

Supplemental standards of responsible conduct of research at Aarhus BSS

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As a supplement to Aarhus University's guidelines on responsible conduct of research, Aarhus BSS has introduced a set of guidelines particularly applicable to research activities within business and social sciences.

Generally

Aarhus BSS adheres to the policy and guidelines on responsible research practice at Aarhus University as well as the national Code of Conduct for Research Integrity. Aarhus BSS emphasises the importance of the requirement for maximum transparency and independence in all phases of the research process as a key criterion in the common guidelines both locally and nationally.

Furthermore, the ongoing work with securing responsible conduct of research at Aarhus BSS is anchored with the management, i.e., the departmental management teams, the faculty management team and, ultimately, the dean. Accordingly, the existence of a university-wide advisory group and the Aarhus University Committee for Responsible Conduct of Research must NOT lead to the local management disclaiming parts of its staff responsibility.

Specifically about authorship

Aarhus University adheres to the Vancouver rules en bloc. Vancouver rules/principles developed by the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) define authorship and set out clear criteria for co-authorship. Vancouver rules/principles are consolidated in a very detailed and comprehensive document, which is very difficult to be "put into practice" among the close to 1,000 researchers at Aarhus BSS who are in contact with the organisation's research production. Therefore, Aarhus BSS sees the need to clarify and elaborate on key parts of the principles in brief form. On the basis of the ICMJE recommendations (December 2014, p. 2), Aarhus BSS puts forward the following (see <http://www.icmje.org/icmje-recommendations.pdf>):

"[...] that authorship [should] be based on the following 4 criteria:

- 1. Substantial contributions to the conception or design of the work; or the acquisition, analysis, or interpretation of data for the work; AND*
- 2. Drafting the work or revising it critically for important intellectual content; AND*
- 3. Final approval of the version to be published; AND*
- 4. Agreement to be accountable for all aspects of the work in ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved."*

In addition to being accountable for the parts of the work he or she has done, an author should be able to identify which co-authors are responsible for specific other parts of the work. In addition, authors should have confidence in the integrity of the contributions of their co-authors. All those designated as authors should meet all four criteria for authorship, and all who meet the four criteria should be identified as authors. Those who do not meet all four criteria should be acknowledged [...]. These authorship criteria are intended to reserve the status of authorship for those who deserve credit and can take responsibility for the work. The criteria are not intended for use as a means to disqualify colleagues from authorship who otherwise meet authorship criteria by denying them the opportunity to meet criterion #s 2 or 3. Therefore, all individuals who meet the first criterion should have the opportunity to participate in the review, drafting, and final approval of the manuscript.”

As a further explanation and guideline regarding the contributors who do not meet all four criteria, the following should be added:

“Contributors who meet fewer than all 4 of the above criteria for authorship should not be listed as authors, but they should be acknowledged. Examples of activities that alone (without other contributions) do not qualify a contributor for authorship are acquisition of funding; general supervision of a research group or general administrative support; and writing assistance, technical editing, language editing, and proofreading.” (The International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE), December 2014, p. 3 (see <http://www.icmje.org/icmje-recommendations.pdf>)).

As a further explanation and guideline concerning authorship accountability, the following should be added:

*“As with citations, author listings establish accountability as well as credit. When a paper is found to contain errors, whether caused by mistakes or deceit, authors might wish to disavow responsibility, saying that they were not involved in the part of the paper containing the errors or that they had very little to do with the paper in general. However, an author who is willing to take credit for a paper must also bear responsibility for its contents. Thus, unless a footnote or the text of the paper explicitly assigns responsibility for different parts of the paper to different authors, the authors whose names appear on a paper must share responsibility for all of it.” (National Academy of Sciences, National Academy of Engineering and Institute of Medicine (Committee on Science, Engineering and Public Policy), *On Being a Scientist: Responsible Conduct in Research*, 2nd ed., The National Academy Press, Washington DC, 1995, pp. 14-15 (<http://www.nap.edu/read/4917/chapter/9#14>)).*

Specifically for the management of data

Aarhus BSS notes that the possibility of verification, replication and falsification of the research results, as reflected in Aarhus University's general guidelines for responsible conduct of research, is paramount for the surrounding society's confidence in research integrity. Therefore, for the purpose of transparency, access to the data used must always be made available for others.