

ETHICS AND MALPRACTICE STATEMENT

„Editura POLITEHNICA” (EP) - www.editurapolitehnica.upt.ro (POLITEHNICA Publishing House) belongs to University POLITEHNICA Timișoara (UPT), Romania (www.upt.ro) and has published, for decades now, text books, monographs and scientific bulletins (journals) divided in series dedicated to various branches of engineering. All journals serve to further academic discussions of topics, irrespective of their nature – whether religious, gender-based, environmental, ethical, political, or other potentially or topically contentious subjects. EP is binding oneself to meeting and sustaining standards of ethical behavior at all stages of the review and publication processes. The main aim of the EP is to consolidate its position as an unit, specialized in the technical books and journals, didactically or scientifically, thus bringing real added value to the prestige of the UPT. Quality assurance, on both components: content and form, at a reasonable price, is another objective of EP.

The Editorial Board follows that the authors, the journal editor, the peer-reviewers, the journal publisher, and the owner of the journal have responsibilities to meet expected actual ethical standards at all stages in their involvement from submission (upload) to publication of each article. The ethic statements are based on the Code of Conduct for Journal Publishers and Best Practice Guidelines for Journal Editors of the Committee on Publication Ethics –COPE (<https://publicationethics.org/>).

A summary of our key expectations for authors, editors and (peer-) reviewers, is here detailed:

Author's responsibilities:

- To submit the manuscript using the format outlined in the Instructions to Authors;
- To certify that their manuscripts are their original work, and if the authors have used the work and/or words of others that this has been appropriately cited or quoted. Authors must state that all data in the paper are real and authentic. Fraudulent or knowingly inaccurate statements constitute unethical behavior and are unacceptable;
- All Authors mentioned in the paper must have significantly contributed to the research. Authorship should be limited to those who have made a significant contribution to the conception, design, execution, or interpretation of the reported study. All those who have made significant contributions should be listed as co-authors. Where there are others who have participated in certain substantive aspects of the research project, they should be acknowledged or listed as contributors. The corresponding author should ensure that all appropriate co-authors and no inappropriate co- authors are included on the paper, and that all co-authors have seen and approved the final version of the paper and have agreed to its submission for publication;
- To identify all sources used in the creation of their manuscript;
- Proper acknowledgment of the work of others must always be given. Authors should cite publications that have been influential in determining the nature of the reported work;
- Authors should ensure that any studies involving human or animal subjects conform to national, local and institutional laws and requirements (e.g. WMA Declaration of Helsinki, NIH Policy on Use of Laboratory Animals, EU Directive on Use of Animals) and confirm that approval has been sought and obtained where appropriate. Authors should obtain express permission from human subjects and respect their privacy.

Editor's responsibilities:

- To evaluate manuscripts for their intellectual content without regard to race, gender, sexual orientation, religious belief, ethnic origin, citizenship, or political philosophy of the Authors;

- To not disclose any information about a submitted manuscript to anyone other than the authors of the manuscript, reviewers, potential reviewers, other editorial advisers, and the publisher, as appropriate;
- To do diligences in a balanced and objective mode while carrying out their expected duties, without discrimination on grounds of gender, sexual orientation, religious or political beliefs, ethnic or geographical origin of the authors;
- To send the uploaded papers to be reviewed by at least two reviewers designated by the associated field editors. The reviews should be operated on the basis of First Come – First sent for review;
- To use and follow reasonable procedures in the event of complaints of an ethical or conflict nature;
- To give to authors a reasonable chance to respond to any issued complaints. All complaints should be investigated. Documentation associated with any such complaints should be retained in a proper way;
- The editor has complete responsibility and authority to accept a submitted paper for publication or to reject it. The editor may confer with reviewers for an evaluation to use in making this decision;
- The editor are responsible for the contents and overall quality of the publication;
- The editor should act if they suspect misconduct, whether a paper is published or unpublished, and make all reasonable attempts to persist in obtaining a resolution to the problem;
- The editor should not allow any conflicts of interest between staff, authors, reviewers and board members;
- Unpublished materials disclosed in a submitted manuscript will not be used in the own research of the Editor-in-Chief or the members of the Editorial Board without the express written consent of the author;
- If the editor is presented with convincing evidence that the main substance or conclusions of a paper published in the journal are erroneous, the editor should facilitate publication of an appropriate paper pointing out the error and, if possible, correcting it.

Reviewers' responsibilities:

- To contribute thoroughly to the reviewing process and to assist in improving the quality of the paper uploaded for review and publish by reviewing the manuscript objectively, in the assumed time frame;
- To keep the confidentiality of any information supplied by the editor or author.
- To not retain or copy the manuscript in any way;
- To inform the editor in chief to any published or submitted content that is substantially similar to that under review and which is not cited properly;
- To be aware of any potential conflicts of interest (financial, institutional, collaborative or other relationships between the reviewer and author) and to alert the editor to these, if necessary withdrawing their services for that manuscript.

Authors' responsibilities:

- To keep accurate records of data associated with their submitted manuscript using correctly the Journal interface, and to supply or provide access to these data, on reasonable time line. Where appropriate and where allowed by employer, funding body and others who might have an interest, to deposit data in a suitable repository or storage location, for sharing and further use by others;

- To be aware that the paper proposals should contain original work that was not published in other journals; papers presented at international conferences may be accepted pending standard Journal review procedure;
- To confirm that the manuscript as submitted is not under consideration or accepted for publication elsewhere. Where portions of the content overlap with published or submitted content, to acknowledge and cite those sources;
- To confirm that all the work in the submitted manuscript is original and to acknowledge and cite content reproduced from other sources. To obtain permission to reproduce any content from other sources;
- To accept that they should respond in a special statement available on the journal interface to the critical observations, remarks, and suggestions of the reviewers;
- To declare any potential conflicts of interest (e.g. where the author has a competing interest (real or apparent) that could be considered or viewed as exerting an undue influence on his or her duties at any stage during the publication process);
- To notify promptly the journal editor or publisher if a significant error in their publication is identified. To cooperate with the editor and publisher to publish an erratum, addendum, corrigendum notice, or to retract the paper, where this is deemed necessary;
- All submitted papers are subject to strict peer-review process by at least two reviewers that are experts in the area of the particular paper and they will make a recommendation to accept, reject, or modify the manuscript;
- The reviewing of manuscripts is an essential step in the publication process. The factors that are taken into account in review are relevance, significance, originality, readability and language;
- The possible decisions include acceptance, acceptance with revisions (minor or major), or rejection;
- If authors are encouraged to revise and resubmit a submission, there is no guarantee that the revised submission will be accepted;
- An author should make no changes to a paper after it has been accepted. If there is a compelling reason to make changes, the author is obligated to inform the Editor directly of the nature of the desired change. Only the Editor has the final authority to approve any such requested changes;
- Authors must report any errors they discover in their published paper to the Editor. When an author discovers a significant error or inaccuracy in his or her own published work, it is the author's obligation to promptly notify the journal Editor and cooperate to retract or correct the paper;
- Rejected articles will not be re-reviewed;
- The paper acceptance is constrained by such legal requirements as shall then be in force regarding libel, copyright infringement and plagiarism;
- No research can be included in more than one publication (Multiple, Redundant, or Concurrent Publications).

Publisher responsibilities:

- Both EP and the Editor-in-Chief, on behalf of which it publishes, shall ensure that the good practice is continuous to the standards delineated above.

Identification of unethical (malpractice) behavior:

- Misconduct and unethical behavior may be identified and brought to the attention of the editor in chief and publisher at any time, by anyone using any way of communication;

- Misconduct and unethical behavior may include, but need not be limited to, examples as delineated above;

- Whoever informs the Editor-in-Chief or Publisher of such conduct should provide sufficient information and evidence in order for an investigation to be initiated. All allegations should be taken seriously and treated in the same way, until a successful decision or conclusion is reached.

Investigation:

- An initial decision should be taken by the Editor-in-Chief, who should consult with or seek advice from the publisher, if appropriate;

- Evidence should be gathered, while avoiding spreading any allegations beyond those who need to know.

Breaches:

- Minor misconduct might be dealt with/without the need to consult more widely. In any event, the author should be given the opportunity to respond to any allegations;

- Serious misconduct might require that the employer of the accused be notified. The Editor-in-Chief, together with the Publisher, should make the decision whether or not to involve the employers, either by examining the available evidence themselves or by further consultation with a limited number of experts.

Outcomes:

- Informing or educating the author or reviewer where there appears to be a misunderstanding or misapplication of acceptable standards;

- A more strongly worded letter to the author or reviewer covering the misconduct and as a warning to future behavior;

- Publication of a formal notice detailing the misconduct;

- Publication of an editorial detailing the misconduct;

- A formal letter to the head of the Author's or Reviewer's department or funding agency;

- Formal retraction or withdrawal of a publication from the journal, in conjunction with informing the head of the Author or Reviewer's department, Abstracting & Indexing services and the readership of the publication;

- Imposition of a formal embargo on contributions from an individual for a defined period in this way, papers found with signs of plagiarism / self-plagiarism are rejected; the author will receive a letter where he is also announced that he is barred from sending another paper proposal to the Journal for 2 years;

- Reporting the case and outcome to a professional organization or higher authority for further investigation and action.

Important definition:

Conflict of interest means that Authors submitting a paper must declare any potential conflicts of interest - of any type: financial, nonfinancial, professional, or personal.

Conflicts of interest are those that could be considered or viewed as exerting an undue influence on the presentation, review or publication of their work.