



Baqai Medical University

Policies for Baqai Journal of Health Sciences (BJHS)

Prepared By	Special Committee
Approved By	Vice-Chancellor
Version No.	1.0
Date of Issue	28 th April, 2025
Total Pages	15
Custodian	Editor BJHS

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Policies for Baqai Journal of Health Sciences (BJHS)

Introduction

The Baqai Journal of Health Sciences (BJHS) at Baqai Medical University is dedicated to advancing research in the field of health sciences through conducting exemplary research and publish them in high-quality, peer-reviewed, high impact journals. The policies of the BJHS outline the guidelines for authorship, peer review, publication ethics, and others to ensure the academic integrity and excellence. The details of the policies are as follows:

1. Authorship Policy

BJHS follows the authorship guidelines of the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE). According to ICMJE (www.icmje.org), authorship is based on the fulfillment of the following four criteria:

- Substantial contributions to the conception or design of the work; or the acquisition, analysis, or interpretation of data for the work
- Drafting or revising the work critically for important intellectual content
- Final approval of the version to be published
- Accountability for all aspects of the work, ensuring that questions related to accuracy or integrity are appropriately addressed

All authors must meet these four criteria. Individuals who do not meet all the above four criteria should be acknowledged for their contributions in the appropriate section but not listed as an author.

At the time of manuscript submission, the corresponding author must submit a statement outlining the specific contributions of each author i.e. the Authors Contribution (a detailed description of the specific roles and contributions of each author as per the ICMJE guideline in the creation of the manuscript). Incomplete or inaccurate submissions may delay manuscript processing.

Present addresses for individual authors that differ from the address (es) at which the work was done should be given in a Present Addresses note to be placed in title page as per BJHS template.

If any author passes away during the submission or publication process, his/her name will be included on the manuscript with a death dagger (†) symbol, and the date of his/her death will be included in a footnote e.g., †Deceased 1 January 2024.

Alterations to Author List: No changes (additions or deletions) to the author list will be accepted after initial submission, unless justified and approved by the editorial board. Such requests should include written consent from all authors involved.

2. Acknowledgement Policy

Contributors who do not fulfil all four authorship criteria as per the ICMJE guideline but contributed to the study may be mentioned in the acknowledgement section. Examples of individuals who may be acknowledged include, but are not limited to:

- Individuals who helped in acquisition of funding
- Individuals who generally supervised the research group
- Individuals who provided general administrative support
- Colleagues who contributed to study design
- Individuals who helped review the manuscript, including assistance with writing, technical or language editing, and proofreading
- Physicians who referred cases
- Those who offered laboratory support
- Statisticians who conducted statistical tests and analyses
- Secretarial assistance
- Parents who participated by completing questionnaires
- Pharmaceutical companies
- Supporting organizations
- Colleagues who supplied micrographs, X-rays, or slides

3. Conflict of Interest (COI) Policy

As defined by the World Association of Medical Editors (WAME) (<https://wame.org/wame-editorial-on-conflict-of-interest>), a conflict of interest arises when a participant in the publication process whether author, peer reviewer, or editor

has a competing interest that could inappropriately influence, or be reasonably perceived to influence, their responsibilities in the publication process. All authors are required to disclose any potential conflicts of interest. These may include, but are not limited to, financial support such as grants or honoraria, professional benefits like credits, promotions, or memberships, personal or professional affiliations, or data ownership rights associated with the academic or clinical institution where the study was conducted. Such interests should not be unethical, may raise concerns regarding the integrity of the research or the credit attributed to the study site. Authors must provide a clear conflict of interest disclosure in the submission statement, and this declaration should also be included at the end of the manuscript, before the references. In the absence of any conflicts, authors should explicitly state, “none to declare.”

4. Transfer of Copyrights and Originality Policy

Author(s) in BJHS is/are required to submit Transfer of Copyrights and Originality Form (available on <https://journals.baqai.edu.pk/index.php/CS/about> after log-in to the journal). By submitting a manuscript in BJHS, the author (or Principal author if a Multi-authored paper) confirms the following:

- The work is original and has not been published before (except as part of thesis or dissertation) and/or is not under consideration by any other journal.
- The work does not infringe any intellectual property right of any person(s).
- All authors agree with the preparation and submission of this manuscript.
- Authorship should follow the criteria indicated in ‘Authorship policy of BJHS’.
- If the paper is rejected, all rights under this license revert to the author(s).
- The manuscript or a modified version of the same is not submitted to any other journal and is simultaneously under consideration by any other Journal.
- The manuscript contains no subject matter that contravenes laws (including defamatory, misleading, and deceptive material).
- The work meets ethical standards applicable to the research discipline.
- If any author has a conflict of interest, please give details.

All submissions, including any patient information, are expected to comply with the guidelines outlined in the Instructions to Authors.

In addition to retaining their moral rights over the work, the author(s) also maintain rights under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY 4.0) (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

5. Grant Support & Financial Disclosures

All sources of grants received and its spending should be disclosed. Such statements should be declared on the Title Page and at the end of the manuscript before the references. If there are no funding sources, the authors should state “none to declare”.

6. Ethical Approval Policy

In case of reporting experiments involving human subjects, authors must confirm that all procedures were conducted in accordance with the ethical standards of the relevant committee on human experimentation, as well as the most recent version of the Declaration of Helsinki. It is essential that participant’s names, initials, or hospital numbers are not included in the text or any illustrative material.

Every manuscript submitted to BJHS must have received ethical approval from the Ethical Review Committee (ERC) or Institutional Review Board (IRB) of the affiliated institution. This approval should be documented on official letterhead, stamped, and/or signed by the Chairperson of the ERC or IRB. The study must have been prospectively approved. For studies that do not involve direct contact with human subjects, an exemption letter from the ERC/IRB must be provided prior to the commencement of the project.

If an institution lacks an ERC or IRB, ethical approval should be obtained from another institution with a recognized ERC or IRB that adheres to established ethical standards for human research and is willing to cooperate in maintaining those standards.

Additionally, for all the case reports, approval on official institutional letterhead from the head of the department is also required. A statement must be included indicating

that participants provided informed consent for their inclusion in the study or for the publication of a case report.

7. Clinical Trial Registration

The publication of results from randomized controlled trials (RCTs) will only be considered if the ICMJE guideline is followed. A trial registration number must be provided with the manuscript and included at the end of the abstract. The trial must have been registered prospectively, as retrospective registration will not be accepted. Manuscripts describing trials that were conducted without prior registration will not be processed. Pilot studies of clinical trials are not considered RCTs or original articles. According to the ICMJE, a clinical trial is defined as “any research project that prospectively assigns individuals or groups to an intervention, with or without concurrent comparison or control groups, to study the cause-and-effect relationship between a health-related intervention and a health outcome.” Health-related interventions include drugs, surgical procedures, devices, behavioral treatments, educational programs, dietary changes, quality improvement initiatives, and process-of-care modifications. Health outcomes refer to any biomedical or health-related measures recorded from participants, including pharmacokinetic data and adverse events.

The ICMJE endorses the following clinical trial registries:

- i. Any registry that is a primary register of the World Health Organizations (WHO) International Clinical Trials Registry Platform (ICTRP) (<https://www.who.int/clinical-trials-registry-platform>)
- ii. ClinicalTrials.gov
- iii. The Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP), which provides approvals and trial numbers for clinical trials involving drugs or devices (<http://www.dra.gov.pk/>)
- iv. Other recognized clinical trial registries, which can be found online.

For further details, refer to the ICMJE recommendations: <http://www.icmje.org/icmje-recommendations.pdf>.

8. Open Access Policy

To facilitate rapid dissemination and ensure easy accessibility, BJHS provides free, unrestricted access to the full text of all articles published. No permission is required for scholarly or commercial use of the content, provided that BJHS is properly cited as the original source.

In consideration of the publication of their work, the author(s) grant BJHS a non-exclusive publishing right. This allows BJHS to reproduce, publish, and distribute the work, or any part thereof, to the public through any medium for educational and other purposes.

While the author(s) maintain moral rights over their work, they also retain copyright under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY 4.0) (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/deed.en>).

9. Peer Review Policy

All the submissions to BJHS undergo an initial internal (editorial) review. Manuscripts that are deemed unsuitable for publication due to issues such as topic irrelevance, poor writing quality, ethical concerns, or conflicts of interest, may be reverted / rejected at this preliminary stage.

Following the internal review, manuscripts proceed to external peer review in a double-blind process. Research articles are evaluated by two external reviewers. However, editorials and obituaries written by the editor and/or editor-in-chief are exempted from external peer review.

BJHS adheres to the peer review guidelines as recommended by the ICMJE*. Peer reviewers are required to maintain strict confidentiality regarding the manuscript. The document must not be shared with colleagues and should be destroyed upon completion of the review process. Additionally, reviewers are expected to complete their reviews and return the document within the allotted time frame of three weeks.

*<https://www.icmje.org/recommendations/browse/roles-and-responsibilities/responsibilities-in-the-submission-and-peer-review-process.html>

10. Plagiarism Policy

Any submitted manuscript is reviewed for originality using Turnitin.

- A similarity index of less than 19%, with no single source contributing more than 5%, is considered acceptable.
- Any similarity index above 19% requires further review and possible revision.
- Bibliographic material, quotes, and small matches are generally excluded from the similarity index calculation, as per HEC guidelines.
- If plagiarism is detected, the authors must revise and resubmit the document.

11. Using Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Research Publication Policy

This policy provides guidance to use artificial intelligence (AI) technologies, such as Large Language Models (LLMs), Chatbots (e.g., ChatGPT), and AI-based image creators, in academic writing and research publication by authors. The policy is in alignment with the recommendations of the ICMJE guideline as below:

- At submission, authors must disclose whether they have used artificial intelligence (AI) assisted technologies (such as Large Language Models [LLMs], Chatbots, or image creators) in the production of submitted work.
- Authors who use such technology should describe, in the submitted work if applicable how they used it. For example, if AI was used for writing assistant describe this in the acknowledgement section.
- If AI was used for data collection analysis or figures and generation authors should describe this use in the methods.
- Therefore, authors are responsible for any submitted material that included the use of AI assisted technologies.
- Authors should carefully review and added the result because AI can generate authoritative sounding output that can be incorrect, incomplete or biased.
- Authors should not list AI and AI-assisted technologies as an author or co-author nor cite AI as an author, because they cannot be responsible for the accuracy, integrity, and originality of the work and these responsibilities are required for authorship.

- Author should be able to assert that there is no plagiarism in their paper including in text and images produced by the AI.
- Humans must ensure there is appropriate attribution of all quoted material, including full citations.

(Ref: Up-dated ICMJE Recommendations. <https://www.icmje.org/icmje-recommendations.pdf>. Updated January 2024.)

12. Policy for Expected Duration from Submission to Publication

It includes:

- Average duration from submission to acceptance or any other decision: 03 to 06 months.
- Average duration for publication: It could be some later days after acceptance.

13. Withdrawal Policy

In accordance with BJHS's copyright policy, the copyright for any manuscript is transferred to the Journal upon submission.

If authors wish to withdraw their manuscript during the review process, they must notify the editorial office via email, indicating their intention to withdraw. Upon receipt of this notification, a manuscript withdrawal form will be sent to all authors for their signatures. This form must be completed, scanned, and returned to the editorial office. Subsequently, a formal letter confirming the withdrawal of the manuscript will be issued. Please note that electronic signatures will not be accepted.

It is essential to understand that a manuscript will not be considered withdrawn without a formal withdrawal letter. Utilizing a manuscript that has not been officially withdrawn for submission elsewhere will be regarded as ethical misconduct.

14. Scientific Misconduct, Expressions of Concern, and Retraction

BJHS follows the same guideline provided by the ICMJE (<https://www.icmje.org/recommendations/browse/publishing-and-editorial->

concern. The text of the retraction should explain why the article is being retracted and include a complete citation reference to that article. Retracted articles should remain in the public domain and be clearly labeled as retracted.

When an author is found to have engaged in scientific misconduct, the credibility of their previously published work becomes uncertain and should not be accepted without verification. Editors may request a formal assessment from the author's institution to confirm the integrity of his/her earlier publications. If verification is not provided, editors may choose to retract the affected articles from their journal or issue an expression of concern to inform readers that the validity of the author's prior work is in doubt.

The integrity of research may also be compromised by inappropriate methodology that could lead to retraction.

15. Privacy Policy Statement

BJHS values its relationship with authors and reviewers and upholds mutual trust for disseminating key information. We are committed to respecting and protecting the privacy and personal information of all authors and reviewers. This policy should be read alongside other guidelines and assurances provided by BJHS to its subscribers, including authors and reviewers. These documents outline how any personal information or data shared with us is used for communication related to article submission and review processes.

All authors and reviewers are encouraged to read this policy carefully. For any clarifications or questions, please contact us at bjhs@baqai.edu.pk, confidentially.

i. Personal Information

Individuals may provide us with personal information when they contact BJHS via email or register at BJHS's Open Journal System (OJS). This may occur in connection with manuscript submission, publication inquiries, participation in discussions, or when using services such as language editing and formatting. Information provided may include name, email address, mailing address, phone number, academic institution, affiliation, job title, subject expertise, technical skills and financial details (optional).

Retention of Information: Personal information submitted to BJHS is only used for its intended purpose and is securely retained in the office records for a period of five years.

Protection of Personal Information: Personal information is stored electronically in password-protected records. In some cases, paper records are securely stored under lock and key.

ii. *Third-Party Web Linkage (Sharing):*

Sharing of email information: BJHS may share an author's email address with service providers such as publishers. Any other sharing of personal information will require the prior consent of the individual.

Changes to the Privacy Policy: Any changes to the privacy policy must be approved by the editorial board of BJHS.

iii. *Rights of Authors/Reviewers:*

Pakistan's data protection laws, intellectual property regulations, and other relevant legislation provide individuals with rights that safeguard personal information and intellectual property. Authors, reviewers, and other contributors should ensure they fully understand their rights and familiarize themselves with both national and international policies in this regard.

16. *Supplements Policy*

BJHS is open to accepting requests for supplement publishing from external organizations on a variety of topics, abstracts, conference proceedings, meetings and advertisements. The cost associated with publishing the supplement will be tolerated by the requesting organization, following discussions with the journal management.

It is important to note that all articles published in the supplements reflect the opinions of the authors and do not represent the official policy of the journal.

For more information regarding supplements, please email to the journal at bjhs@baqai.edu.pk.

17. *Rejected Articles - Appeals*

Author(s) whose submission(s) have been rejected have the right to submit a letter of appeal, providing detailed explanations for reconsideration. This appeal will undergo an internal review, and a final decision will be made accordingly.

Revised article will not be reconsidered once it has been officially rejected, and article rejected at this stage will not be reviewed again under any circumstances.

The reproduction of an article, in full or in part that has been previously published may be permitted if the author provides a justified rationale and the editorial board grants approval. It is the author's responsibility to obtain the necessary permissions from all relevant sources before submitting the manuscript. Any content derived from another source must be accompanied by a signed letter of consent from the copyright holder, which may be the original author, journal, or publisher.

18. Rebuttals and Comments on Published Work

Comments on previously published articles in BJHS will be reviewed by the editor/ editor-in-chief and then forwarded to the original authors for a response. Authors will be given sufficient time to provide their reply, and both the comment and the response will be published together in an upcoming issue. If the original author does not respond, the comment will be published on its own.

This process will be conducted only if the comments are deemed appropriate.

To submit comments on published articles, please email: bjhs@bagai.edu.pk.

19. Preprint Policy

Editorial team may take decision to upload articles of all categories for preprint, excluding case reports and editorials, provided that the following conditions are strictly observed:

- The original version of the manuscript (i.e., the version that has not undergone peer review) may be posted at any time. Authors must disclose any preprint posting details during the manuscript submission process.
- Research must have received approval from the ERC or IRB as per the BJHS ERC/IRB policy.

- The research and creative work must be conducted in accordance with the guidelines set forth by the ICMJE guideline.
- Authors possess ORCID ID should declare in title page during submission.
- Upon rejection by BJHS, the manuscript must be removed from the preprint site.
- Following the publication of the article, the following statement will be included on the preprint server:

“This article has been published in [insert full citation] following peer review and can also be accessed on the journal’s website at [insert DOI].”