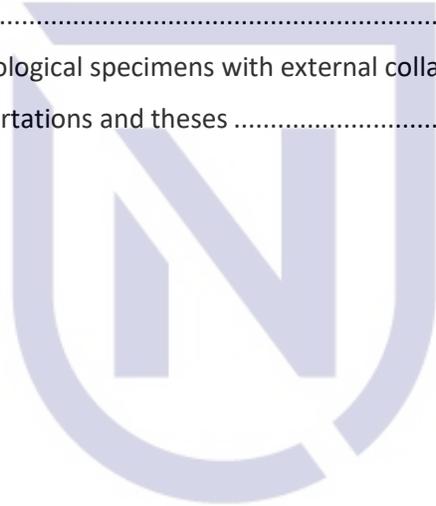


<b>Name of the Policy/ Guidelines</b>	<b>Responsible Conduct of Research and Publishing</b>
<b>Short Description</b>	Policy and guidelines on ethical conduct of research and publishing
<b>Scope</b>	This policy is applicable to all faculty, students and research scholars of the constituent colleges and departments of NITTE (Deemed to be University).
<b>Policy status</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original <input type="checkbox"/> Revised
<b>Date of approval of Version 1</b>	
<b>Revision No.</b>	0
<b>Brief description of last revision</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Date of approval of current revision</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Effective date</b>	
<b>Approval Authority</b>	Board of Management
<b>Responsible officer</b>	Registrar

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# **Responsible Conduct of Research and Publishing**

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## **Introduction**

## **Definitions**

1. "University refers to NITTE (Deemed to be University)
2. Research study - "a systematic investigation, including research development, testing and evaluation, designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge. Activities which meet this definition constitute research, whether or not they are conducted or supported under a program which is considered research for other purposes."
3. Institutional Research Board – Committee at Institution / University to oversee scientific and technical aspects of research proposals and projects in implementation
4. Institutional Ethics Review Board - Committee at Institution / University to oversee ethical aspects of research proposals and projects in implementation

## **Policy statements**

### **1. Approval of research Studies by Institutional Research Review Board (IRRB)**

- 1.1. A research study maybe initiated only after review and approval by the obtaining explicit written approval from the Institutional Research Board. The IRRB will review the need and significance of the proposed study, clarity of research objectives, validity of the methods, justification of required resources and feasibility.
- 1.2. The above requirement (1.1) applies to all research studies whether faculty or student research projects as well as research leading to dissertations or theses. Review by the Institutional Research Review Board may be exempted for research studies approved by a legitimate external research funding agency / organization
- 1.3. The procedures for constitution of the Institutional Research Review Board(s), their functioning and the requirements that Investigators have to meet will be as per the Standard Operating Procedures laid down for the purpose

### **2. Approval of research Studies by Institutional Ethics Review Board**

- 2.1. A research study maybe initiated only after obtaining explicit written approval from the Institutional / University Ethics Committee / Review Board. For studies involving animal subjects, explicit written approval should be obtained from the Institution Animal Ethics Committee.
- 2.2. The above requirement (2.1) applies to all research studies whether funded or non-funded, faculty or student research projects as well as research leading to dissertations or theses.

Such approval is mandatory for all research studies including analysis of investigations performed for “routine” diagnostic purposes, retrospective analysis of health care records, data collection through non-invasive methods, anthropometric measurements, questionnaire based survey studies and educational research. In all such cases, the decision as to whether the research study is exempt from Institutional Ethics review and the type of review that applies (full / expedited etc.) rests with the Institutional / University Ethics Committee / Review Board and not with the Investigator.

- 2.3. The procedures for constitution of the Institutional Ethics Review Board(s), their functioning and the requirements that Investigators have to meet will be as per the Standard Operating Procedures laid down for the purpose

### **3. Advisory on journals for publication**

#### **3.1. UGC’s list of approved Journals**

The University recommends publishing in journals listed in the UGC’s list of approved Journals. The list may be accessed at <https://www.ugc.ac.in/journallist/>. Only publications in such journals will be considered for career advancement, increments and for incentives.

#### **3.2. Indexed journals**

The University recommends publishing in journals indexed in Scopus / Web of Science / Pubmed. Publications in such journals will be eligible for considered for career advancement, increments and for incentives.

#### **3.3. “Predatory journals and “Pseudo-Journals”**

Predatory journals and predatory publishers “prey” on academicians for financial profit by charging article processing charges for open access articles, without meeting basic scholarly publishing standards such as rigorous peer review, editorial review, archiving, transparency in fees etc. “Pseudo-Journals” include journals that may be published by “legitimate” publishers but exist primarily for marketing purposes and do not have sufficiently rigorous peer review processes to identify “fake” research reports. Predatory and pseudo journals are inimical to the very essence of science and are hence strongly condemned by the University. Faculty and Students are advised to be informed of such journals and practices and avoid publishing / supporting them in any way.

#### **3.4. Open Access Journals**

Open access journals are scholarly journals that are available online free of any direct cost to the readers. Such Journals reduce the barriers for dissemination of scientific knowledge. However, such an online “free access” model is increasing being adopted unscrupulous predatory and pseudo-journal publishers. Hence faculty and students are advised to use caution while considering publishing in Open Access Journals. The University makes following recommendations for evaluating legitimacy and “safety” of Open Access Journals

- a) Check with the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) accessible at <https://doaj.org/>. DOAJ is a website maintained by a non-profit organization that lists Open Access Journals that meet basic publishing quality standards by exercising peer review or editorial quality control. This can be used a “white list”.

- b) Use the “Think, Check, Submit” checklist available at <https://thinkchecksubmit.org/>
- c) Refer to Laine, C., & Winker, M. A. (2017). Identifying predatory or pseudo-journals. *Biochemia Medica*, 27(2), 285–291. <http://doi.org/10.11613/BM.2017.031> and similar resources

## 4. Authorship

### 4.1. Criteria for authorship

Authorship should be limited to those who have made a significant contribution to the conception, design, execution, or interpretation of the reported study. The order of authorship should be based on the individuals’ contributions to the work and drafting of the manuscript. Based on the suggestions of the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors the University recommends the following guidelines for publications in the field of biomedical sciences (ref). To be eligible for authorship, an individual should meet ALL of the following criteria:

1. Substantial contributions to study conception and design; data acquisition, analysis and interpretation of data
2. Drafting the manuscript and/ or revising it critically for important intellectual content
3. Final approval of the version to be published
4. Agreement to be accountable for all aspects of the work related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work.

4.2. Honorary authorship or guest authorships are not permitted. The head of department / division / laboratory does not by default become eligible for authorship if not meeting the four criteria listed in 4.1.

### 4.3. Order of authorship

It is recommended that the order of authorship be discussed at the beginning of research study and a consensus agreement explicitly stating the proposed order of authorship and their roles be recorded. At the time of submission of a manuscript for publication, if there is any change in the previously agreed upon order, this may be discussed, recorded and written approval obtained from all authors. In all cases, it is mandatory for the corresponding author (see below) to obtain written approval of the order of authorship from all authors before submitting a manuscript for publication.

1. The order of the authorship is generally reflective of the quantum of contributions to the study and manuscript drafting.
2. In general, the individual who has contributed most to all aspects of the study – conception, design, data collection, analysis, interpretation, drafting and revision of manuscript is to be designated as the **First Author** irrespective of their student / faculty status. It is expected that post-graduate students and PhD scholars contribute majorly to all these aspects of their dissertation projects. Therefore, in publications arising from such dissertation / thesis projects, the student / scholar would be expected to be the First Author. If there is a justifiable reason for any other individual to be designated as the First Author, this should be discussed, recorded and written approval obtained from all authors before submission of the manuscript.
3. Traditionally, in biomedical publications, the “principal investigator” senior most contributor of the group, who is the intellectual leader of the group is placed as the **Last Author**. The Last Author is also often designated as the **Corresponding Author**. The

corresponding author takes primary responsibility for communication with the journal during the manuscript submission, peer review, and publication process. He / She is responsible for the journal's administrative requirements, such as providing details of authorship, ethics committee approval, clinical trial registration documentation, conflict of interest forms etc. The corresponding author should be available throughout the submission and peer review process to respond to editorial queries in a timely way and should be available after publication to respond to critiques of the work and cooperate with any requests from the journal for data or additional information should questions about the paper arise after publication. *The University recommends that in case of publications with both student and faculty authors the "principal investigator" or "research guide" to be designated as corresponding author.*

4. In fields other than biomedical sciences, other conventions maybe followed (Eg. alphabetical listing). In all cases, it is mandatory for the corresponding author (see below) to obtain written approval of the order of authorship from all authors before submitting a manuscript for publication.
- 4.4. If a manuscript is revised and resubmitted to the same journal, co-authors should be asked to reaffirm their assent to be listed as co-authors and to approve the revised version. In addition, if the manuscript is rejected or withdrawn from a journal and then submitted to a different journal, the co-authors should be asked again to affirm their assent to authorship even if no substantive changes have been made.
- 4.5. All authors share responsibility for the scientific accuracy of an abstract for a presentation at a professional meeting or a manuscript, including supplementary material. Hence, in cases of fabrication, falsification, or plagiarism, all authors are potentially culpable.
- 4.6. The above guidelines apply for conference abstracts and presentations as well. Authorship order is determined based on above guidelines irrespective of who is presenting the paper.
- 4.7. Any disputes about authorship that are not resolved by a research group must be brought to the notice of the Head of the institution. Such disputes are not to be reported to Journal editors as it is not their responsibility.

## **5. Acknowledgement of Non-author Contributions**

- 5.1. Contributions which do not meet the above criteria should be acknowledged as non-author contributors. Examples of such contributions include providing financial resources (but not contributing as per above criteria), equipment / consumables / reagents / tissues samples, writing assistance, technical editing, language editing, proofreading, general supervision, assistance in collecting data, expert statistical advice, caring of patients etc. Such contributions by themselves do not qualify for authorship.
- 5.2. Approval must be obtained form Individuals who are being acknowledged in publications.
- 5.3. All funding sources should be acknowledged.

## **6. Affiliation and Address Conventions**

- 6.1. It is mandatory that author affiliations to the University, parent Institution and department are clearly stated in all publications arising from work conducted in the University and/or its constituent units. The following format is to be followed for reporting author affiliations:

## **7. Scientific / Research Misconduct**

### **7.1. Data fabrication and falsification**

7.1.1. Researchers are expected to maintain all original records and data for at least 10 years after publication

7.1.2. Data generated from student research projects is to be retained by their faculty supervisors even after completion of the student project and exit of the student from the Institution

7.1.3. Original data should be made available for verification as and when required by the Institution ethics Committee or other designated authority

7.1.4. All modifications, editing done to images including microscopy images, radiology images, gel documentation images etc., should be clearly documented. The image editing tools used, the editing steps involved should be recorded. Guidelines of publishers regarding image processing should be referred to and adhered to.

7.1.5. Any error that is discovered in reported results in publications should be brought to the notice of the Registrar and Institutional Ethics Committee and corrections / retraction should be reported to the Editor of the publication

7.1.6. Any accusation of data fabrication / falsification from any source should be brought to the notice of the Registrar of the University

### **7.2. Plagiarism**

7.2.1. Plagiarism is an attempt to pass off someone else's work as his or her own. Self-plagiarism (duplicate publication), refers to an author's attempt to reuse substantial parts of his or her own published work without providing the appropriate references

7.2.2. It is every researcher's responsibility to ensure that manuscripts submitted for publication are free of plagiarism

7.2.3. The University recommends using of a Plagiarism detection tool (eg. Turnitin) to screen manuscripts before submission and retain a copy of the report for their defense against possible accusations.

### **7.3. Procedure for handling allegations of scientific / research misconduct**

7.3.1. Any allegations of scientific / research misconduct is to be reported by the recipient of such communication to the Registrar through the concerned head of Institution.

7.3.2. The Registrar will refer the matter for inquiry by the University Institutional Ethics Committee.

7.3.3. The Institutional Ethics Committee will conduct an inquiry. The respondent will be given an opportunity to submit in person and in writing clarifications and comments on the allegation.

7.3.4. The Institutional Ethics Committee will submit a report on the findings of the Inquiry to the Registrar. The report will include the judgment by the Committee on whether scientific / research misconduct has indeed taken place, the nature of the misconduct and the seriousness of the misconduct.

7.3.5. The Registrar will constitute a Disciplinary Committee which will make a final recommendation regarding disciplinary and/or corrective action, if any based on the report of the Institutional Ethics Committee.

## **8. Archiving of publications**

8.1. All publications of faculty and students of the University will be archived in a designated repository maintained by the University. A softcopy (PDF) of the accepted pre-publication proof or the published paper will be submitted through designated channels for archiving.

## **9. Sharing and transfer of biological specimens with external collaborators**

- 9.1. Any research project that involves transfer of biological specimens with collaborators outside the University must seek specific, explicit approval from the Institution ethics Committee for the same
- 9.2. A written mutually acceptable agreement has to be entered into with the external collaborators regarding the confidentiality and intellectual property rights arising from sharing of such material
- 9.3. All legal provisions applicable to transfer of such material have to be adhered to

## **10. Copyright of student dissertations and theses**

- 10.1. The University holds copyright of all intellectual property arising from research conducted in the University, including student dissertation / theses projects as these are supported by the University and are guided and supervised by faculty members in the employ of the University.
- 10.2. Students / scholars are entitled to authorship in publications arising from student dissertations / theses in accordance with the guidelines specified in Section 4.
- 10.3. The University holds a perpetual, irrevocable, royalty-free, nonexclusive, worldwide license (including the right of sub-license) to use data and material arising from student dissertation / theses projects for its (University's) teaching and research purposes.
- 10.4. Income generated from commercialization of IPR originating from student dissertation / theses is subject to regulation as specified in the Intellectual Property Rights policy of the University