

**European Association of Science Editors  
(EASE)**

www.ease.org.uk

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EASE Publications Committee

1<sup>st</sup> Workshop of the ESF Member Forum on Research Integrity  
17-18 November 2008, Madrid

**Research Integrity in scientific  
communication**

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- Principles and guidelines followed by editors
- Role and responsibilities of editors
- Practical aspects
  - Prevention, detection and enforcement
  - Challenges
  - Successes
  - Case history
  - How to promote research integrity?

**Overview**

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**Principles**

- Maintain editorial independence
- Avoid commercial influence of academic content
- Promote transparency (don't hide anything!)
  - Conflicts of interest
  - Funding sources
  - Professional assistance with writing/editing

**Principles and guidelines**

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### Guidelines – journal processes

- Publish journal policies on integrity
  - Encourage authors to follow best practice
  - Encourage peer reviewers to follow best practice
  - Raise awareness of negative consequences of misconduct
- Publish instructions on how to make a complaint to journal about its own procedures
- Detect, avert and respond to
  - Plagiarism
  - Fraud, e.g. fabrication, falsification
  - Redundant publication

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

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### Published guidelines

- COPE (Committee on Publication Ethics)  [www.publicationethics.org](http://www.publicationethics.org)
- ICMJE (International Committee of Medical Journal Editors)  [www.icmje.org](http://www.icmje.org) International Committee of Medical Journal Editors
- GPP (Good Publication Practice, for pharmaceutical companies) [www.gpp-guidelines.org](http://www.gpp-guidelines.org)
- WAME (World Association of Medical Editors) [www.wame.org](http://www.wame.org)
- CSE (Council of Science Editors, USA)  [www.councilscienceeditors.org](http://www.councilscienceeditors.org)
- Publishers' own guidelines (e.g. Wiley-Blackwell, [www.blackwellpublishing.com/publicationethics](http://www.blackwellpublishing.com/publicationethics))

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### Published guidelines (cont'd)

- EASE *Science Editors' Handbook*
  - 1-4.1: The ethics of scientific publication, by Povl Riis
  - 1-4.2: How to be prepared for fraud, by Stephen Lock
  - 1-4.3: How should fraud be dealt with, by Povl Riis
  - 1-4.4: Conflict of interest: declaring more or less, by Hervé Maisonneuve
  - 1-4.5: Editors and the biomedical industry, by Liz Wager[www.ease.org.uk/handbook/index.shtml](http://www.ease.org.uk/handbook/index.shtml)
- WMA (World Medical Association) Declaration of Helsinki  [www.wma.net/e/policy/b3](http://www.wma.net/e/policy/b3)
- EMWA (European Medical Writers Association)  [www.emwa.org](http://www.emwa.org)
- AMWA (American Medical Writers Association) [www.amwa.org](http://www.amwa.org)

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### Editors

- Editor-in-Chief & Editorial Board
- Editorial staff, e.g. copyeditor, managing editor
- Editors' roles vary among journals

### Role and responsibilities

- Publisher must define journal policies
- Notify Editor-in-Chief of research integrity issues
- Editor-in-Chief to follow guidelines/principles
  - Journal's policies control the Editor-in-Chief's remit

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## Role and responsibilities

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### Practical aspects – prevention

Editors have many powers...

- Publish clear guidelines to prevent misconduct:
  - Ensure author is aware of best practice
    - Do authors have time & inclination to read/follow guidance?
    - Pressure to publish - authors might breach guidelines anyway
  - EASE statement on inappropriate use of impact factors
- Give full, clear guidance to reviewers
  - Do reviewers have time to read/follow guidance?
- Control who is on the Editorial Board
  - e.g. Subject-specific Editorial Board members, statistician

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## Practical aspects

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### Practical aspects – detection

#### Challenges

- Detecting plagiarism
  - Cost & effectiveness of tools to detect plagiarism (e.g. CrossCheck)
  - Cost of editorial staff's time
- Reviewers have little time and are not paid
- Difficult to detect fraud or undeclared conflict of interest



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## Practical aspects

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### Practical aspects – enforcement

#### Responding to poor research integrity

- First, seek response from author
- Publish corrections
- Retract published paper if necessary
- Journal may ban submissions from offending authors
- Editors cannot usually carry out investigations themselves
- Therefore, notify authorities or author's employer if appropriate

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## Practical aspects

### Practical aspects – enforcement

#### Challenges

- Tactful discussion with author
- Avoid unnecessary damage to the author's career

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## Practical aspects

### Practical aspects – successes

- Online submission and peer-review systems
  - Authors must make declarations before submission
    - e.g. conflict of interest, financial support, professional writing/editorial support, author/contributor roles
- Transparency is improving
  - Conflicts of interest
  - Funding sources
  - Paid editorial assistance (including ghost writing)

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## Practical aspects



### How to promote research integrity?

- Promote awareness of existing guidelines
- Develop guidelines for other (non-medical) areas of scientific research?
- Encourage collaboration among professional groups that produce guidelines
  - Aim for consensus
- Notify journal editors when bad practice is suspected
  - In peer review process
  - In submitted manuscripts
  - In published papers

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**Promoting research integrity**

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### Interested to learn more?

EASE Conference  
**Integrity in Science Communication**  
 Pisa, Italy  
 16-19 September 2009



[www.ease.org.uk](http://www.ease.org.uk)

Programme Committee: Professor Arjan Polderman (Chair)  
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**Promoting research integrity**

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### In summary...

- Many sources of support are available to editors, authors & reviewers
- Editors' role: prevention, detection & enforcement
  - Publish journal policies & provide clear guidance to authors & reviewers
  - Assign appropriate peer reviewers
  - Use tools to detect plagiarism, image manipulation & redundant publication
  - Use online manuscript submission/peer review systems to aid enforcement
  - Respond to poor research integrity (author/employer; correction/retraction)
- The way forward
  - Promote awareness of guidelines
  - Notify editors of suspected bad practice
  - Encourage development of international guidelines...consensus

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**Summary**

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Dr Joan Marsh, Vice-President, EASE; Wiley-Blackwell  
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Dr John Glen, Scientific Editor, *Journal of Glaciology*

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