



Authorship and Publications for Research Guidance Document

Introduction

This guidance document has been prepared by the Research Office to assist all staff and postgraduate students who are engaged in collaborative research at the University of Limerick. This guidance deals with the essential issues of authorship and publishing research outputs, and is in keeping with University's overarching strategic plan (Broadening Horizons 2015-19) and the University's research and innovation strategy (Excellence and Impact 2020).

Please note: The accepted norms for authorship and the styles required by the publishers of research vary across discipline. This guidance is not intended to replace any existing standards, but to provide a university-wide framework under which such discipline-specific norms and styles are implemented.

In doing so, this guidance aims to ensure the right of each author of research to be credited for their work and to ensure that they understand their role in taking accountability for its dissemination.

Scope

Who

This guidance applies to all staff of the University, both academic and support, including staff attached to a research institute, centre or group. This guidance applies to research undertaken with any collaborator, including, but not limited to, research students, research partners from other institutions, companies, non-governmental organisations, and semi-state or government bodies.

This guidance also applies to all post-graduate research students, and to research graduates of the university in reference to the output of research undertaken as part of a programme in UL, or under the auspices of UL.

What

All outputs of research¹ are covered by this guidance including but not limited to artefacts; books; book chapters; compositions; conference contributions; design;

¹ Intellectual Property (IP) although a research output, is not covered in this document. Researchers who create intellectual property should consult the UL IP Policy and the National IP Protocol.

exhibitions; journal articles; papers forming part of a research theses or PhD by publication; performances; recordings; reports; software; web-based publications.

1. Authorship

It is strongly advised that authorship be discussed explicitly at an early stage, i.e. when research collaborators first meet, and that any decisions taken are noted. As research progresses and likely targeted outlets for publication become identified, authorship should be agreed in writing. A sample basic authorship agreement is included at Appendix I.

i) What constitutes authorship?

Authorship agreements should be mindful of the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors' (ICMJE) criteria, commonly referred to as the 'Vancouver Protocol' for establishing who is entitled to authorship.² Ideally, all four of these criteria should be met:

- Substantial contributions to the conception or design of the work; or the acquisition, analysis, or interpretation of data for the work; AND
- Drafting the work or revising it critically for important intellectual content; AND
- Final approval of the version to be published; AND
- 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.

These authorship criteria are intended to reserve authorship for researchers who deserve this credit and can be accountable for the work. Anyone involved in the research who meets the four criteria should be listed as an author.

Open discussion among collaborators at an **early stage** of the research prevents the criteria being introduced at a later stage as a means of disqualification: all individuals who meet the first criterion should have the opportunity to meet the subsequent criteria, and not be denied authorship through not having the opportunity to participate in drafting, approval or accountability of a research output.

As research progresses, all collaborators should discuss authorship, note decisions made and make formal agreements in writing for specific publications or outlets, and adhere to these agreements.

ii) What is insufficient – on its own – to constitute authorship:

Examples of involvements in research which are not considered to merit authorship in and of themselves include:

- Acquisition of funding;

² <http://www.icmje.org/recommendations/browse/roles-and-responsibilities/defining-the-role-of-authors-and-contributors.html>

- Being the owner of a grant or of equipment used;
- Data collection, although data creation may warrant consideration if it makes a significant conceptual contribution to the project and the other criteria are met;
- Giving feedback on a draft manuscript without contributing to conceptualisation, analysis or interpretation;
- Payment for services rendered as a researcher or consultant (payment does not exclude being an author, but is not sufficient for authorship on its own); or
- Being in a leadership position in the centre, department or institute where the research was conducted.

The following practices are not permitted in UL research:

- ‘Gift/Silent authorship’ - where an individual has not made any meaningful contribution to the research but is named as an author in tribute or as ploy for recognition
- ‘Guest authorship’ - where an individual is named as an author in the hope that their name will increase the likelihood of publication and/or citation
- ‘Mutual support authorship’ - naming an individual as an author to fulfil, or in expectation of, a reciprocal gesture with the aim of falsely inflating both researchers’ productivity

Researchers should not seek, or accept being listed as an author under any of these scenarios.

iii) Contributors and other research participants

Individuals who are not authors but who have made a contribution to the research should have their work acknowledged with their consent. This acknowledgment should include a description of the contribution made, and be in keeping with discipline norms. Failure by research authors to acknowledge the contributions of others is regarded as unprofessional conduct.

iv) Listing order of authors

The listing order of authors varies according to discipline norms, and by publication channel. Where one author is the designated Principal Investigator or Lead Author, or otherwise acts in a coordinating role to manage correspondence with a publication and/or the overall drafting of the research piece, it should be considered amongst all authors if he/she merits a particular placing in the list, in keeping with discipline norms and requirements of the publication channel.

Authors should agree the listing order among themselves in a manner that accords with the discipline and the publication channel, and that fairly reflects the equity of the work done by each author.

2. Publications

The University requires where possible, that all research results are published in an appropriate form, usually as papers in peer-reviewed journals, or books or book chapters with impactful publishers. Publication should occur in a timely fashion.

Research sponsors, be they private or public entities, should be acknowledged in the publication of research they have funded, and all stipulations of any sponsor grant terms and conditions or sponsor agreements must be followed as the research is published. This may include mandatory use of a logo or specified text. The sponsor terms may include prior right of review, prior to publication and also stipulations on confidentiality. Adhering to the stipulations of the sponsor terms with a funder may have significant implications on the timeframe of publication, or the channels of publication so, **as with authorship, it is strongly recommended that the sponsor terms are discussed and considered by all collaborators at an early stage.**

The University encourages researchers to be as open as possible in discussing their work with other researchers and the public, and communicating about their research and its impact. To achieve such openness, researchers should give consideration to the duration of embargoes imposed by certain publications and other potentially limiting factors such as the ongoing engagement or availability of research participants and collaborators.

i) Open Access – UL Institutional Repository

UL provides an institutional repository for Open Access, the [ULIR](#), which enables UL research outputs to be made freely available on the web to all, with, in-so-far-as it is possible, no license restrictions. UL and the Irish Universities Association (IUA) support the National Principles for Open Access Policy Statement which was launched by the Irish Government in October 2012. Researchers should also note that open access may be a contractual requirement for research which is partially or fully publicly funded so that outputs can be made available to potential users in education, business, charitable and public sectors, and to the general public.

When considering publication outlets, researchers are to be particularly mindful of publishers' embargoes which may hinder open access publishing.

Related documents:

- [Broadening Horizons 2015-2019](#)
- [Excellence & Impact 2020](#)
- [National policy statement on Ensuring Research Integrity in Ireland \(2014\)](#)
- [European Charter for Researchers](#)
- [UL Code of Good Practice in Research](#)

Further Information:

Please contact research@ul.ie. For guidance on discipline-specific norms, please contact the Assistant Dean of Research in your faculty.

ENDS

Appendix I



Sample Authorship Agreement

Research project:

Title of publication:

Proposed order of authors for this publication (add rows as required):

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

The corresponding author for this publication is:

.....

Details of authors' contributions (add rows as required):

Author 1	
Author 2	
Author 3	
Author 4	

Author 5	

Confirmation of agreement of authorship, and to the listing order in the above publication (add rows as required):

Author 1	Signed	Date
	Name	
Author 2	Signed	Date
	Name	
Author 3	Signed	Date
	Name	
Author 4	Signed	Date
	Name	
Author 5	Signed	Date
	Name	

All authors should maintain a copy of this completed form for their records.
