Publication Ethics and Malpractice Policy of the South African Journal of Occupational Therapy

The following standards of expected ethical behaviour apply to all parties involved in the publication of the South African Journal of Occupational Therapy, including the editorial team, authors, and related parties. These standards are based on the Committee of Publication Ethics’ (COPE) Best Practice Guidelines for Journal Editors.

Main Responsibilities of the Editorial team

The Editorial team comprises the Editor in Chief, the Managing Editor and assistant Editors. The Editorial Team operates under the policies and guidance of the Editorial Board. For further detail on the roles of the Editorial Team members and Editorial Board, please visit:


Responsibilities of the Editor in Chief

Publication Decisions: The Editor in Chief of the South African Journal of Occupational Therapy is responsible for the final decision on which articles submitted to the journal will be published. All manuscripts are assigned for blind peer review to two reviewers by the member of the editorial team to whom the submitted manuscript has been assigned. Each reviewer will make a recommendation to accept, reject or modify the manuscript. The editor considers these recommendations, as well as legal requirements regarding libel, copyright infringement, and plagiarism. The editor may consult with the editorial board or reviewers in making final decision should any issues arise.

Fair Play: The Editor in Chief and editorial team members will evaluate manuscripts for their intellectual content without regard to the race, gender, sexual orientation, religious belief, ethnic origin, citizenship, or the political philosophy of the author/s.

Confidentiality: The Editor in Chief and editorial team members will not disclose any information about a manuscript under review to anyone other than the author and the reviewers (or potential reviewers).

Responsibilities of Reviewers

Contribution to Editorial Decisions: Peer reviews assist the editor in making editorial decisions, and through editorial communications with the author, reviewers may also assist the author in improving the manuscript.

Promptness: Any selected reviewer who feels unqualified to review the research reported in a manuscript, or who knows that its prompt review will be impossible, should excuse themselves from the review process by notifying the editor in a timely manner.

Confidentiality: A reviewer receiving a manuscript must treat it as a confidential document and not show it to others, discuss it with others or contact the authors if they think that they know who these may be.
Standards of Objectivity: Reviewers should submit objective comments on the article that do not include personal criticism of the author, and they should express views clearly with supporting arguments and provide constructive feedback.

Disclosure and Conflict of Interest: Privileged information or ideas obtained through peer review must be kept confidential and not used for personal advantage. Reviewers should not consider manuscripts in which they have a conflict of interest resulting in undue influence over their ability to objectively evaluate the manuscript in a professional manner. Competitive or collaborative relationships between the reviewer and the author seeking publication in The South African Journal of Occupational Therapy may constitute a conflict of interest, and if the editor determines such a conflict, an alternate reviewer will be appointed to evaluate the manuscript.

Reviewers should consult the Guide to reviewing an article. The tab for these guidelines can be found in the header of the Journal's home page http://userguide.sajot.co.za/reviewers/.

Responsibilities of Authors

Reporting Standards: Authors of original research should present an accurate account of the work performed as well as an objective discussion of its significance. An author should accurately describe findings of the research with sufficient detail and references to permit others to replicate the work. Fraudulent or knowingly inaccurate statements constitute unethical and unacceptable behaviour, and they may result in disqualification from publication with the editor’s determination. The SAJOT applies the reporting standards as set out by Equator Network (https://www.equator-network.org/reporting-guidelines/)

Originality and Plagiarism: The authors should ensure that they have prepared entirely original work, and if the authors have used the work and/or words of others that they have to appropriately cite or acknowledge it. Plagiarism takes many forms, from masking another author’s work as the author’s own, to copying or paraphrasing substantial parts of other works without attribution, to claiming results from research conducted by others. Plagiarism in all its forms constitutes unethical and unacceptable publishing behaviour. If the editor determines it to be inadvertently apparent in an article submitted for publication, the author must comprehensively revise any area(s) in question. Failure to do so will result in rejection of the article.

All authors are required to submit a plagiarism report on their work such as “Turn-it-in” and to attach this report as a supplementary file during the submission process.

Multiple, Redundant or Concurrent Publication: An author may not publish manuscripts describing essentially the same research in more than one journal or primary publication. Submitting the same manuscript to more than one journal concurrently will constitute unethical and unacceptable publishing practice. If a manuscript under review appears in substantially the same form as an article published elsewhere, it is the editor’s prerogative to remove the manuscript from potential publication in the South African Journal of Occupational Therapy.

Acknowledgement of Sources: Proper acknowledgment of the work of others must always be given. Authors should cite publications that have influenced the nature of the reported work. Information obtained privately, as in conversation, correspondence, or discussion with third parties, must be accompanied by explicit,
written permission from the source. Information obtained in the course of confidential services, such as refereeing manuscripts or grant applications, must be accompanied by the written permission of the author of the work involved in these services.

**Authorship of the Manuscript:** Authorship should be limited to those who have made a significant contribution to the conception, design, execution, or interpretation of the material considered for publication. All those who have made significant contributions should be listed as co-authors, and others who have participated in certain substantive aspects of the research project should be acknowledged or listed as contributors. The corresponding author should include only appropriate co-authors with the manuscript, and ensure that all co-authors have seen and approved the final version of the draft and have agreed to its submission for publication. The role of each author in the research and publication process must be provided and attached to the submission as a supplementary file. This information will be provided in the publication of the article.

**Disclosure and Conflicts of Interest:** All authors should disclose in their manuscript any potential conflict of interest (financial or substantive) that might be construed to influence the results or interpretation of their work. They should disclose all sources of financial support for the project.

**Fundamental Errors in Published Works:** If authors discover a significant error or inaccuracy in a manuscript they have published, they must promptly notify the journal editor or publisher and cooperate with the editor to retract or correct the published version of the manuscript.