

Undergraduate Medical Education

Authorship Policy

Student Conduct Component: Policy #SC-04

Supersedes: none

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Revisions: none



1.0 Background

1.1 Queen's University School of Medicine trains undergraduate medical students to become clinicians and researchers of the highest quality. Our students are given the opportunity to contribute to world-class research across a wide array of subject areas. In so doing, they are expected to learn and respect the ethical principles upon which such inquiry is based.

1.2 The UGME Authorship Policy is based upon the authorship policies of the World Association of Medical Editors and the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors. Students are encouraged to visit the websites of these organizations for further clarification and the most up to date information on best practices in authorship:

- <http://www.wame.org/resources/policies#authorship>
- http://www.icmje.org/ethical_1author.html

1.3 Students are also encouraged to familiarize themselves with the following Queen's University policies:

- Academic Integrity:
<http://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/senate/policies/AIprocedures.pdf>
- The Intellectual Property Guidelines at Queen's:
<http://www.queensu.ca/sgs/academicsupport/intellectualpropertyguidelines.html>
- Integrity in Research:
<http://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/senate/policies/RsrchInteg.pdf>
- Guidelines Concerning Publication of Research Results:
<http://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/senate/policies/resres.html>
- Intellectual Property Report:
<http://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/senate/policies/intelprp/index.html>

2.0 Purpose

- 2.1 The UGME Authorship Policy sets forth the guiding principles that make explicit both credit and responsibility for the contents of published articles and other public presentations of scholarly work. The guiding principle for authorship decisions is to present an honest account of what took place. Criteria for authorship apply to all intellectual products, including print and electronic publications of words, data, and images in all their forms including but not limited to academic journals and conference presentations.
- 2.2 Students are expected to seek clarification from a faculty member or the UGME Academic Advisor if they are unsure whether the policy should apply to a specific piece of work.

3.0 Criteria for Authorship

- 3.1 Everyone who has made substantial intellectual contributions to the study on which the article is based (for example, to the research question, design, analysis, interpretation, and written description) should be an author. It is dishonest to omit mention of someone who has participated in writing the manuscript (“ghost authorship”) and unfair to omit any investigator who has had important engagement with other aspects of the work.
- 3.2 Only an individual who has made substantial intellectual contributions should be an author. Performing technical services, translating text, identifying patients for study, supplying materials, and providing funding or administrative oversight of facilities where the work was done are not, in themselves, sufficient for authorship, although these contributions may be acknowledged in the manuscript, as described below. It is dishonest to include authors only because of their reputation, position of authority, or friendship (“guest authorship”).
- 3.3 Many journals publish the names and contributions of everyone who has participated in the work (“contributors”). Not all contributors necessarily qualify for authorship. The nature of each contributor’s participation can be made transparent by a statement, published with the article, of his or her names and contributions.
- 3.4 One author (a “guarantor”) should take responsibility for the integrity of the work as a whole. Often this is the corresponding author, the one who sends in the manuscript and receives reviews, but other authors can have this role. All authors should approve the final version of the manuscript.

3.5 It is preferable that all authors be familiar with all aspects of the work. However, modern research is often done in teams with complementary expertise so that every author may not be equally familiar with all aspects of the work. For example, a biostatistician may have greater mastery of statistical aspects of the manuscript than other authors, but have somewhat less understanding of clinical variables or laboratory measurements. Therefore, some authors' contributions may be limited to specific aspects of the work as a whole.

3.6 All authors should comply with the journals' policies on conflict of interest.

3.7 All investigative work must be carried out under the supervision of a faculty member who must approve the work before submission, publication or presentation.

4.0 **Order of Authorship**

4.1 The authors themselves should decide the order in which authors are listed in an article. No one else knows as well as they do their respective contributions and the agreements they have made among themselves. Many different criteria are used to decide order of authorship. Among these are relative contributions to the work and, in situations where all authors have contributed equally, alphabetical or random order. Authors may want to include with their manuscript a description of how order was decided.

5.0 **Authorship Disputes**

Disputes about authorship of student work are best settled by students. If a resolution cannot be found it may become necessary to consult a faculty member (e.g., Academic Advisor). In all cases, any known disputes should be settled prior to a manuscript or proposal being submitted to a third party for review.