

CODE OF ETHICS

These commitments are based on the policies of action of Elsevier, as well as on the guidelines of good practices recommended by the COPE (*Committee on Publication Ethics*).

1.- General obligations of the Journal's management.

The director of the Journal must:

Ensure the continuous improvement of the Journal;

Guarantee the quality of the articles published;

Maintain the academic integrity of the Journal's content;

Respect freedom of speech;

Be willing to publish corrections, and to do so if mistakes are detected, as well as publishing retractions and, in the event, any apologies that are necessary. In this respect, the recommendations published by the [COPE](http://publicationethics.org/files/retraction%20guidelines.pdf) [http://publicationethics.org/files/retraction%20guidelines.pdf] shall be followed.

Preserve the anonymity of the reviewers appointed in each case to review the articles.

Not, in any event, place commercial interests before the intellectual and ethical commitments assumed by the Journal.

Continuously review and guarantee the fulfilment of the ethical commitments assumed by the journal along with the Editorial Board.

2.- Relationship with authors

2.1.- Promotion of ethical conducts.

The management of the journal must make sure that appropriate measures are taken to guarantee the quality of the material published, and to avoid the publication of plagiarised articles and non-original papers.

2.2.- Specific obligations of the authors

2.2.1.- Originality and plagiarism

The manuscripts sent in by authors for their publication in the Journal must contain the information necessary to enable their subsequent citation by other authors.

The authors must send in completely original articles, and if the authors have used the work and/or words of others, they must be conveniently cited in the paper. Plagiarism, in the different forms that it may be manifested, such as the reproduction of another person's work as if it was one's own, copying or paraphrasing substantial parts of other peoples' work without citation, are considered unethical and unacceptable behaviour. In such cases the Management of the Journal will take the appropriate measures, which will generally include informing the author of the complaints or claims made, and subsequent communications to the corresponding institutions or research bodies. If the unethical conduct is confirmed and discovered after the publication of the article, even if several years have lapsed, a correction, retraction or another type of notice that makes it known shall be published.

2.2.2.- Multiple, redundant or simultaneous publication

In general, authors must refrain from publishing the same research in more than one publication. Simultaneously sending the same original paper to more than one journal is considered unacceptable behaviour. The publication of an article in more than one journal may be found to be exceptionally justified, and in any event the first reference published in the second publication must be adequately mentioned.

2.2.3.- Acknowledgement of sources

The work of other authors must be acknowledged, meaning that authors must cite in their manuscripts the works that have been relevant for their own work. Information obtained via different channels to previously published works in the public domain may only be used with the express permission of the corresponding author.

2.2.4.- Errors in published articles

If an author discovers a relevant error or inaccuracy in their own already published work, they must immediately inform the director of the Journal and collaborate with them in the correction or retraction of the mistake made. If the director of the Journal has knowledge of a relevant error in a work published through a third person, the author must send the corresponding retraction or correction, or must prove before the director of the Journal the veracity and correction of the original article as soon as possible.

2.2.5.- Authorship

The authorship of the articles must be limited to the people who have contributed significantly to the determination, design and preparation of the work. All those who have contributed in a significant manner must be cited as co-authors.

If other people have participated in some substantial aspects of the work, they must be adequately acknowledged in the article.

Authors must make sure in the event that all the co-authors are duly included, and that no person is unduly mentioned as an author.

Likewise, all authors must have seen and approved the final version of the paper and its dispatch for its publication.

2.2.6.- Conflicts of interest

Authors must state in the manuscript any financial or substantial conflict of interest they may have and which may have an influence on its publication and its assessment. All of the project's sources of funding must be indicated in the manuscript.

2.3.- Publication rules for the authors.

The publication process of the journal will be published and duly updated so that the authors can have all the information they need in this respect, and which can only be modified due to justified causes. In particular, the mechanism of the peer review process that articles submitted by all authors must go through will be published.

2.4.- Decisions with respect to the publication.

Decisions related to the acceptance or rejection of an article for its publication must be based solely and exclusively on the quality of the article, that is, on its clarity, originality and importance, as well as on its alignment with the goals and field of the Journal. The director of the Journal shall ultimately be responsible for deciding what

articles sent to the Journal are to be finally published in it.

In no event shall articles be rejected due to criticism or divergent opinions of majority positions and/or as stated by members of the journal, provided they are quality articles that justify their positions without resorting to personal attacks.

Likewise, the decision of either acceptance or rejection shall always be communicated to the author within the period indicated in the publication rules, and must be reasoned, particularly in the case of rejection. This decision must not be subsequently modified, unless there are serious problems in the publication process that must be duly justified.

In any event, changes to the structure of the journal shall not affect the decisions taken beforehand regarding the acceptance or rejection of articles sent in for their publication.

2.5.- Confidentiality and conflicts of interest

The management of the Journal, and the Editorial Board must not provide information about the articles sent in for the eventual publication to any person other than the corresponding author, the potential or current reviewers of the article and the members of the Journal's Advisory Council, if appropriate.

Articles that are not published may not be used under any circumstance in research by the management of the Journal, the Editorial Board or any other people who may have had access to the same by virtue of the above paragraph, except with the express consent of the author. Information or ideas obtained through the reviewing process by the reviewers must be kept secret and must not be used under any circumstances for personal benefit. The management of the Journal and the sub management must refrain from reviewing manuscripts with respect to which they may find themselves in a situation of conflict of interest as a result of the existence of close relationships or connections with the authors or with their attached institutions. The authors must manifest their relevant interests, and the director of the Journal must publish the corresponding corrections in the event that any of them have not been revealed before publication.

3.- Peer review process.

3.1.- Contribution to the editorial decisions

Adequate peer reviews of the articles are considered an essential element of the Journal. Reviewers assist the Director of the Journal in decisions concerning the publication of articles, and through communication with the author they also contribute to the improvement of the article. Articles will be revised by two reviewers.

3.2.-Due conduct

The reviewers must act objectively, and make clear and precise judgements and assessments that are sufficiently reasoned and impartial. Likewise, conflicts of interest of any type will be avoided (personal, academic, commercial, etc.). In particular, the reviewers must indicate the relevant publications not cited by the author in the manuscript, as well as possible similarities or partial or total identities of the manuscript with other already published articles that the reviewer has personal knowledge of.

If a reviewer does not consider themselves to be sufficiently qualified to review a certain manuscript, or they know that they will be unable to do it within a reasonable period of time, they must immediately communicate this to the management of the Journal.

3.3.- Confidentiality

In any event, the review process will be subject to strict confidentiality conditions. Neither the reviewers nor the authors will know each other's identities, thus avoiding the conflicts of interest that may arise. In this respect, the management of the Journal will have a strict duty of confidentiality. Likewise, the reviewers must treat the manuscripts received as confidential information, and must not show them to or discuss them with third parties, unless expressly authorised to do so by the Director of the Journal.

3.4.- Conflicts of interest

Non-published articles may not be used under any circumstance in research carried out by the reviewers without the express consent of the author. The information or ideas obtained through the reviewing process by the reviewers must be kept secret and must not be used under any circumstances for personal benefit. The reviewers must refrain from reviewing manuscripts with respect to which they may find themselves in a situation of conflict of interest as a result of the existence of close relationships or connections with the authors or with their attached institutions.