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Publishing Ethics

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Outline

- Publication ethics – who guides this and why is this important?
- Common issues which arise
- Ensuring the integrity of the scholarly record
- Cases:
 - Authorship- criteria, responsibilities and misconduct
 - Duplicate submissions and publications
 - Plagiarism
 - Data handling and sharing
- Tips for authors on avoiding problems

Publishing ethics

- Based on **consensus** about standards and best practice
- Ensures the **integrity** of the scholarly record
- Ensures that readers can **trust** what they read
- Ensures scholars and researchers can **build** upon published work



Publishers

Societies

Key statements to include

(ensures transparency
about ethical research
standards)

Approval for the research
(based on study design)
from appropriate ethics
committee/institution
review board

Informed consent from
research participants (or
guardians) to confirm
their voluntary
participation

Animal handling and care

Consent to publish from
anyone who can
potentially be identified

Competing interests
(financial and non-
financial)

Funding and sponsorships

Publication ethics & integrity – common issues

Authorship (disputes; ghost; gift; 'for sale')	Affiliation misrepresentation	Inappropriate citations/poor attribution	Missing /incomplete competing interests	Consent to publish (including Acknowledgements)	Inadequate/biased reporting of research
Breaches of copyright or lack of re-use permissions	Data sharing issues	Duplicate submission and publication	Plagiarism (ideas as well as text)	Text recycling & Redundant publication	Propaganda or controversial content
Data fabrication or "massaging" (e.g. p-hacking, HARKing)	Image manipulation or stock images	Unethical research/ lack of approvals and valid consent	Peer review manipulation or bias	"Papermills" & Predatory "author services"	Identity theft: Guest Editors, authors or reviewers

Ensuring the integrity of the scholarly record

After publication, there are two main ways that we can correct the scholarly record via published notices:

- **Correction**
- **Retraction**

Under some circumstances, the following notices may be necessary:

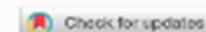
- **Expression of Concern**
- **Removal**

Key points:

- Post-publication notices are attached to the original article permanently
- Purpose of these are to correct the scholarly record and ensure its integrity
- These are not to apportion blame

Correction notice

- No serious breach of publication or research ethics
- To correct minor errors, which do not affect the conclusions
- No concerns about overall integrity of the article



Correction

Article title: Providing Written or Oral Explanations? Differential Effects of the Modality of Explaining on Students' Conceptual Learning and Transfer

Authors: Andreas Lachner, Kim-Tek Ly, and Matthias Nückles

Journal: *The Journal of Experimental Education*

Bibliometrics: Volume 86, Number 3, Pages 344–361

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/00220973.2017.1363691>

The article was published with error in [Table 1](#) in print and online versions. The errors were reported in the mean and standard deviations of Conceptual knowledge and Transfer of dependent variables.

The correct version of [Table 1](#) is as follows:

Table 1. Mean and standard deviations (in parentheses) for the dependent measures.

Dependent variable	Oral explanation condition	Written explanation condition
Prior knowledge ^a	4.79 (2.02)	4.42 (1.77)
Subjective cognitive load ^b	2.91 (0.74)	2.81 (0.75)
Features of the explanations		
Number of words	707.61 (326.67)	249.68 (67.37)
Number of person-deictic references ^c	5.57 (7.22)	0.55 (1.37)
Level of organization ^d	1.80 (0.75)	2.68 (1.08)
Number of elaborations	4.52 (2.33)	1.95 (0.90)
Learning outcome		
Conceptual knowledge ^e	8.33 (1.83)	8.92 (1.14)
Transfer ^e	11.06 (3.45)	9.15 (2.13)

^aTwelve points were possible on the prior knowledge test.

^bThe subjective cognitive load could vary between 1 and 5.

^cThe number of person-deictic references was measured according to the sum of occurrences of first-person pronouns and second-person pronouns.

^dThe level of organization of the explanations could vary between 0 (low organization) and 4 (high organization).

^eTwenty-six points were possible on the transfer test.

The authors apologize for the errors caused.

Retraction notice

- Due to serious breach of publication ethics (e.g. duplicate publication; plagiarism, etc) or research integrity and ethics (e.g. unethical research, data falsification, etc)
- Where honest error is the cause (e.g. problems with data), authors can instigate the retraction
- Where authors or institutions are non-responsive we can still take action if we have sufficient information
- Content of the notice should be factual. This is not about blame
- Original article remains online with a “Retracted” watermark across it

Statement of Retraction

We, the Editors and Publisher of the journal *Artificial Cells, Nanomedicine, and Biotechnology*, have retracted the following article:

Yuqiong Lv, Shaorong Chen, Jingjing Wu, Ruyin Lin, Limei Zhou, Guimin Chen, Huiqing Chen and Yumin Ke. (2019). Upregulation of long non-coding RNA OGFRP1 facilitates endometrial cancer by regulating miR-124-3p/SIRT1 axis and by activating PI3K/AKT/GSK-3b pathway. *Artificial Cells, Nanomedicine, and Biotechnology*. 47:1, 2083–2090, DOI: [10.1080/21691401.2019.1617727](https://doi.org/10.1080/21691401.2019.1617727)

Since publication, concerns have been raised about the integrity of the data in the article. When approached for an explanation, the authors checked their data and confirmed there are fundamental errors present. Therefore, they have agreed to the retraction of this article. The authors apologise for this oversight.

We have been informed in our decision-making by our policy on publishing ethics and integrity and the COPE guidelines on retractions.

The retracted article will remain online to maintain the scholarly record, but it will be digitally watermarked on each page as 'Retracted'.

Expression of concern

- Can be issued where investigation is inconclusive or taking a long time, but where a public expression of concern is deemed necessary
- Careful consideration required, as these are permanent
- Author(s) will be informed
- Purpose is to alert readers

ARTIFICIAL CELLS, NANOMEDICINE, AND BIOTECHNOLOGY
2020, VOL. 48, NO. 1, 714
<https://doi.org/10.1080/21691401.2020.1741866>



EXPRESSION OF CONCERN

 OPEN ACCESS  Check for updates

Expression of Concern: *Ras-PI3K pathway promotes osteosarcoma progression via regulating VRK1-mediated H2A phosphorylation at threonine 120*

We, the Publisher and Editor of *Artificial Cells, Nanomedicine, and Biotechnology*, are issuing an Expression of Concern for the following article:

Article title: Ras-PI3K pathway promotes osteosarcoma progression via regulating VRK1-mediated H2A phosphorylation at threonine 120

Authors: Xianlun Xu and Hao Yu

Journal: *Artificial Cells, Nanomedicine, and Biotechnology*

Bibliometrics: Volume 47, Number 01, pages 4274–4283

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/21691401.2019.1687506>

After publication of this article, questions about the scientific integrity of the article content were brought to the Publisher and Editor's attention. We have reached out to the authors requesting that they supply information that would confirm the article's integrity, but the authors have not responded to our queries within the requested timeframe. Therefore, as we continue to work through the issues raised, we advise readers to interpret the information presented in the article with due caution.

Removal vs retraction– what is the guidance?

Specific circumstances:

- Defamation or other legal concerns
- Content is subject to a court order
- High risk of harm if acted upon
- Breach of privacy

Removal notice, outlining the reasons will be issued in place of the content



Journal
The Round Table >
The Commonwealth Journal of International Affairs
Volume 106, 2017 - Issue 1

24
Views

0
CrossRef citations
to date

0
Altmetric

Listen

Short Communication

Withdrawal statement

Page (x) | Published online: 08 Mar 2017

Download citation
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The following article has been withdrawn from publication in the Taylor & Francis journal *The Round Table: The Commonwealth Journal of International Affairs*: Gruenbaum, O. (2017) Commonwealth Update, *The Round Table: The Commonwealth Journal of International Affairs*, 106(1), 1-8. DOI: 10.1080/00358533.2017.1285527. Version of Record published online: 17 Feb 2017.

The Editors and Publishers are withdrawing the above article from publication in *The Round Table: The Commonwealth Journal of International Affairs* for legal reasons.

A world map with a circular horizon. Landmasses are colored either red or blue. Red landmasses include North America, South America, Africa, Europe, Asia, and Australia. Blue landmasses include Greenland, Iceland, and parts of Europe and Asia. The map also shows numerous small red and blue dots scattered across the oceans.

Publication Ethics- considerations for the Global South

Authorship



T&F Authorship criteria: who qualifies?

1. Made a significant contribution to the work reported, whether that's in the conception, study design, execution, acquisition of data, analysis and interpretation, or in all these areas.
2. Have drafted or written, or substantially revised or critically reviewed the article.
3. Have agreed on the journal to which the article will be submitted.
4. Reviewed and agreed on all versions of the article before submission, during revision, the final version accepted for publication, and any significant changes introduced at the proofing stage.
5. Agree to take responsibility and be accountable for the contents of the article and to share responsibility to resolve any questions raised about the accuracy or integrity of the published work.

Remember:

- **Any** listed author is a representative of the published paper and shares accountability
- Corresponding authors signs **author publishing agreement** on behalf of co-authors
- Authorship comes with responsibilities

Gift Authorship: what are the issues?

- Dishonest representation of who was involved in the work
- Listed authors must be accountable for the published work
- Sometimes occurs without the knowledge of whomever has been “gifted” the authorship



Ghost Authorship: what are the issues?

- Lack of credit for those who have significantly contributed to the work
- Conceals involvement of those who have influenced the research, data analysis, conclusions etc
- Conceals relevant competing interests



Misconduct- Authorship for sale

- Sale of authorship to people who have not directly conducted the work.
- Articles often contain other problems – e.g fake data, manipulated images, high levels of plagiarism, etc.
- Leads to publication of dishonest and unreliable work, duplicate submissions/publications (with different author lists) and reputational damage for authors and institutions.



Acknowledgments

- Authors must notify and obtain permission from anyone named within the Acknowledgments section
- Gives them the option to not be named (personal reasons, political reasons etc)
- Person being acknowledged may think they should be an author rather than just be acknowledged
- Authors should declare at submission they have obtained agreement from those being named



Changes to authorship list: consensus and confirmations required from all co-authors

Changes

1. After the journal has accepted your article, if you need to change the co-authors for any reason you should write to the editor of the journal, with a completed version of our [Authorship Change Request form](#). This form must be signed by all the authors, including the person you are adding or removing. The editor will need to agree to the change, and if a clear rationale has not been provided, the request may be rejected.
2. If the corresponding author changes before the article is published (i.e., if a co-author becomes the corresponding author), please write to the editor of the journal and the production editor, confirming that both authors have agreed the change.
3. Requested changes to the co-authors or corresponding authors after publication of the article will also be considered, following the [authorship guidelines issued by COPE](#), the Committee on Publication Ethics. Please [see our corrections policy](#) for more details. Any requests for changes must be made by submitting the completed [Authorship Change Request form](#).

Warm-up question – to obtain wordcloud answers
via mentimeter followed by discussion

What ethical challenges related to authorship have
you faced lately?

Case: Authorship

- Article listing several authors, was peer reviewed and accepted for publication by the Editor.
- After acceptance, a collaborator who had made significant contributions to the analysis and revised draft of the article, asked why they have not been included as an author.
- The authors agree the collaborator has provided a strong argument for why they meet the authorship criteria.
- In the meantime, the corresponding author has received the proofs from the production team.

What should the authors do? (answer via mentimeter)

1. Proceed with no further changes because it's too late to add an additional author?
2. Tell the collaborator they will add them as an author on their next article, rather than on this one?
3. Immediately contact the editorial and production team to request the change to the authorship list?

Duplicate submissions and publications



Duplicate submission

- Cannot submit to more than one journal at the same time
- Authors must declare at submission that the manuscript has not been submitted elsewhere
- Prior to publication authors sign a legally binding publishing agreement
- Corresponding author signs on behalf on all co-authors. All listed co-authors are collectively accountable.



Duplicate submission or publication- when is it ok?

- Article was published in another language and has been translated (considered at Editors discretion). Must be made clear which version is a translation and to cite the original article. Translator must be named. Authors should check any copyright or reuse restrictions.
- Data presented at conferences (**short** abstracts)
- Posted in a repository/pre-print server



Transparency is key. Any previous **full** versions should be highlighted to the Editor.

Case: Duplicate Publication

- Soon after publication of an article in Journal A, readers alerted the Editor to the existence of the same article in another journal (Journal B)
- Content and author list was the same, and the article was published in Journal A three weeks **after** Journal B
- Journal A asked authors for an explanation, and reminded them they had confirmed the article was original and not under consideration elsewhere (during submission process, and when the Author Publishing Agreement was signed)
- Authors explained that due to miscommunication amongst the authors, they submitted to two different journals in error

What should the editor/publishers do? (answer via mentimeter)

1. Do nothing because the articles are already published
2. Retract the article from Journal A, as it was published after publication in Journal B
3. Remove the article from both Journal A and Journal B

Plagiarism and text- recycling



Plagiarism

- The appropriation of another person's/groups ideas, processes, results, figures or words without giving appropriate credit
- Includes content from books and websites (blogs)
- Text plagiarism can be detected by plagiarism detection software (e.g. iThenticate)
- Can lead to rejection of the manuscript or retraction of the published article



Source: Flickr. Adapted from Alan Cleaver

Self Plagiarism/Text recycling

- The excessive repeated use of own work (text, figures, data, ideas, etc)
- Leads to redundant publication
- Distorts the scholarly record
- Can lead to rejection of the manuscript or retraction of the published article



Flickr: Shannon Kringen "Magical File"

Text Recycling Research Project

A multi-institution, NSF-funded initiative investigating text recycling in STEM research

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Best Practices for Researchers

Text recycling is the reuse of textual material (prose, visuals, or equations) in a new document where (1) the material in the new document is identical to that of the source (or substantively equivalent in both form and content), (2) the material is not presented in the new document as a quotation (via quotation marks or block indentation), and (3) at least one author of the new document is also an author of the prior document.

The best practices here are intended to guide scholarly and research writers working in all disciplines. We advise authors who have questions about whether or how these best practices apply for any specific document to consult with a journal editor or mentor prior to submission. Researchers interested in learning more about text recycling can consult our document [Understanding Text Recycling in Research Writing: A Guide for Researchers](#).

These recommendations apply only to reusing one's own work, not using material written by others. Authors should not engage in plagiarism. For advice on avoiding plagiarism, consult disciplinary guides.

<https://textrecycling.org>

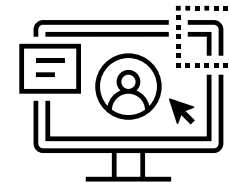
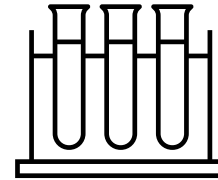
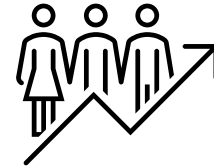
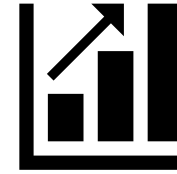
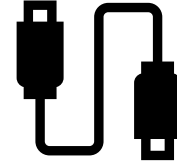
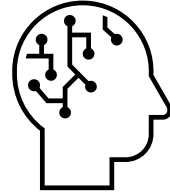
Case: Redundant Publication and Text Recycling

- Upon submission, significant text overlap was detected with two recently published papers by the same authors. Those articles had not been discussed or cited.
- Text overlap was present throughout the manuscript (i.e. not just Methods)
- Many figures and tables had also been reused from the published papers
- Upon query, the authors confirmed there were no significant novel findings, but explained they needed to publish more papers which is why they submitted this

What should be the outcome? (answer via mentimeter)

1. Editor should reject the submission because of excessive reuse of authors own previously published work and lack of attribution.
2. Authors should rephrase all the overlapping text.

Data/image handling and sharing



Editorial Policy: Images and data

Science, technology and medicine: specific considerations

- Experimental photographic images including microscopy, immunohistochemical staining, immunofluorescence staining, electrophoretic gels and immunoblots should accurately reflect the results of the original image.
 - Where images have been modified or enhanced in any way this must be stated with a full explanation within the manuscript as well as in the figure legend so as not to mislead readers about what the images show.
 - **Authors should be prepared to share the original, uncropped and unprocessed images with the journal editorial office upon request.**
- Modifications are only acceptable if these are minor in nature and have been applied to the whole image. **Any modifications which can alter the scientific interpretation of the image are not allowed.**
- Clinical images such as X-rays and other types of medical imaging scans, should not include any identifying information about the patient. Details such as the patient name, ID number etc should be blurred or cropped out prior to submission.

Editorial Policy: Images and data

Arts, humanities, and social sciences: specific considerations

- Authors should be aware of any cultural sensitivities or restrictions associated with any images included in their manuscripts. For example, images of human remains or deceased humans is restricted in some cultures, and appropriate ethical guidelines should be adhered to by considering the views and approval processes of the affected communities.
- In many indigenous communities, additional permissions may need to be sought from community leaders or an Elder.
 - **Authors should include a statement to confirm that all necessary permissions have been obtained for the use and publication of such content (e.g. photographs, video or audio recordings, 3D models, illustrations, etc.).**
 - This includes human samples obtained from museum collections, where additional permission may need to be obtained for re-use and publication of the work.
- Authors who include sensitive images in their submission – e.g. photographs, videos or models of human remains from indigenous communities, or pornographic images, explicit images, etc. **should ensure that a clear statement is included in the article to provide a warning about the content.**
- Authors publishing work in the fields of conservation and heritage research in particular, are required to include details of image gathering methods and the technology used for creating any images, videos or models included in their submission.

Editorial Policy: Authorship and acknowledgements

Assistance with experiments and data analysis

- Any significant contribution to work reported should be appropriately credited according to our authorship criteria.
- If any parts of the work have been outsourced to professional laboratories or data analysts, this should be clearly stated within the manuscript with an explanation of their role, or they should be included in the author list if appropriate.
- **Authors are responsible for retaining all of the original data related to their work, and should be prepared to share it with the journal editorial office if requested.**

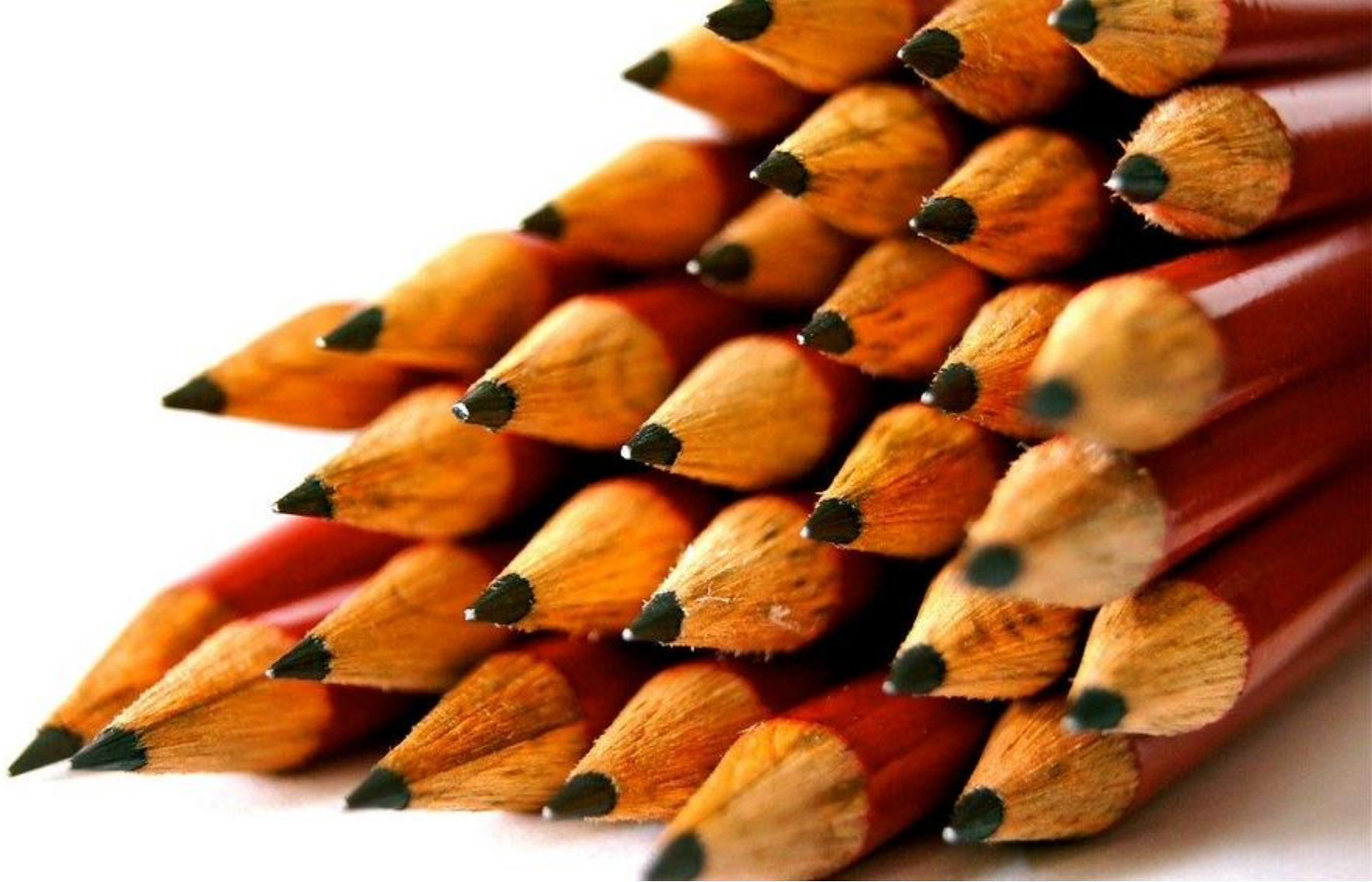
Case: Data integrity concerns

- After publication, a reader raises concerns about the analysis and interpretation of data in the article
- Upon query, the authors check their data and confirm there was a coding error
- Reanalysis was conducted and the overall conclusions of the research remain unchanged.
- Authors supplied the Editor with full explanation and the original data files so that it can be assessed by the editorial team
- Editor and editorial team assessment confirms authors findings

What should be the outcome? (answer via mentimeter)

1. Editor should retract the article because of the coding error confirmed by the author
2. Authors should highlight the error and a Correction notice should be issued
3. Editor and author should ignore the reader concerns because the article has already been published

Summary



Tips for authors on avoiding problems

Tip 1

Authorship

- Agree on authorship early on, based on criteria and responsibilities
- Ensure anyone who meets authorship criteria has been included
- Be aware of the role and responsibilities of the corresponding author
 - Ensure all authors agree on which journal to submit to
 - Ensure all authors agree on any changes to the manuscript, including any changes to the authorship list
 - Ensure all relevant declarations on funding and competing interests have been stated by co-authors

Tip 2

Securely store original data and be ready to share if requested

- Ensure all original data (including images) are clearly labelled and stored
- Be ready to share the files with the journal editorial office upon request. This can happen during the review process or even after publication
- Ensure anonymity of participants in any datasets which need to be shared

Tip 3

Check mandatory requirements

- Journal instructions for authors
- Editorial policies
- Confirmation about originality
- Mandatory data sharing policies
- Mandatory deposition and registration policies (e.g. clinical trial registration, gene expression data etc)

Tip 4

Include declarations on ethical conduct of the study and any competing interests

- Statement on ethical approval for the study from the appropriate ethics board (or reasons for a waiver)
- Statement on informed consent from research participants
- Ethics for data which can impact privacy, etc
- Consent for publication from anyone who can potentially be identified (keep copies of forms)
- Competing interests statement
- Funding information
- Acknowledge assistance by anyone involved in the study or writing of the paper

Tip 5

Cite all relevant sources and previous versions, and obtain permissions for re-use

- Prior to submission check your manuscript for unintended text re-use via a Plagiarism checker (e.g. IThenticate, Turnitin, etc)
- Cite appropriate, balanced and relevant sources (evidence-based, peer reviewed content)
- If any previous full versions exist online or other citeable form (e.g. preprints) then ensure these have been cited
- Ensure permissions have been obtained from the copyright/licence holder for any images, models, etc from third parties