

International Journals, Ethics and AI

Athena de Albuquerque Farias¹

The recent widespread use of artificial intelligence as a writing-support tool has become increasingly integrated into scientific writing, thereby introducing new dynamics to the processes of creating, reviewing, and publishing scholarly articles. Processes that for a long time have remained largely standardized and rigid, now are demanding new measures and guidelines to try to cope with the large-scale use of AI^{2,3}.

Most International Editorial Organizations are not banning the use of AI Tools, instead they are creating new guidelines to clarify or specify the generative AI tools usage.

The new guidelines often require authors to be transparent about how they used AI tools. This often involves a mandatory disclosure of "AI usage statement" - that can be placed in the methods section or in a form or declaration primarily sent at the beginning of the submission - specifying the tool's name and version, the tasks it performed (e.g., grammar checks, data analysis, drafting sections). Disclosure is essential for maintaining transparency and academic integrity⁴.

A key principle that dominates writing in the scholarly community is that humans must remain fully responsible for the content of academic work.

The COPE states that AI cannot be considered an author of a publication⁹:

“AI tools cannot meet the requirements for authorship as they cannot take responsibility for the submitted work.[...] Authors who use AI tools [...] must be transparent in disclosing [...] how the AI tool was used and which tool was used. Authors are fully

¹ Bachelor of Laws by the Guararapes University Center – UNIFG, Pernambuco, Brazil. Specialist in Labor Procedural Law by the Integrated Faculties of Cruzeiro – São Paulo, Brazil.. Master's degree in Sustainable Development by the University of Milan, Milan, Italy. PhD candidate in Education by the University of Minho, Minho, Portugal. Associate Editor of the scientific journal *Id on Line Multidisciplinary and Psychology Journal*. Director of the Persona Institute of Education, Pernambuco, Brazil. athenafarias4@gmail.com

responsible for the content of their manuscript, even those parts produced by an AI tool, and are thus liable for any breach of publication ethics (COPE, 2023, paras. 1 & 2).

Any AI involvement must be framed as assistance, not authorship. So, regarding the responsible use of AI Tools, authors should always check for factual errors and for any potential bias, because they are fully responsible for their work.

Managing generative AI policies for journals requires attention to every stage of the publishing process

As Elsevier journals define: “Generative AI is a type of artificial intelligence technology that can produce various types of content including text, imagery, audio and synthetic data. Examples include ChatGPT, NovelAI, Jasper AI, Rytr AI, DALL-E, etc”¹.

For authors, the use of generative AI or AI-assisted technologies in journals remains strictly a human responsibility. The Lancet Group, as most international journals, is supportive of authors using AI-assisted technologies in the writing process to improve readability and language of the work but does not support the use of these technologies to replace researcher tasks such as producing scientific insights, analyzing and interpreting data or drawing scientific conclusions. It remains crucial to incorporate human involvement in AI-generated proposals, revising and guaranteeing uniqueness to the work and compliance with ethical guidelines^{6,7}.

For reviewers, the prohibition of using AI Tools when drafting and writing evaluations, remains a consensus, because of the need to protect confidentiality from authors, that can be breach by an inappropriate use of a non-proprietary AI Tool during the review process², but also to ensure that the integrity and judgment at the heart of the peer review process are preserved.

For editors, the possibility to whether use AI or AI-assisted technologies is still viewed as appropriate when reviewing submissions⁶. But editors should stay alert to confidentiality and data privacy rights of the authors when uploading information into an AI tool, even if it is just for the purpose of improving language and readability of the review¹.

These new policies and conduct by the journals were initially activated by the acceleration of generative AI and AI-assisted technologies use. They aim to provide greater transparency and guidance to authors, reviewers, editors, readers and contributors.

These measures will remain under continuous review, as the growing use of AI as a writing-support tool is expected to continue among researchers and is also increasingly recognized by academic journals as reflecting good practice in publishing, whenever authors - and all parts involved in publication - adopt transparency, human responsibility, and maintaining academic integrity.

Ethics and International Organizations on Publishing

The implementation of AI and chatbots has raised a number of ethical challenges and concerns on scholarly publishing. International organizations including *Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE)*, *International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE)*, and *Council of Science Editors (CSE)*, in their suggestions on AI usage in scholarly publishing, now have similar opinions regarding authorship, AI disclosure, transparency and responsibility, and ethical use of AI⁸.

These organizations also share a duty to educate editors, reviewers, and authors about the risks and ethical challenges posed by AI (e.g. “paper mills,” plagiarism, AI-generated fraudulent content), and to implement safeguards and create and updated guidelines.

Another key ethical issue that raises with the use of AI and chatbots in research in education is that although these technologies may offer substantial benefits for research and education, equitable access remains a concern. Recent studies also highlighted the need for stronger professional ethics in data science, expanded ethics education, and careful attention to privacy and fairness in chatbot design^{10,11}.

Last considerations

It is undeniable that Generative AI is increasingly shaping academic research and publishing, enhancing productivity by reducing the time and effort required for manuscript preparation. That’s why it is strongly emphasized in all international journals that full responsibility for the content remains with the human authors.

AI should be viewed as a helpful but imperfect assistant, not a replacement for genuine intellectual work or ethical responsibility, also ethical principles must be actively

integrated into the development and deployment of AI and chatbots to ensure responsible and equitable use.

Although compliance can be viewed as mandatory, the ethical dimension is even more essential. Ethics, grounded in moral principles, reflects a voluntary commitment to fairness and authorial responsibility. Both compliance and ethics must operate together to foster a responsible AI environment within the academic context.

References

1. Elsevier. (2025). *Generative AI policies for journals*. Elsevier. Accessed November 20, 2025]. <https://www.elsevier.com/about/policies-and-standards/generative-ai-policies-for-journals>
2. Science. (2025). *Science journals: editorial policies*. Science. [Accessed November 20, 2025]. <https://www.science.org/content/page/science-journals-editorial-policies>
3. Yoo, J.-H. (2025). Defining the boundaries of AI use in scientific writing: A comparative review of editorial policies. *Journal of Korean Medical Science*, 40(23), e187. <https://doi.org/10.3346/jkms.2025.40.e187>
4. International Committee of Medical Journal Editors. *Recommendations for the conduct, reporting, editing, and publication of scholarly work in medical journals*. ICMJE. [Updated 2023]. [Accessed November 1, 2025]. <https://www.icmje.org/recommendations/>.
5. Zielinski, C., Winker, M. A., Aggarwal, R., Ferris, L. E., Heinemann, M., Lapeña, J. F., *et al.* (2024). Chatbots, generative AI, and scholarly manuscripts: WAME recommendations on chatbots and generative artificial intelligence in relation to scholarly publications. *Current Medical Research and Opinion*, 40(1), 11–13.
6. Bagenal, J., Biamis, C., Boillot, M., Brierley, R., Chew, M., Dehnel, T., Frankish, H., Grainger, E., Pope, J., Prowse, J., Samuel, D., Slogrove, A. L., Stacey, J., Thapaliya, G., Trethewey, F., Wang, H. H., Varley-Reeves, J., & Kleinert, S. (2024). Generative AI: ensuring transparency and emphasising human intelligence and accountability. *The Lancet*, 404(10468), 2142–2143. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0140-6736\(24\)02615-1](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0140-6736(24)02615-1)
7. Ateriya, N., Sonwani, N. S., Thakur, K. S., Kumar, A., & Verma, S. K. (2025). Exploring the ethical landscape of AI in academic writing. *Egyptian Journal of Forensic Sciences*, 15(1). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41935-025-00453-1>

8. Kocak, Z. (2024). Publication Ethics in the Era of Artificial Intelligence. *Journal of Korean Medical Science*, 39(33), e249. <https://doi.org/10.3346/jkms.2024.39.e249>
9. Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE). (2023). *Authorship and AI tools: COPE position statement*. <https://publicationethics.org/cope-position-statements/ai-author>
10. Burton, E., Goldsmith, J., Koenig, S., Kuipers, B., Mattei, N., & Walsh, T. (2017). Ethical considerations in artificial intelligence courses. *AI Magazine*, 38(2), 22–34. <https://doi.org/10.1609/aimag.v38i2.2731>
11. Goldsmith, J., & Burton, E. (2017). Why teaching ethics to AI practitioners is important. *Proceedings of the AAAI Conference on Artificial Intelligence*, 31(1). <https://doi.org/10.1609/aaai.v31i1.11139>

Received on November 1, 2025

Accepted on November 15, 2025

Published on November 30, 2025