

# Scientific Misconduct

Horizon follows the guidelines provided by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE), the World Association of Medical Editors (WAME), the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) and the Higher Education Commission, Pakistan (HEC) for dealing with scientific misconduct.

The following examples and forms of misconduct have been taken from WAME, originally with minor modification:

- **Falsification of data:** Ranges from fabrication to deceptive selective reporting of findings and omission of conflicting data, or wilful suppression and/or distortion of data.
- **Plagiarism:** The appropriation of the language, ideas, or thoughts of another without crediting their true source, and representation of them as one's own original work.
- **Improprieties of authorship:** Improper assignment of credit, such as excluding others, misrepresentation of the same material as original in more than one publication, inclusion of individuals as authors who have not made a definite contribution to the work published; or submission of multi-authored publications without the concurrence of all authors.
- **Misappropriation of the ideas of others:** an important aspect of scholarly activity is the exchange of ideas among colleagues. Scholars can acquire novel ideas from others during the process of reviewing grant applications and manuscripts. However, improper use of such information can constitute fraud. Wholesale appropriation of such material constitutes misconduct.
- **Violation of generally accepted research practices:** Serious deviation from accepted practices in proposing or carrying out research, improper manipulation of experiments to obtain biased results, deceptive statistical or analytical manipulations, or improper reporting of results.
- **Material failure to comply with legislative and regulatory requirements affecting research:** Including but not limited to serious or substantial, repeated, wilful violations of applicable local regulations and law involving the use of funds, care of animals, human subjects, investigational drugs, recombinant products, new devices, or radioactive, biologic, or chemical materials.
- **Inappropriate behaviour in relation to misconduct:** this includes unfounded or knowingly false accusations of misconduct, failure to report known or suspected misconduct, withholding or destruction of information relevant to a claim of misconduct and retaliation against persons involved in the allegation or investigation.

Misconduct also includes redundant publication and duplicate publication, lack of declaration of competing interests and of funding/sponsorship, and other failures of transparency to be forms of misconduct.

## Responses to possible misconduct

All allegations of scientific misconduct are taken very seriously at Horizon. We follow the guidelines prescribed by the previously mentioned organisations. The manuscript processing will be halted while the fact-finding investigation is being carried out.

[1] WAME. Recommendations on Publication Ethics Policies for Medical Journals [Internet]. 2015 [cited 28 December 2015]. Available from: <http://www.wame.org/about/recommendations-on-publication-ethics-policy>