

Leiden University Institute of Psychology Authorship Guidelines

These guidelines are based on the official guidelines of the American Psychological Association ([APA](#)) and the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors ([ICMJE](#)). Webpages, guidelines and policy documents on authorship from other sources have been used as information for this document. These sources are: [Erasmus MC Guidelines](#), [Catholic University of Leuven](#), and the [VSNU](#).

Authorship entails a public acknowledgment of an intellectual contribution to a disseminated piece of information. Authorship is important to the reputation, academic promotion, and grant support of the individuals involved as well as to the strength and reputation of their institution. Discussions on authorship ideally start at the inception of a research project. Decisions about authorship and about acknowledgement (i.e. the way to recognize people who have contributed otherwise but who do not fulfil the authorship criteria) normally result from a process of ongoing communication, reflection and/or revision as the project evolves.

The text of the APA authorship guidelines is as follows:

“Publication Credit

(a) Psychologists take responsibility and credit, including authorship credit, only for work they have *actually performed* or to which they have *substantially contributed*.

(b) Principal authorship and other publication credits accurately reflect the relative scientific or professional contributions of the individuals involved, regardless of their relative status. Mere possession of an institutional position, such as department chair, does not justify authorship credit. Minor contributions to the research or to the writing for publications are acknowledged appropriately, such as in footnotes or in an introductory statement.

(c) Except under exceptional circumstances, a student¹ is listed as principal author on any multiple-authored article that is substantially based on the student's doctoral dissertation. Faculty advisors discuss publication credit with students as early as feasible and throughout the research and publication process as appropriate.” ([APA Tips for determining authorship credit](#))

‘Substantial contribution’ as described above under point (a) in the definition of the APA is described in more detail in the ICMJE criteria:

“The ICMJE recommends that authorship be based on the following 4 criteria:

- 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

¹ A student in this context refers to a PhD student.

- 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.” (*ICMJE Defining the role of authors and contributors*)

In line with the APA and ICMJE guidelines, the Leiden University Institute of Psychology has developed overall authorship guidelines:

1. Criteria for Authorship

Authorship should be granted to individuals who:

1.1. make a substantial *intellectual*² contribution to:

- a) the conception and design; OR
- b) the collection of research data; OR
- c) the analysis and interpretation of research data;

1.2. AND substantially contribute to the drafting of the manuscript (e.g. article, book) and/or substantially critically revise its content;

1.3. AND approve the final version of the manuscript to be published;

1.4. AND agree 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. In addition to being accountable for the parts of the work he or she has done, an author should be able to identify which co-authors are responsible for specific other parts of the work and an author should have justified confidence in the integrity of the contributions of their co-authors.³

No person who fulfils the authorship criteria may be excluded as an author. Therefore, all researchers who have made a substantial intellectual contribution in view of the first criterion should have the opportunity to meet the second and the third criterion. This applies to all publication types. Those who do not meet all four criteria should be acknowledged.

In view of the above, securing research funding, providing space, equipment or materials, collecting some research data, or managing or supervising researchers involved in the project do not by themselves justify authorship. Mere possession of an institutional position, such as chair of a unit, department or institute, also does not justify authorship credit.

2. Order of authorship

² 'Intellectual' in this context means that the individual should have contributed by thinking along during the process of conception and design, collection of data, or the analysis and interpretation of data.

³ In case Master students (or PhD students) have contributed, the first author needs to be asked to give an overview of accountability instead of the student.

Many different ways of determining order of authorship exist across disciplines, research groups, and countries. Examples of authorship policies include descending order of contribution, placing the person who took the lead in writing the manuscript or doing the research first and the most experienced contributor last, and alphabetical or random order. While the significance of a particular order may be understood in a given setting, order of authorship has no generally agreed-upon meaning.

As a result, it is not possible to deduce the respective contributions of individual authors from the sequence in which the authors are listed. Many journals ask the authors of the publications to describe their contributions in a contributor list.

Together, the authors should attempt to reach a consensus on the sequence of authorship. Every author should be prepared to explain the rationale for the agreed author sequence.

If requested by the journal, authors should explain how they have assigned the order in which they are listed so that readers can interpret their roles correctly.

3. Author affiliations

In addition to the order of authorship, the correct information should be provided as to the location where the researcher has conducted the study.

a) If the researcher has conducted the study at the Leiden University Institute of Psychology and has used the expertise and infrastructure available at the said institute, the author should give the institute as his/her affiliation.

b) Researchers who recently joined the Leiden University Institute of Psychology should give their previous location as affiliation for research they conducted prior to joining Leiden. The author may of course indicate that the corresponding address has changed. Researchers who recently left the Leiden University Institute of Psychology to work elsewhere should use Leiden University Institute of Psychology as their affiliation for any research conducted mainly at Leiden.⁴

c) When applicable, two or more affiliations may be given.

4. Special Recommendations and Authorship disputes (Sections a, b, c reflect [APA Guidelines](#))

a) Timing

Discussion of authorship should ideally begin at the beginning of a project and involve a purposeful and thoughtful examination of expected contributions of the individuals who are involved in the project. Keep in mind that it is possible that several manuscripts will be planned, each of which could

⁴ The Leiden University Institute of Psychology will count only those publications that carry the Leiden University affiliation.

involve different authors or different authorship orders. It is also helpful for everyone to recognize that initial authorship and authorship order can change throughout the development of the project if necessary in order to better reflect the actual contributions of all investigators.

The team of individuals who conduct the work is responsible for identifying who meets these criteria and ideally should do so when planning the work, making modifications as appropriate as the work progresses.

b) Reasons to deviate from the original plan

Potential reasons for why authors might be added to a manuscript include:

- The project has expanded beyond the original purpose, conceptualization or scope.
- An added author may possess valuable expertise necessary for the completion of the project or for addressing major concerns expressed by a reviewer of the submitted manuscript.
- A contributor to the project who originally was intended to be thanked in the acknowledgement section of the manuscript became significantly more involved to the extent that their contribution warrants authorship.

Potential reasons for why an author may be later omitted from authorship include:

- An author did not contribute to the project as originally expected or agreed upon.
- An author graduated or relocated before a project could be significantly undertaken, and the author's relocation prevented him or her from reasonably or substantially contributing to the proposed project.

Potential reasons for why authorship order may be revised include:

- The actual contributions of authors differed significantly from the originally expected contributions at the beginning of the project.
- An author would like to accept increased responsibility, or would like to delegate a portion of his or her responsibility to other authors.

c) Interdisciplinary groups

If you are doing interdisciplinary research, it is important to know that other fields may have different authorship cultures.

d) Large multi-author groups

When a large multi-author group has conducted the work, the group ideally should decide who will be an author before the work is started and confirm who is an author before submitting the manuscript for publication. All members of the group named as authors should meet all four criteria for authorship, including approval of the final manuscript, and they should be able to take public responsibility for the work and should have full confidence in the accuracy and integrity of the work of other group authors.

Some large multi-author groups designate authorship by a group name, with or without including the names of individuals. When submitting a manuscript authored by a group, the corresponding author should specify the group name if one exists, and clearly identify the group members who can take credit and responsibility for the work as authors.

e) In case of conflict

These guidelines serve the purpose of opening the conversation about authorship early on in the process which may prevent problems from arising. Disputes sometimes arise about who should be listed as authors of an intellectual product and the order in which they should be listed. Many such disagreements result from misunderstanding and failed communication among colleagues and might have been prevented by a clear, early understanding of standards for authorship that are shared by the academic community as a whole. However, not all issues can be solved with these guidelines.

Parties in dispute are to attempt to resolve the matter through direct dialogue. Where this fails, depending on the nature of the conflict and the role of the various people involved, the parties should, if possible, first contact their direct supervisor or chair of their unit, and if this is not possible, they should contact the Scientific Director of the Institute, or the Dean of the Faculty. If this does not solve the conflict, parties can contact the university [confidential counselor](#) for questions regarding academic integrity or an ombudsperson can give advice to one or both parties or can mediate the dispute.

The above rules do not prejudice the right of researchers to bring a case before the [Academic Integrity Committee](#) invoking academic integrity infringements that relate to authorship.