not disclose information on their evaluation of an article to any of the parties involved in its preparation for publication. The same applies to unpublished material, unless with the specific consent of the authors.
- The publisher commits to act promptly in case any published material requires corrections of significant import, retractions, clarifications and apologies, as appropriate to each case. Corrections shall be adopted only if they refer to facts or events prior to the submission of the final manuscript and substantially affect the work. Minor or cosmetic corrections, including typos, updates, revisions etc will not be allowed after publication.

2. General Duties of the Editors

- The members of the Editorial Teams shall act in a professional, balanced, fair and objective manner in carrying out their duties to the journal, without discrimination on any of the grounds set forth in Article 14 of the European Convention on Human Rights.
- This shall apply to all situations, but especially the treatment of authors and assessment of submissions for publication. These shall be considered solely on the basis of the quality of their content and the ethical standards set herein.
- The Editorial Teams shall duly follow these ethical guidelines and act diligently in cases of suspected misconduct, adopting reasonable measures and procedures to deal with complaints and conflicts.
- Editors shall refrain from involvement in any review or situation in which a conflict of interests may arise.

3. General Duties of the Reviewers

- Reviewers shall follow this PEMS and our other specific guidelines and provide an unbiased, non-personal, and objective review of the contributions submitted to them. The reviews must be a tool for improving the quality of the papers, therefore any criticism by the reviewers must be supported by strong arguments, be as clear and specific as possible and remain respectful at all times.
 - Reviewers must treat any submitted manuscript confidentially, and must not use the content to their advantage, unless otherwise agreed upon in writing with the publisher, who shall consult authors beforehand.
 - When accepting the review of a contribution, reviewers shall commit to following all mutually-agreed-upon deadlines and not unduly delay or postpone the review. If unwilling or unable to finish a review, reviewers shall promptly notify the Editorial Team, and attempt to the best of their abilities to find a replacement.
 - Reviewers must immediately inform the Editorial Team of any actual or potential conflict of interests, including those arising after the initiation of their review. The Editorial Team shall act accordingly based on this information.
4. General Duties of the Authors
- Authors must present an accurate account of the work performed and provide or reference sufficient material to permit the check or replication of their work. If the work has more than one author, all of them must have significantly contributed to the research; conversely, all significant contributors shall be duly identified. If requested, authors shall clarify to the Editorial Team who was responsible for which part of the work.
 - Authors ensure the originality of their work and the proper citation of, reference or credit to the works of others present in their own, in terms of both specific quotation and general influence and guidance.
 - In accordance with Lexxion's Terms and Conditions, authors shall not submit a contribution to multiple journals or publishers at the same time, nor shall they submit contributions already published (partially or as a whole), even if in another language.
 - Authors must verify and guarantee compliance with ethical standards in the treatment of participants (human or animal) and provide information about the procedures adopted in their studies. Any relevant financial support, direct involvement in a matter discussed in the work (such as judicial proceedings) or other relevant affiliations shall be clearly stated in the work.
 - In case an author discovers a significant error or inaccuracy in their own published work it is the author's responsibility to immediately notify the publisher or the journal's Editorial Team, who shall act promptly as appropriate. Authors shall remain available to make such corrections at the request of the publisher or Editorial Team.
 - Authors shall pledge to follow this PEMS and the Author Guidelines of the respective publication, making sure that their work adheres to them entirely before submission. Contributions that do not do so may be summarily rejected.
 - Authors are obliged to take part in the review process by remaining available for any changes, modifications, improvements etc as may be required by reviewers and Editorial Teams. These shall be considered as mandatory conditions for publication; authors shall strive to adopt them to the widest possible extent. Clear and objective justification shall be given by authors if any request hasn't been met. Editorial Teams reserve the right to return any insufficiently modified contribution to authors for further work, or to reject its publication.
 - Authors shall undertake to follow all assigned deadlines strictly, without undue or unjustified delays. Any delay must be communicated to the Editorial Team *prior* to the original deadline; failure to do so may result in the summary rejection of a contribution.
 - Upon the first submission of a manuscript, authors must clearly inform the publisher of any prior commitments or obligations they are under which may affect the licensing of their work, including (but not limited to) obligations to make research freely available. Failure to do so may incur the sole liability of the author.

5. Publication Ethics

- Under no circumstance shall Lexxion publish any work where research misconduct (including but not limited to plagiarism) has knowingly occurred, nor encourage or knowingly allow such misconduct to take place. It shall take reasonable steps to identify and prevent the publication of such works.
- In the event such misconduct or allegations thereof are brought to the attention of the publisher or Editorial Team, by any person whatsoever, they shall deal with such information as appropriate to each case. The identity of the source shall be protected unless this is explicitly waived by the same.
- The case shall be treated discretely and confidentially as much as possible or required by the situation, and no information or allegation shall be made public until the end of the inquiry, and only if so required.
- All persons involved or alleged to be involved shall be given ample opportunity to clarify the matter.
- The Editorial Teams and the publisher shall strive to seek the most accurate information possible to guide any decision.
- Without prejudice to other actions, the publisher shall promptly correct, retract, remove or otherwise remedy any work it published in which misconduct has occurred.
- The publisher reserves the right to seek judicial remedies, inform or alert professional associations, ethics committees, funding bodies, employers etc, or to take any other action it deems appropriate according to the severity of the misconduct.

6. Peer-review

All articles submitted to a Lexxion journal are peer-reviewed. Review processes vary per journal and are described in their respective Author Guidelines. The choice and assignment of reviewers is at the sole discretion of the Editorial Team; details thereof shall not be discussed or made public, and authors may not make any requests in this regard.