

Ethics of Scholarly Publishing

Lessons from the DHET Accreditation of Publications

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White Paper 3, 1997

One of the goals for the higher education system in SA as “**to secure and advance high-level research capacity** which can ensure both the continuation of self-initiated open-ended intellectual inquiry and the sustained application of research activities to technological improvement and social development”.

Research Outputs Policy (basic tenets)

- The policy can be sub-divided into three sections:
 - The section on basic tenets (covering introduction; policy framework; principles and research integrity/ethics);
 - Recognised and measured textual outputs (**journals, books and published conference proceedings**); and
 - Processes and procedures

Research Outputs Policy (basic tenets)

- The purpose is ‘to encourage research productivity by rewarding quality research output and enhancing productivity by recognising the major types of research output, using appropriate proxies (*such as scholarliness; peer review; conformity to academic writing and addressing specialists in the respective field*) to determine quality of such output’.

Research Outputs Policy (basic tenets)

- The policy aims ‘to sustain current research strengths and to promote research and other knowledge outputs required to meet national development needs’.
- It defines research as ‘original, systematic investigation undertaken in order to gain new knowledge and understanding’.

Research Outputs Policy (basic tenets)

- The emphasis of the policy is on quality of research outputs and not on the quantity.
- The principle is to fund institutions and not individual authors.
- Institutions have the autonomy on how to utilise subsidy generated through research outputs. The Department does not interfere in this regard.

Research Integrity (ethics)

- The policy “aims to support and encourage scholarship. Institutions and academics must remember the importance of research integrity when submitting their claims and are urged to focus on quality research and not maximum accrual of subsidy funds”. (e.g. ‘salami slicing’; serial conferencing)
- “The integrity of scholarship should also be taken into consideration when recycling previously published work and dividing research outcomes between articles”.

Research Integrity (ethics)

- The Department may consider punitive measures (such as the docking of units) against an institution which persistently makes incorrect claims that compromise the integrity of scholarship or research. Such punitive measures shall be applied fairly and the process of introduction of such punitive measures shall be made transparent as will the process of arriving at punitive measures.
- Institutions may consider establishing a Research Integrity Committee, which could be a Senate Committee that would primarily ensure institutional compliance with respect to such aspects as the conduct of researchers.

Beall's Criteria

- Editor and Staff
 - publisher's owner is identified as the editor of each and every journal published by the organization.
 - Two or more journals have duplicate editorial boards
 - The editorial board engages in gender bias
- Business management
 - Has no policies or practices for digital preservation, meaning that if the journal ceases operations, all of the content disappears from the internet.
 - Copy-proofs (locks) their PDFs, thus making it harder to check for plagiarism.

Beall's Criteria

- Integrity
 - The publisher asks the corresponding author for suggested reviewers and the publisher subsequently uses the suggested reviewers without sufficiently vetting their qualifications or authenticity.
 - The name of a journal is incongruent with the journal's mission.
 - The publisher sends spam requests for peer reviews to scholars unqualified to review submitted manuscripts
- Poor journal standards/practices
 - The publisher publishes journals that are excessively broad (e.g., Journal of Education) in order to attract more articles and gain more revenue from author fees.



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Thank You