

论文服务提供商道德规范最佳实践指南

1 导言

1.1 目的

本指南可供论文服务提供商用作本行业伦理道德的最佳实践性文件，无论由其提供的服务是否收费以及如何收费。论文服务是指在投稿和稿件发表过程中为稿件撰写所提供的任何第三方协助。此类服务可能包括投稿前稿件审读、推荐期刊和审稿人、同行评议、技术性问题的修改、排版以及语言和图表润色（润色工作可在投稿前、根据审稿意见修稿或稿件接受后开展）。

1.2 受众

目前已经有了针对作者[如：《医学研究报告规范 3》（Good Publication Practice, GPP）¹]和针对期刊编辑、审稿人和读者[即，由出版伦理委员会（Committee on Publication Ethics, COPE）公布的道德规范²]的伦理道德指南。部分指南也涵盖了专业性医学论文写作服务机构的角色[例如，由欧洲医学作家协会（European Medical Writers Association, EMWA）³提供的服务]。然而，迄今尚未专门针对普通的论文服务提供商制订伦理道德准则。本指南主要面向为作者提供咨询并提高论文质量的商业公司，但也可供出版社（出版社可推荐或组织投稿前的作者服务、在稿件接受后实施社内文本/图表润色、或外包此类工作）、机构（机构可开展内部服务或使用/推荐供应商）、内部的编辑和作者/发表支持专业人员以及自雇人员使用。本指南也可供作者在遴选论文服务机构时使用。

本最佳实践指南由中国科技编辑联盟（Alliance for Scientific Editing in China, ASEC）制定。ASEC 成立于 2015 年 10 月，系由在中国开展业务的一批知名论文服务机构组成的自律性行业协会。⁴虽然本指南主要供在中国开展业务的论文服务提供商使用，但同样适用于世界其他国家和地区。

2 论文服务提供商的基本责任

论文服务提供商应做到：

2.1 在网站清晰展示其伦理准则

论文服务提供商应在其网站上，设置专门的网页，使用其服务对象的语言明确阐明其遵循的出版伦理制度和程序，相关链接应出现在首页和宣传材料上。

论文服务提供商应熟知研究和发表伦理道德的定义和基本问题（例如：COPE 列举的定义和问题）。如条件适宜，应采纳 COPE 的指南/流程图⁵。此外，应遵循任何现行的国家法律、法规、研究/出版伦理准则和作者服务道德准则。

2.2 明确界定所提供的服务以及从业人员的资质

服务提供商必须明确向客户阐明其服务和流程表（如适用，应包括价格和计费/支付系统），且不得向其保证在使用此类服务后即可在任一指定的期刊中发表其论文。服务提供商必须在其宣传材料中做到诚信宣传，包括其员工/代表的资质、技巧、能力和其他信息。提供此类服务的员工必须在服务方面以及在研究和出版伦理方面均接受过充分培训。

出现在服务提供商的网站或宣传材料上的任何推荐或引言均应该是真实的，并且在获得准许后方可使用。服务提供商与任何特定的机构、期刊、出版商或其他合作方之间存在的关系应予以说明。在服务提供商的网站和宣传材料上必须提供该公司的注册地址和联系信息。

2.3 基于业内认可的准则开展服务

服务提供商应坚守权威机构（COPE、世界医学编辑协会、欧洲医学作家协会、欧洲科学编辑协会和美国医学作家协会）发布的获得广泛认可的准则。论文服务提供商的员工/代表通常并不收集或分析数据，也不针对某一项目提供主要的知识性内容，且不能对稿件承担全部责任；因此，他们并不具备作者资格（例如，国际医学杂志编辑委员会规定的作者署名标准⁶）。在这些情况下，论文服务提供商的员工/代表不得提议、同意或坚持将自己列为作者。如果可能的话，论文服务提供商的员工/代表的姓名以及雇主/机构（如适宜的话，也可包括赞助方）的名称可出现在“致谢”部分，以申明其在文章润色中发挥的作用。

论文服务提供商的员工/代表（包括审稿人）不得剽窃或分享任何已提交的材料，也不得从任何已提交的材料中寻求获得任何个人的或商业的利益。在接手某一项目时，员工/代表应申明是否存在任何利益冲突；如果确实存在任何利益冲突或其本人的学术专业领域并不适合该项目，员工/代表应主动退出该项目。论文服务提供商可建议作者增加一些缺失的参考文献（因文本重复或因某些事实或概念并非受众普遍知晓的知识），但不得添加、建议或坚持加入作者系其本人的无关引文。

任何关于审稿人的建议必须包括审稿人正确的姓名、资质和联系方式。在提供任何同行评议（审稿）时，必须做到公平、诚实、真实。如服务提供商提供的服务也包括期刊选择，仅应向作者推荐合法期刊；应提醒作者访问 ThinkCheckSubmit.org。

2.4 在任何时候都应为客户保守秘密

论文服务提供商及其员工必须确保客户的详细资料、材料和通讯内容的保密性和安全性。不过，在政府有关部门和期刊编辑对可能存在的学术不端行为展开调查时，论文服务提供商及其员工应与其密切合作，并依法披露必要的信息。论文服务提供商应在其网站，使用目标受众的语言，向其阐明此项政策。

2.5 在网站明确显示投诉制度

论文服务提供商应使用目标受众的语言，在其网站阐明投诉受理程序。

3 论文服务提供商涉及的具体伦理问题

论文服务提供商应做到：

3.1 确保作者知晓其责任

作者在检查其稿件的准确性和内容时，应遵守研究和发表相关的伦理准则，并确保论文内容不具有攻击性，不构成诽谤、欺诈或误导，且不得含有非法内容。论文服务提供商应告知其这一点，并要求其认真复核并认同稿件的最终版本。论文服务提供商不得协助作者：编造、篡改或抄袭作品；违反任何研究或出版伦理；或从事任何不端行为，包括操纵作者署名或审稿进程。

如论文服务提供商提供的服务系科学性编辑（scientific editing）（或称实质性编辑、开发性润色、全面编辑、结构性润色或技术性润色），论文服务提供商仍应提醒作者：作者对其稿件内容的科学性承担最终责任。除语言润色之外的建议应以“批注”的形式提供，而不应出现在正文中，因存在因此而改变科学性内容的风险。如有必要，可以“批注”的形式询问作者是否某项润色内容会改变作者原意。

论文服务提供者应关注针对作者职责的国际、国家级指南以及由出版社、期刊或会议公布的相关指南，并应向作者或客户提供相应指导。例如，出版社或期刊可能会要求仅由一名指定的作者（通常是通讯作者）在线提交稿件，并在附信（或在线表格）中作出伦理道德方面的声明。

3.2 建议客户重视与其稿件相关的伦理问题

论文服务提供商不承担筛查不端行为（如图像处理、图像或文本剽窃、或数据篡改和编造）的任务。如果论文服务提供商怀疑某篇稿件存在研究或出版伦理方面的疏失（如可能没有缺乏伦理委员会审查、未经临床试验注册、未获参与者同意或涉嫌存在剽窃或数据篡改和编造），就应通过一定方式（如，在“批注”中）提醒客户注意这些问题。不过，如果潜在的问题对稿件整体构成了影响（如涉嫌重复发表或大幅剽窃），则应尽快告知客户。

如果客户是作者本人，应告知其此类潜在问题的性质和严重程度。如果客户系一家期刊、出版社或机构，也应告知其此类潜在问题的性质和严重程度。

3.3 指导作者提供缺失或不完整的信息

论文服务提供商如发现存在缺失的信息[如方法不够详尽导致其他科研人员无法重复该研究以及缺乏图表、补充文件以及关于资助和利益冲突的声明（关于透明度的声明）]，应通过一定方式（如，在“批注”中）提醒客户。部分研究的报告方式在 Equator 网络数据库⁶中已有相关指南（例如，涉及人类或动物的研究均有相关指南）。应向客户告知此类指南的标题并提供链接。应明确告知作者：务必如实提供任何缺失的信息。

3.4 妥善处理文本抄袭问题

如果论文服务提供商怀疑稿件中的多个句子与已发表的某篇作品（可由他人撰写，也可由作者本人撰写）高度重复，应高亮显示这些内容；如果稿件已进入润色阶段，这些内容应保持不变。如果论文服务提供商怀疑某一句子的部分内容与已发表的某篇作品（可由他人撰写，也可由作者本人撰写）重复，应高亮显示这一部分，且不予润色；该句子的其他部分可进行语法方面的润色，但不进行改述。在这两种情况下，应通过一定方式（如，在“批注”中）提醒客户，并要求其：检查是否其他部分也存在重复现象，改写所有存在重复的部分或直接提供引文，增加缺失的引文，并重新提交稿件。

虽然论文服务提供商并不承担常规筛查文本抄袭的责任，但此项工作也可作为一项单独的服务提供。然而，应指导作者改写存在抄袭现象的文本，并提供完整、准确的引文，并邀请其重新提交稿件。

3.5 妥善处理潜在的版权问题和其他问题

如果论文服务提供商怀疑稿件中使用了某一既往已发表过的图（表），但未经版权持有者许可；此时，应高亮显示这些图表及正文内相关内容，且不予润色。应提醒作者注意这一

问题，并要求其增加缺失的引文；同时，寻求获得版权许可，并在图注（表注）或脚注中注明。如果任一文本或图表需要修改，可以在“批注”中提供语法润色方面的建议。

有时，在根据审稿意见修改稿件或提供相关指导时，审稿人或编辑可能会坚持要求增加一些不相关的或不必要的引文（作者系审稿人或编辑本人，或原载于目标期刊）；此时，论文服务提供商可提醒客户并提供相应的建议。

4 指南的批准

本《最佳实践指南》由 ASEC 起草、审读和批准。自 2016 年 5 月至 9 月，指南草案分发给 ASEC 成员单位以及其他论文发表和润色专业人员，并经其修改。ASEC 成员单位目前包括 Accdon-LetPub LLC、Crimson Interactive Pvt Ltd、意得辑[Editage (China)]、理文编辑（Edanz China）、美捷登生物科技有限公司（Medjaden Bioscience Limited）和长青藤编辑（Ivyediting）。

5 参考文献

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Best Practice Guidelines on Ethics for Author and Publication Support Service Providers

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

These guidelines serve as a reference for best practices related to ethics for author and publication support service providers, regardless of whether or how the services are charged for. Author and publication support services refer to any third-party assistance that takes place during the preparation of an academic manuscript for journal submission and publication. Such services may include pre-submission manuscript review, journal and peer reviewer recommendations, peer review, scientific editing, formatting, and language and artwork editing (which could be done before submission, during revisions in response to peer review comments, or after acceptance).

1.2 Audience

Ethics guidelines are already available for authors (for example, the *Good Publication Practice 3* guidelines¹) and for journal editors, peer reviewers, and readers (namely, those published by the Committee on Publication Ethics [COPE]²). Some guidelines cover the roles of professional medical writing services (for example, those of the European Medical Writers Association³). However, there are currently no ethics guidelines dedicated to general author and publication support service providers. These guidelines are primarily intended for commercial companies that advise authors and improve journal manuscripts, but they can also be used by publishers (who may recommend or organize pre-submission author services, perform in-house post-acceptance text/artwork editing, or outsource such activities), institutions (which may have in-house services or use/recommend vendors), in-house editorial and author/publication support professionals, and self-employed individuals. They may also be useful for authors when seeking publication support services.

These best practice guidelines were prepared by The Alliance for Scientific Editing in China (ASEC), which was established in October 2015 as a self-regulating association of reputable author services in China.⁴ Although the guidelines are intended primarily for use by author and publication support service providers in China, they can also be applied elsewhere.

2 General responsibilities of author and publication support service providers

Author and publication support service providers must do the following:

2.1 *Clearly display their code of ethics on their website*

Author and publication support service providers should have a webpage detailing their publication ethics policies and procedures in the language of the intended audience, and a link to that page should appear on the homepage and in marketing materials. Service providers should be familiar with definitions and general issues in research and publication ethics, as outlined by COPE. When applicable, COPE guidelines/flowcharts⁵ should be used. In addition, any existing national laws, regulations, research/publication ethics guidelines, and author service ethics guidelines should be followed.

2.2 *Clearly define the services offered and the credentials of people performing those services*

Service providers must clearly explain their services and schedules (and, if applicable, prices and billing/payment system) to clients and should not guarantee that the use of their services leads to automatic publication in any named journal. Service providers must be honest in their marketing materials, including the qualifications, skills, expertise, and other details of their staff/representatives. Staff who provide services should be adequately trained in those services and in research and publication ethics.

Any endorsements or testimonials on a service provider's website or marketing materials should be genuine and used with permission. Relationships with any named institutions, journals, publishers, or other partners should be explained. A registered company address and contact details must be clearly stated on the company website and in marketing materials.

2.3 *Perform services within industry-accepted guidelines*

Service providers should adhere to prevailing guidelines of respected associations such as COPE, World Association of Medical Editors, European Medical Writers Association, European Association of Science Editors, and American Medical Writers Association. Staff/representatives of a publication support service provider usually do not collect or analyze data or provide the main intellectual content of a project and cannot take full responsibility for the manuscript, and hence would not fulfill authorship criteria (for example, those specified by the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors⁶). In such cases, they should not suggest, agree to, or insist on adding their name as an author. The exact editorial role, with the name of the staff/representative when possible, the name of the employer/agency, and, when applicable, the name of the sponsor should be stated in the Acknowledgments section.

Staff/representatives (including peer reviewers) of service providers must not plagiarize, share, or seek to gain personal or commercial advantage from any submitted materials. They should also declare any conflicts of interest before taking on a project, and, if any conflicts exist or the area of academic expertise is not appropriate, they should recuse themselves from an assigned project. Service providers may suggest references where they are missing (in areas of unattributed text overlap or for any unattributed facts or concepts that are not common knowledge) but should not add, suggest, or insist on adding irrelevant citations that they themselves have authored.

Any peer reviewer recommendations must include the correct names, qualifications, and contact details of suitable reviewers. Any peer review services must be provided impartially, honestly, and truthfully. For services offering journal selection guidance, only legitimate journals should be recommended; authors should nevertheless be reminded to refer to ThinkCheckSubmit.org.

2.4 *Maintain client confidentiality at all times*

Service providers and their staff must keep client details, materials, and correspondence confidential and secure. However, they should be prepared to cooperate with appropriate authorities and journal editors during formal investigations of possible misconduct, and disclose necessary information if required by law. Clients should be notified of this policy via the service provider's

website in the language of the intended audience.

2.5 *Clearly display a complaints policy on their website*

Service providers should explain their complaints resolution procedure on their website in the language of the intended audience.

3 Responsibilities of author and publication support service providers related to specific ethical issues

Author and publication support service providers must do the following:

3.1 *Ensure that authors are aware of their responsibilities*

Authors are responsible for complying with research and publishing ethics, for checking the accuracy and content of their manuscripts, and for ensuring that content is not offensive, defamatory, fraudulent, misleading, or illegal. They should be reminded of this and asked to review and approve the final version carefully. Service providers should never assist authors to fabricate, falsify, or plagiarize work; to commit any breach of research or publication ethics; or to engage in any misconduct, including manipulation of authorship or the peer review process.

If the service being provided is scientific editing (also variously known as substantive, substantial, developmental, comprehensive, structural, or technical editing), authors should be reminded that they bear ultimate responsibility for the scientific content of their manuscripts. Suggestions beyond typical language editing may be made in a Comment rather than in the text if there is a risk of changing the scientific content. When needed, a Comment may be written to ask the author to check that an edit has not changed the intended meaning.

Service providers should also be up-to-date with relevant international, national, and specific publisher, journal, or conference guidelines about expected roles and responsibilities of authors, and should inform authors or clients. For example, publishers or journals may require only one designated author, usually the corresponding author, to make the online submission of a manuscript and to make certain ethics declarations in a cover letter or online form.

3.2 *Advise clients on any ethical issues related to their manuscripts*

Service providers are not expected to screen for misconduct, such as possible image manipulation, image or text plagiarism, and data falsification or fabrication. However, if a service provider suspects a lapse in research or publication ethics (such as possible lack of ethics board review, clinical trial registration, or participant consent, or possible plagiarism or data falsification or fabrication), the client should be alerted, for example, in a Comment. However, if a potential issue affects the whole manuscript (such as suspected duplicate publication or large-scale plagiarism), the client should be alerted as soon as possible.

If the client is an author, the author should be informed of the nature and extent of the potential issue. If the client is a journal, publisher, or institution, that client should be informed of the nature and extent of the potential issue.

3.3 *Guide authors to supply missing or incomplete information*

If service providers notice missing information, such as insufficient methods that would prevent others from reproducing the study, display items, supplementary files, and Funding and Conflicts of Interest statements (transparency declarations), they can alert the client, for example, in a Comment. For certain studies that have a relevant reporting guideline in the Equator Network repository⁶ (for example, studies involving humans or animals), the relevant guideline can be named and a link can be provided. It must be made clear that the author is to supply any missing information truthfully.

3.4 *Appropriately deal with suspected text plagiarism*

If a service provider suspects that multiple sentences show text overlap with published work of other authors or even of the same author, those areas should be highlighted and, if editing had been requested, these areas should be left unedited. If a service provider suspects that part of a sentence shows text overlap with previously published work of either the same or different authors, those areas should be highlighted and left unedited, but the rest of the sentence may be edited for grammar without paraphrasing. In both cases, the author should be alerted, for example, in a Comment, and asked to check for any other areas of text overlap, rewrite all areas of text overlap or indicate direct quotations, add citations if absent, and resubmit the manuscript.

Although service providers are not expected to routinely screen for possible text plagiarism, this may be provided as a separate service. However, the author should be instructed to rewrite plagiarized text and provide complete and accurate citations, and invited to resubmit the manuscript.

3.5 *Appropriately deal with potential breach of copyright and other issues*

If a service provider suspects that a previously published display item has been used without copyright permission, the item and relevant text in the manuscript, should be highlighted and left unedited. The author should be alerted and asked to add citations if absent and seek and document copyright permission in the legend/footnote of the display item. If any text of display items requires revision, suggested grammar edits can be left in a Comment.

Service providers may alert the client and offer advice if, when providing guidance on or editing a revised manuscript according to peer review comments, it appears that a reviewer or editor is insisting on adding irrelevant or excessive citations that he or she has authored, or that come from the target journal.

4 Guideline approval

These best practice guidelines have been drafted, reviewed, and approved by ASEC. Drafts of the guidelines were circulated among and revised by ASEC members and other publishing and editing professionals between May and September 2016. Members of ASEC are Accdon-LetPub LLC, Crimson Interactive Pvt Ltd, Editage (China), Liwen Bianji (Edanz China), Medjaden Bioscience Ltd, and The Ivyediting (China).

5. References

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