

Ethical Policy for *GCEJ*

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1. Ethical Policy for Authors

To proactively identify potential ethical concerns, *Global Clinical Engineering Journal (GCEJ)* collects relevant information at multiple stages of the editorial process. Authors are required to disclose ethics approvals, conflicts of interest, funding sources, author contributions, and data availability at the time of submission. All manuscripts are subject to plagiarism checks and image integrity screening before peer review. Additional clarifications or documentation may be requested during revision or prior to acceptance. The **Editorial Office** and **Ethics Officer** are responsible for reviewing this information and addressing any concerns in accordance with COPE guidelines.

1.1 Research Ethics

- **Research Involving Human Subjects**

- **Institutional Review Board Statement**

When reporting on research that involves subjects, material, tissues, or data of humans, authors must declare that the investigations were carried out following the rules of the *Declaration of Helsinki of 1975*, which was revised in 2013. According to point 23 of this declaration, approval from the local **Institutional Review Board (IRB)** or another appropriate ethics committee must be obtained before undertaking the research to confirm that the study meets national and international guidelines. As a minimum, a statement including the project identification code, date of approval, and name of the ethics committee or institutional review board must be stated in the “**Institutional Review Board Statement**” in the **Back Matter** of the manuscript.

Example of an Institutional Review Board Statement: “The study was conducted in accordance with the Declaration of Helsinki, and the protocol was approved by the Ethics Committee of XXX (Project identification code) on [date of approval].”

For non-interventional studies (e.g. surveys, questionnaires, social media research), all participants must be fully informed whether their anonymity is assured, why the research is being conducted, how their data will be used, and if there are any risks involved in participating. As with all research involving humans, ethical approval from an appropriate ethics committee must be obtained prior to conducting the study. If ethical approval is not required, authors must either provide an exemption from the ethics committee or cite the local or national legislation that indicates ethics approval is not required for this type of study. When a study has been granted the exemption, the name of the ethics committee that provided this should be stated in the ‘Institutional Review Board Statement’ Section with a full explanation for the rejection of ethical approval.

- **Informed Consent Statement**

Manuscripts reporting studies involving subjects, material, tissues, or data of humans must include a **Statement of Informed Consent for Participation**. Verbal informed consent to participate in a study can be acceptable under some circumstances (such as in ethnographic studies). The authors must explain the rationale for using this kind of consent in the **Back**

Matter of the manuscript. For verbal informed consent, a copy of the script used must be provided during the submission stage.

For all manuscripts that include identifying patients/participants information (personal details, images, or videos related to a person), the written **Informed Consent for Publication** of these details must be obtained from patients/participants (or their relatives/guardians) before submitting to *GCEJ*. A blank version of the form used to obtain permission (without the patient/participant name or signature) should be provided upon submission. You may refer to our ***GCEJ-Patient Consent Form*** and provide an appropriate form after consulting with your affiliated institution.

To publish in *GCEJ*, a consent, permission, or release form should include unlimited permission for publication in all formats (including print, electronic, and online), in sublicensed and reprinted versions (including translations and derived works), and in other works and products under open access license. To respect patients'/participants' and any other individuals' privacy, please do not send signed forms.

Private information identifying participants need not be included unless the identifiable materials are of relevance to the research (e.g., photographs of participants' faces that show a particular symptom). Patients'/participants' initials or other personal identifiers must not appear in any images. Patient/participant details must be anonymized as much as possible, e.g., do not mention specific age, ethnicity, or occupation where they are not relevant to the conclusions. Steps necessary to protect privacy may include de-identifying data, adding noise, or blocking portions of the database. Editors reserve the right to reject any submission that does not meet these requirements.

The **Editorial Office** reserves the right to request further documentation when necessary. The **Editorial Office** will scrutinize the submitted manuscript, and upon request, documentary evidence (***Signed Consent Forms*** and any related discussion documents from the ethics board) must be provided.

Example of an Informed Consent Statement: “Informed consent for participation was obtained from all subjects involved in the study.” OR “Informed consent for participation is not required as per local legislation [provide local legislation].” OR “Verbal informed consent was obtained from the participants. Verbal consent was obtained rather than written because [state the reason]”, OR “Informed consent for publication was obtained from all identifiable human participants.”

- **Requirements for Studies on Vulnerable Groups**

GCEJ fully supports international ethical standards and strictly follows the guidance of COPE regarding research involving vulnerable groups and individuals. Authors must ensure that such research is conducted in accordance with the highest ethical principles, including but not limited to:

- The WMA Declaration of Helsinki–Ethical Principles for Medical Research Involving Human Subjects (last affirmed July 2018)
- The Belmont Report from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

➤ The *Guidelines of the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), UK*

These standards emphasize the necessity of **enhanced protections** for vulnerable populations, which may include—but are not limited to—children, persons with cognitive impairments, economically or educationally disadvantaged individuals, and patients with rare or stigmatized conditions. Protections must be applied by all parties involved in the research and publication process, including authors, funders, research ethics boards, editors, reviewers, and publishers.

Manuscript Requirements:

- If a study involves vulnerable groups, **the manuscript will undergo an additional ethical review** by the **Editorial Office**.
- Authors must, **upon request**, provide documentary evidence of ethical compliance. This includes:
 - Approval letters from an institutional review board (IRB) or ethics committee
 - **Blank consent forms** and other related materials (e.g., information sheets or debriefing documents)
 - Any communications or approvals from funding agencies, where relevant
- Authors must also clearly state **how informed consent was obtained**, and what steps were taken to minimize harm and protect the rights of participants.

Justification for Group Identification:

When describing participants using characteristics such as **race, ethnicity, gender, disability, disease status, or socioeconomic background**, authors must **clearly justify** the need for such categorization in the manuscript. The rationale must be scientifically relevant and ethically defensible, in order to prevent stigma or misuse of sensitive descriptors.

GCEJ reserves the right to **reject or request revision** of any manuscript that fails to meet the above requirements or raises concerns regarding the ethical treatment of vulnerable populations.

- **Clinical Trials Registration**
 - **Registration**

GCEJ follows the *International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) Guidelines*, which require and recommend registration of clinical trials in a public trials registry at or before the time of first patient enrollment as a condition of consideration for publication.

Purely observational studies do not require registration. A clinical trial not only refers to studies that take place in a hospital or involve pharmaceuticals, but also refers to all studies that involve participant randomization and group classification in the context of the intervention under assessment.

Authors are strongly encouraged to pre-register clinical trials with an international clinical

trials register and cite a reference to the registration in the **Methods** section. Suitable databases include clinicaltrials.gov, [the EU Clinical Trials Register](http://www.clinicaltrialsregister.eu), and those listed by the World Health Organization [International Clinical Trials Registry Platform](http://www.who.int/trialsregister).

Approval to conduct a study from an independent local, regional, or national review body is not equivalent to prospective clinical trial registration. *GCEJ* reserves the right to decline any paper without trial registration for further peer review. However, if the study protocol has been published before the enrolment, the registration can be waived with the correct citation of the published protocol.

- **CONSORT Statement**

GCEJ requires a completed CONSORT 2010 [Checklist](#) and [Flow Diagram](#) as a condition of submission when reporting the results of a randomized trial. Templates for these can be found here or on the [CONSORT website](#), which also describes several CONSORT checklist extensions for different designs and types of data beyond two-group parallel trials. At a minimum, your manuscript should report the content addressed by each item of the checklist.

- **Dual Use Research of Concern**

GCEJ follows the practical framework defined in [Guidance for Editors: Research, Audit and Service Evaluations](#) and introduced by the **Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE)**. Research that could pose a significant threat, with broad potential consequences to public health or national security, should be clearly indicated in the manuscript, and potential dual-use research of concern should be explained in the cover letter upon submission. Potential areas of concern include, but are not limited to biosecurity, nuclear and chemical threats, and research with a military purpose or application, etc. For these manuscripts to be considered for peer review, the benefits to the general public or public health must outweigh the risks. The authors have a responsibility to comply with relevant national and international laws.

1.2 Borders and Territories

Potential disputes over borders and territories may have particular relevance for authors in describing their research or in an author's or editor's correspondence address, and should be respected. Content decisions are an editorial matter, and where there is a potential or perceived dispute or complaint, the editorial team will attempt to find a resolution that satisfies the parties involved.

GCEJ stays neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.

1.3 Publication Ethics Statement

The editors of *GCEJ* enforce a rigorous peer review process together with strict ethical policies and standards to ensure high-quality scientific works in the field of scholarly publication. Unfortunately, cases of plagiarism, data falsification, image manipulation, inappropriate authorship credit, etc., do arise. Thus, we strictly follow [the general approach to publication ethics announced by COPE](#). The editors of *GCEJ* take such publishing ethics issues very seriously and are trained to proceed in such cases with a zero-tolerance policy.

Authors wishing to publish their papers in *GCEJ* must abide by the following:

- Any facts that might be perceived as possible conflicts of interest of the author(s) must be disclosed in the paper before submission;
- Authors should accurately present their research findings and include an objective discussion of the significance of their findings;
- Data and methods used in the research need to be presented in sufficient detail in the paper so that other researchers can replicate the work;
- Raw data should preferably be publicly deposited by the authors before submission of their manuscript. Authors need to at least have the raw data readily available for presentation to the referees and the editors of the journal if requested. Authors need to ensure appropriate measures are taken so that raw data is retained in full for a reasonable time after publication;
- Submitting the same manuscript to more than one journal simultaneously is considered violating the basic ethics of the author, and will not be acceptable;
- The journal accepts exact translations of previously published work. All submissions of translations must conform with our *Policies on Translations* (on page 6 of the pdf document);
- If errors and inaccuracies are found by the authors after the publication of their paper, they should communicate with the editors of *GCEJ*, so that appropriate actions can be taken. Please refer to our policy regarding *Updating Published Papers* (on page 8 of the pdf document);
- Your manuscript should not contain any information that has already been published. If you include already published figures or images, please obtain the necessary permission from the copyright holder to publish under the CC-BY license. For further information, see the *Copyrights* (on page 11 of the pdf document).
- **Plagiarism, data fabrication, and image manipulation are never tolerated.**
 - **Plagiarism is not acceptable** in submissions of *GCEJ*.
 - Plagiarism includes copying text, ideas, images, or data from another source, even from your own publications, without giving any credit to the original source.
 - Reuse of text that is copied from another source must be between quotes and the original source must be cited. If a study's design or the manuscript's structure or language has been inspired by previous works, these works must be explicitly cited.
 - All submissions are checked for plagiarism. If plagiarism is detected during the peer review process, the manuscript may be rejected. If plagiarism is detected after publication, an investigation will take place, and action taken in accordance with our policies.

- **Image files must not be manipulated or adjusted in any way** that could lead to misinterpretation of the information provided by the original image.
- Irregular manipulation includes: 1) introduction, enhancement, moving, or removing features from the original image; 2) grouping of images that should obviously be presented separately (e.g., from different parts of the same gel, or different gels); or 3) modifying the contrast, brightness or color balance to obscure, eliminate or enhance some information.
- If irregular image manipulation is identified and confirmed during the peer review process, we may reject the manuscript. If irregular image manipulation is identified and confirmed after publication, we may correct or retract the paper.

Our in-house editors will investigate any allegations of publication misconduct and may contact the authors' institutions or funders if necessary. If evidence of misconduct is found, appropriate action will be taken to correct or retract the publication. Authors are expected to comply with the best ethical publication practices when publishing with *GCEJ*.

In cases where serious ethical concerns arise—such as plagiarism, data fabrication, image manipulation, or duplicate submission—*GCEJ* may contact the authors' affiliated institutions, funding bodies, or other journals involved to initiate or assist with an appropriate investigation. These communications will follow COPE guidelines, maintain confidentiality where appropriate, and ensure that due process is observed. We aim to uphold the integrity of the scientific record and prevent further ethical violations across the publication landscape.

1.4 Translations

GCEJ can consider high-quality content that has been previously published in different languages for publication, provided that the original study is appropriately referenced in the **Acknowledgments** section.

If you are planning to submit a translated version to *GCEJ*, please pay attention to the following issues:

1. Authors should clearly declare that their paper is a translated version in the cover letter at submission;
2. All authors from the original publication must appear on the submitted manuscript;
3. Appropriate permission must be sought and granted from the previous publisher, copyright holders, and/or authors of the original article before submitting the translated manuscript;
4. Relevant documentation relating to these permissions must be uploaded in the **Supplementary Materials** section during submission;
5. The journal editor must be informed about the publishing history of the previously published content;
6. The original article must be referenced in the **Acknowledgments** section.

You can consider the following announcement: “**This is a translation/reprint of (insert title here) originally published in (insert language) by (insert publisher) (insert journal name, year, issue/volume number, page numbers). This translation was prepared by (insert name) with support from (insert name of funding source, if any). Permission was granted by (insert publisher, copyright holder, and/or author name).**”

Please note that any translated articles that do not follow the above guidelines are unacceptable. Those passing the pre-check will be strictly peer-reviewed following our editorial process.

1.5 Citation Policy

Authors should ensure that where the material is taken from (including their own published papers). The source should be clearly cited, and authors should state where appropriate permission has been obtained.

Regarding the citation policy, please pay attention to the following issues:

1. Authors should not engage in excessive self-citation of their own work;
2. Authors should not copy references from other publications if they have not read the cited work;
3. Authors should not preferentially cite their own or their friends’, peers’, or institution’s publications;
4. Authors should not cite advertisements or advertorial material.

In accordance with COPE guidelines, we expect that “original wording taken directly from publications by other researchers should appear in quotation marks with the appropriate citations.” This condition also applies to an author’s own work. COPE has produced a discussion document on *Citation Manipulation* with recommendations for best practices, and *GCEJ* has produced its own policy according to it (see the next sub-section)

1.6 Citation Manipulation Policy

We uphold the integrity of the scholarly record and strictly prohibit any form of citation manipulation. Citation practices should serve only to support the scholarly content of the manuscript and must not be influenced by any self-promotional or impact-enhancing motives.

- **Definition of Citation Manipulation**

Citation manipulation includes, but is not limited to:

- **Author self-citation** that is excessive and does not contribute meaningfully to the article.
- **Journal self-citation**, where authors are encouraged or required to cite articles from the journal solely to increase the journal’s citation metrics.
- **Citation stacking**, involving coordinated excessive cross-citation between journals or authors to artificially boost citation counts.

- **Honorary citations**, referencing prominent individuals (e.g., editors, reviewers) without direct scholarly relevance.
- **Coercive citation**, where editors, reviewers, or journal policies condition publication on the addition of irrelevant citations.
- **Editorial and Reviewer Conduct**
 - Editors and reviewers **must not request citations** to their own work or the journal's content unless **genuinely relevant** to the manuscript's topic.
 - All citation suggestions must be accompanied by a **justification of scholarly relevance**.
 - Coercive or unjustified citation requests may result in the **removal of editors/reviewers** from their roles and may be reported to institutional authorities or indexing agencies.
- **Author Responsibility**
 - Authors are expected to use references **ethically and responsibly**.
 - Excessive self-citation or citation of non-relevant works, whether to one's own publications or to specific journals, is discouraged and may be investigated.
 - If citation manipulation is suspected, the journal may request **revisions, remove references**, or reject the manuscript.
- **Detection and Response**
 - We monitor citation trends using bibliometric tools and may investigate patterns of suspicious citation activity.
 - Proven cases of citation manipulation may result in:
 - **Manuscript rejection or retraction** (if already published),
 - Notification to the **author's institution** or the **editor's employer**,
 - Exclusion of the journal or individuals from editorial activities,
 - Reporting to **indexing databases**.
- **Transparency and Education**
 - We support transparency in citation practices and encourage all stakeholders—authors, reviewers, editors—to engage in proper citation ethics.
 - Educational materials and clear guidelines are available at **COPE Guidance** to promote good practices and avoid unintentional citation bias.

1.7 Reviewer Suggestions

During the submission process, we suggest that authors recommend 3–5 potential reviewers with the appropriate expertise to review the manuscript. Please provide detailed contact

information (affiliation, homepage, phone, Email address) to our editors, but please note that editors have the right to check their qualifications and won't necessarily approach them. The proposed reviewers should neither be current collaborators of the co-authors nor have published with any of the co-authors of the manuscript in the last year, meanwhile, they should come from different institutions with the authors.

1.8 Extensive English Editing

It is the authors' responsibility to submit their work in correct English and an academic narrating style. In order to avoid **Reject Decisions** proposed by reviewers owing to language issues, we suggest that authors have their work reviewed by an experienced English-speaking colleague or use a paid language-editing service before submitting their papers to us. If extensive editing is required, the manuscript will be returned to the authors for English editing, which may delay the peer review.

1.9 Preprints and Conference Papers

GCEJ accepts submissions that have previously been made available as preprints, provided that they have not undergone peer review.

Expanded high-quality conference papers can also be considered as articles if they fulfill the following requirements: (1) the paper should be expanded to the size of a regular paper which is suitable to be published in a scientific journal; (2) the conference paper should be cited and noted on the first page of the paper; (3) if the authors do not hold the copyright of the published conference paper, authors should seek the appropriate permission from the copyright holder; (4) authors should disclose the source of this conference paper in the cover letter and include a statement on what has been changed compared to the original conference paper.

1.10 Authorship

GCEJ follows the *International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) Guidelines* which state that, in order to qualify for authorship of a manuscript, the following criteria should be observed:

1. Substantial contributions to the conception or design of the work; or the acquisition, analysis, or interpretation of data for the work;
2. Drafting the work or reviewing it critically for important intellectual content;
3. Final approval of the version to be published;
4. 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;
5. **Please note that we suggest every manuscript have only one Corresponding Author**, however, if authors have a special request, please explain the reason in the cover letter when submitting, or contact the **Editorial Office** of *GCEJ*.

Those who contributed to the work but do not qualify for authorship should be listed in the

Acknowledgments. For more detailed guidance on authorship, please refer to the *International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE)*.

Any change to the author list should be approved by all authors including any who have been removed from the list. The corresponding author should act as a point of contact between editors and the other authors and should keep co-authors informed and involve them in major decisions about the publication. We reserve the right to request confirmation that all authors meet the authorship conditions.

GCEJ follows the guidelines set by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) for *managing authorship disputes*. In cases where authorship conflicts arise—such as disputes over author order, inclusion or exclusion of individuals as authors, or disagreements over the attribution of contributions—the **Editorial Office** will not act as an arbitrator.

Instead, the following steps will be taken:

1. **Initial Communication:** The **Editorial Office** will request all involved parties to provide a written explanation of their positions, including documentation or prior agreements (e.g., emails, contribution records, authorship declarations).
2. **Referral to Institutions:** If the dispute cannot be resolved by mutual agreement, the matter will be referred to the relevant institutions (such as the affiliated universities or research organizations) for investigation and resolution. The journal will await the outcome of such investigations before proceeding.
3. **Manuscript Status:** During an ongoing dispute, the journal may suspend the review or publication process. Manuscripts under dispute will not be considered for publication until the matter is fully resolved.
4. **Post-publication Disputes:** If a dispute arises after publication, corrections (e.g., corrigenda) or retractions may be issued based on the outcome of the institutional investigation or the recommendation of COPE.

Authors are therefore advised to discuss and agree upon authorship order and contributions prior to submission, and to provide a clear **Author Contributions Statement** as part of the submission process.

1.11 Updating Published Papers

GCEJ recognizes our responsibility to correct scientifically relevant errors or ethical issues that have been brought to our attention. To offer transparency regarding any changes for our authors and readers, we have the following standardized criteria in place for updates to any of our published papers.

- **Direct Update**

It refers to the updates made directly to the publication and can be completed in certain situations if deemed by the **Editorial Office** to be a reasonable request. Once approved, the paper will be updated and re-published on our website. Following this, all relevant indexing databases will be notified to ensure that the database versions have also been revised.

- **Corrections**

There are two types of *Corrections*:

- *Minor corrections* address issues that do not impact the scientific content of an article but require an updated version to be uploaded to the version of the record. If this update is approved, it will be accompanied by the addition of a footnote on the PDF version and the addition of a “correction statement” located in the **Back Matter** of the website version. A minor correction will not be accompanied by a separate published correction notice.
- *Major corrections* aim to address issues and errors that could affect the scientific interpretation of an article. Once approved, the paper will be updated and re-published on our website, along with the publication of a *Correction*. This notice is a separate publication that links to the updated paper but is published in the most current issue of the journal. The *Correction* notifies all readers that a significant change has occurred to the paper and that the revised version is now available on the website.

Following both the *Minor and Major Corrections*, all relevant indexing databases will be notified to ensure that the database versions have also been revised.

- **Author Name Change Policy**

Some authors might wish to change their names after the publication of their papers. In such cases, *GCEJ* will update and republish the article and re-deliver the updated metadata to the appropriate indexing databases (please note that all updates are dependent upon the policies of the databases). Our teams are aware that name changes can be sensitive and/or private, for a variety of reasons that may include alignment with gender identity, marriage, divorce, or religious conversion. Therefore, to protect the author's identity, a *Correction* will not be published and co-authors will not be notified. Authors should contact the journal's **Editorial Office** with their name change request.

- **Retractions**

Sometimes a paper needs to be retracted from the body of research literature. This could be due to inadvertent errors made during the research process, gross ethical breaches, fabrication of data, large amounts of plagiarism, or other reasons. Such articles threaten the integrity of scientific records and need to be retracted.

GCEJ follows the recommendations of the *Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) For Retraction*.

If a *Retraction* is published, the original publication is amended with a “RETRACTED” watermark, but will still be available on the journal's website for future reference. However, retracted articles should not be cited and used for further research, as they cannot be relied upon. *Retractions* are published using the same authorship and affiliation as the paper being retracted, so that the notice and the original retracted paper can be properly found by readers within indexing databases. The *Retraction* notice will also be published in the current Issue of the journal. *Partial Retractions* might be published in cases where results are only partially

wrong.

A paper will only be completely removed from *GCEJ*'s website and relevant indexing databases in very exceptional circumstances, such as:

- (1) The removal has been requested by an order from a court or government authority;
- (2) The content poses a threat to personal privacy or the legal rights of other parties, which cannot be adequately addressed through editorial notices or updates;
- (3) The research was conducted or published unlawfully, and its ongoing presence may lead to potential legal issues or privacy concerns;
- (4) Although marked as retracted, the content poses risks to the general public.

Under these situations, the retraction notice explains why the entire paper has been removed, and only the metadata (title and authors) is kept. For detailed information, please refer to [Section 6.3 Retraction Policy in GCEJ's Editorial Process](#).

- **Expression of Concern**

For complex, inconclusive, or prolonged situations, an *Expression of Concern* may be published. If investigations into alleged or suspected research misconduct have not yet been completed or prove to be inconclusive, our in-house editor may wish to publish an *Expression of Concern*, detailing the points of concern and what actions, if any, are in progress.

- **Comments and Replies**

If readers have concerns about the reported results or methods used in a specific paper, they should approach our **Editorial Office** and if deemed reasonable, a *Comment* may be submitted for potential publication. *Comments* are short letters to the editors from readers who would like to publicly question a specific paper.

Once a *Comment* is approved for further peer review, the **Editorial Office** will then approach the authors of the paper in question and invite them to prepare a *Reply* to this *Comment*. The *Reply* allows the authors to publicly respond to the concerns pointed out by the reader. If the reader's complaints are substantiated, and the authors are not able to adequately respond to the concerns, a *Correction* of the original paper may be published, or the paper can be retracted entirely. If authors do not provide a response by the deadline provided, or decide not to respond, the *Comment* may be published alongside a note that explains the absence of the *Reply*.

Both *Comments* and *Replies* will be reviewed to ensure that:

- the *Comment* addresses significant aspects of the original paper without becoming essentially a new paper;
- the *Reply* responds directly to any concerns, without becoming evasive;
- the tone of both publications is appropriate for a scientific journal.

While *Comments* can criticize the work, they should not criticize the work's authors.

Comments should not reiterate previously published disagreements. No more than one round of *Comment* and *Reply* will be facilitated where that discussion is from the same reader/s. Please note that *GCEJ* only accepts the submission of *Comments* on articles that were published by us.

1.12 Copyrights and Licensing

For all papers published by *GCEJ*, the copyright is retained by the authors. The *Journal* allows authors to retain the copyright of their papers without restrictions. However, the *Journal* reserves the right to reprint all or portions of the paper and to post all or part of the article paper. The *Journal* reserves the right to edit manuscripts as required to publish. Authors are responsible for obtaining any clearances as appropriate. Unless stated otherwise, all papers are licensed under an open access [Creative Commons CC BY 4.0](#) license, which means that any re-user can freely **share—copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format for any purpose, even commercially, and adapt—remix, transform, and build upon the material for any purpose, even commercially**. In addition, the authors must give appropriate credit, provide a link to the license, and indicate if changes were made.

In exceptional circumstances, papers may be licensed differently. If you have a specific condition (such as one linked to funding) that does not allow this license, please mention this to our **Editorial Office** at submission. Exceptions will be granted at the discretion of the *Editor-in-Chief*. In case of any dispute regarding copyright ownership or licensing, *GCEJ* will follow COPE guidelines and may request supporting documentation or legal proof of ownership prior to publication.

By submitting the manuscript to *GCEJ*, the corresponding author affirms that all co-authors have read and agreed to the journal's copyright and licensing policies.

Author(s) must obtain all parties' consent (all authors have participated in the paper and agreed to submit it for publication) and submit the acceptance of the Copyright Agreement with their paper. Written permission must be obtained by the author for material that has been published in copyrighted material; which includes tables, figures, and quoted text that exceeds 150 words. A copy of all permissions must accompany the manuscript when published in copyrighted material. The author(s) hereby represents and warrants that the paper is original and that he/she is the author of the paper, except for material that is clearly identified as to its original source, with permission notices from the copyright owners where required. Author(s) must clearly indicate that approval for publication has been received in cases of institutional ownership.

All listed authors must meet authorship criteria and agree to be accountable for all aspects of the work. Contributors who do not meet authorship criteria should be acknowledged appropriately.

- **Reproducing Published Material from other Publishers**

It is absolutely essential that authors obtain permission to reproduce any published material (figures, schemes, tables, or any extract of a text) which does not fall into the public domain, or for which they do not hold the copyright. Permission should be requested by the authors from the copyright holder (usually the Publisher, please refer to the imprint of the individual

publications to identify the copyright holder).

Permission **is required** for:

1. Your own papers published by other Publishers and for which you did not retain copyright;
2. Substantial extracts from anyone's works or a series of works;
3. Use of Tables, Graphs, Charts, Schemes, and Artworks if they are unaltered or slightly modified;
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Permission **is not required** for:

1. Reconstruction of your own table with data already published elsewhere. Please notice that in this case, you must cite the source of the data in the form of either "Data from..." or "Adapted from...";
2. Reasonably short quotes are considered fair use and therefore do not require permission;
3. Graphs, Charts, Schemes, and Artworks that are completely redrawn by the authors and significantly changed beyond recognition do not require permission.

- **Obtaining Permission**

In order to avoid unnecessary delays in the publication process, you should start obtaining permissions as early as possible. Please note that *GCEJ* cannot publish material from other publications without permission. If you have any questions about the copyright, please ask for permission.

The copyright holder may give you instructions on the form of acknowledgment to be followed; otherwise, follow the style: "Reproduced with permission from [author], [book/journal title]; published by [publisher], [year]." at the end of the caption of the Table, Figure or Scheme.

1.13 Conflicts of Interest

According to **The International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE)**, "Authors should avoid entering into agreements with study sponsors, both for-profit and non-profit, that interfere with authors' access to all of the study's data or that interfere with their ability to analyze and interpret the data and to prepare and publish manuscripts independently when and where they choose." We strictly follow the *guidance of COPE on handling conflicts of interest*, and always ensure the best practices for handling competing interests.

All authors must disclose all relationships or interests that could inappropriately influence or bias their work. Examples of potential conflicts of interest include but are not limited to financial interests (such as membership, employment, consultancies, stocks/shares ownership, honoraria, grants or other funding, paid expert testimonies, and patent-licensing arrangements)

and non-financial interests (such as personal or professional relationships, affiliations, personal beliefs).

Authors can disclose potential conflicts of interest via the online submission system during the submission process. Declarations regarding conflicts of interest can also be collected via the ***GCEJ Disclosure Form***. The corresponding author must include a summary statement in the manuscript in a separate section “**Conflicts of Interest**” placed just before the reference list. The statement should reflect all the collected potential conflicts of interest disclosures in the form.

See below for examples of disclosures:

Conflicts of Interest: Author A has received research grants from Company A. Author B has received a speaker honorarium from Company X and owns stocks in Company Y. Author C has been involved as a consultant and expert witness in Company Z. Author D is the inventor of patent X.

If no conflicts exist, the authors should state:

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

1.14 Data Availability and Research Transparency Policy

In alignment with COPE’s best practices and international data transparency standards, ***GCEJ*** requires authors to adhere to the following policies:

- **Data Sharing and Availability Statement**

Authors are **encouraged to share the data** underlying their findings to promote transparency, reproducibility, and further research. For all submissions, a **Data Availability Statement** must be included, specifying:

- Whether and where the data supporting the findings are available (e.g., in a public repository or available upon request).
- Any justified restrictions on data access (e.g., patient confidentiality, third-party agreements, national security).

Exceptions to data sharing may be granted in cases where ethical, legal, or privacy concerns prohibit open access. Authors must clearly explain such restrictions in the data availability statement.

- **Data Citation**

All datasets that have been used in the research and are publicly available **must be cited** in the reference list using appropriate formats. Citations should include authors, year, title, repository, version (if applicable), and DOI or other permanent identifiers.

- **Data Repositories and Anonymisation**

Where applicable, authors are encouraged to deposit their **anonymised raw data** (e.g., de-identified patient data, code, algorithms, or supplementary material) in recognized open-access repositories.

Authors must ensure that any personal or confidential data are properly anonymised, and sharing complies with local regulations and institutional policies.

- **Clinical Trials and Reporting Standards**

For clinical or interventional studies, **registration in a public trials registry** (e.g., ClinicalTrials.gov or WHO ICTRP) is **mandatory** prior to patient enrollment. The registration number and registry name must be stated in the manuscript.

Authors are also required to **follow relevant reporting guidelines** such as CONSORT, PRISMA, STROBE, or CARE, depending on the manuscript type. The corresponding **reporting checklist** must be submitted as a supplementary file at the time of submission.

1.15 Plagiarism Policy

GCEJ strictly adheres to ethical publishing practices and does not tolerate any form of plagiarism. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to the unacknowledged use or reproduction of others' **text, ideas, images, data, or creative works** (e.g., figures, tables, charts, musical compositions, choreography). The journal follows *COPE guidelines* to identify and manage plagiarism.

- **Types of Plagiarism**

Plagiarism can occur in various forms. Editors will assess suspected cases based on the following factors:

- **Extent** of copied content (e.g., a few sentences vs. full paragraphs or entire papers)
- **Originality** of the copied content (e.g., novel ideas or standard background information)
- **Context and position** of the duplicated content within the article
- **Referencing or attribution** (e.g., whether sources are cited, improperly cited, or omitted)
- **Intent** (deliberate vs. inadvertent)
- **Author seniority and experience**
- **Language** (e.g., cross-language plagiarism via translation)

- **Detection and Screening**

All manuscripts submitted to *GCEJ* are subject to plagiarism screening using iThenticate. However, automated similarity reports are used as a **preliminary tool** and require editorial interpretation.

- **Assessing Acceptable Levels of Duplication or Overlap**

GCEJ recognizes that not all forms of textual or content overlap constitute academic misconduct. Therefore, all allegations or detections of duplication will be reviewed on a **case-by-case basis**, considering context, intent, and discipline-specific norms. The following guidelines apply:

1. No Fixed Similarity Threshold

Following *the suggestion of COPE on Determining acceptable levels of plagiarism/duplication*, *GCEJ* does **not** rely on a fixed percentage from plagiarism detection software to determine misconduct. Instead, the editorial team evaluates:

- The **extent and distribution** of the duplicated content
- The **originality** of the copied sections
- Whether **key ideas, results, or discussions** are duplicated
- Whether **sources were properly cited or not**

For example:

- Short, scattered phrases of overlap in the methodology may be acceptable.
- Repeated use of stock phrasing in clinical/technical reports may be tolerated, especially in standardized reporting.
- Large-scale duplication across paragraphs, data interpretation, or discussions will be investigated more seriously.

2. Disciplinary and Article-Type Considerations

- Certain disciplines, especially in **engineering, clinical practice, or systematic reviews**, may require formulaic language or standard figure formats. Such stylistic similarities are not considered plagiarism unless originality or attribution is compromised.
- For **student theses/dissertations**, duplication of material from the author's own institutional thesis may be acceptable, depending on:
 - The **journal's policy on prior publication**
 - The **type of thesis (e.g., master's vs. doctoral)**
 - The **institution's public repository or copyright rules**

Authors must **declare any thesis-based overlap** upon submission and, if needed, provide the relevant repository link or declaration.

3. Copyright Considerations

If the submitted work includes content adapted from a thesis or institutional report:

- Authors must ensure they **hold the copyright** or have necessary permissions.
- If the work is part of a broader research project, **intellectual property ownership** must be clarified (e.g., whether it belongs to the student, supervisor, or institution).
- When in doubt, authors are encouraged to contact the **Editorial Office** for clarification before submission.

- **Text Recycling and Self-Plagiarism Policy**

GCEJ follows COPE's definition of text recycling (also known as **self-plagiarism**) as:

“Reusing one’s own previous writing without being transparent about this or appropriately referencing/quoting from the original.”

Recycled content includes not only **prose**, but also **visuals, tables, figures, equations**, and other content where:

- The reused material is **identical or substantially similar** to the original,
- It is not marked as a **quotation or paraphrased with attribution**, and
- **At least one of the authors** is the same as in the previous publication.

Acceptable vs. Unacceptable Reuse

- Reuse of previously published material without disclosure or proper citation is considered **unethical** and may result in editorial actions.
- Some **text recycling in Methods sections** (e.g., standard protocols) may be acceptable, but it must still be **disclosed and cited** appropriately.
- **Recycling in Results, Discussion, or Conclusions** sections is generally **not acceptable** unless the new work clearly adds significant original findings.

Editorial Evaluation and Actions

Cases of potential self-plagiarism are assessed **case-by-case**, considering:

- The **amount and location** of the recycled content,
- The **transparency** of disclosure by the author,
- The **novelty and originality** of the new work,
- Whether **fair use** or **prior consent** applies in line with copyright.

Possible editorial responses include:

- **Request for revision** and proper citation,
- **Publication of a correction** or editorial note if already published,
- **Rejection or retraction** in severe or repeated cases,
- **Referral to the author’s institution**, when applicable.

An **educational approach** may be taken with early-career authors or minor first-time infractions. However, serious or repeated self-plagiarism will trigger **formal investigation**.

Author Requirements:

- All authors must **declare the originality** of their submission upon submission.
- Authors must disclose and cite any **overlapping content** from previously published, submitted, or in-preparation works, and provide **copies or links** to such work.

- If a manuscript is derived from a **thesis, conference abstract, or preprint**, this must be stated clearly in the cover letter and manuscript with full citation and explanation of new contributions.

- **Editorial Responses to Plagiarism**

Depending on the severity and context of the plagiarism, the editorial team may take one or more of the following actions:

Type of Plagiarism	Editorial Action
Minor similarity (e.g., common phrases or background text, properly cited but poorly paraphrased);	Request for revision; educational guidance offered
Moderate plagiarism (e.g., unattributed copying of parts of the introduction/discussion; improper referencing)	Request for revision, and stop peer review until the issue is solved properly
Major plagiarism (e.g., duplication of significant portions of text, data, or images; copying entire articles or translated publications)	Immediate rejection or retraction (if published); formal notification to authors' institution; possible ban from future submission

- In **minor cases**, where only a few sentences are involved and the overall data remain valid, editors may contact the author for correction or revision.
- In **major cases**, especially where entire sections or full manuscripts are plagiarized, **GCEJ** will follow the COPE retraction guidelines and **notify the authors' institutions or funders**.

- **Author Responsibility**

Authors are expected to ensure the originality of their submissions. All submissions must be accompanied by a signed **Author Declaration Form or Cover Letter**, confirming that the manuscript is original and has not been plagiarized from any source.

- **Appeals**

Authors who disagree with a plagiarism decision may appeal by submitting a point-by-point response, which will be reviewed by the **Editor-in-Chief**.

- **Handling Plagiarism in a Submitted Manuscript**

GCEJ is committed to upholding the highest standards of research integrity. If a **reviewer or editor suspects plagiarism** in a submitted manuscript, the following procedure will be followed, in alignment with **COPE's recommended flowcharts**.

Step-by-Step Procedure

1. **Request Evidence from Reviewer**

- The **Editorial Office** will **request full documentary evidence** from the reviewer or whistleblower, including the source of the allegedly plagiarized material and specific duplicated passages.
- Editors will independently verify the plagiarism using detection software and manual comparison.

2. Preliminary Assessment

- The editorial team will **assess the extent and nature** of the similarity, including whether the content is:
 - Directly copied (verbatim)
 - Poorly paraphrased without attribution
 - Derived from the author's own previously published work (potential duplicate/redundant publication)

3. Contacting the Author

- If plagiarism is confirmed or strongly suspected, the corresponding author will be contacted with:
 - A **detailed explanation** of the concern
 - The **evidence of plagiarism**
 - A request for a **formal response** or clarification within a defined period (usually within 14 days)

4. Editorial Decision

- Based on the response, the **Editorial Office** will decide whether:
 - The explanation is satisfactory and no further action is needed
 - **Minor revision** is warranted (e.g., proper citation or rephrasing)
 - **Rejection** of the manuscript is necessary due to misconduct

5. Referral to Author's Institution

- If the plagiarism is **substantial or deliberate**, or the author provides no adequate explanation, the journal may:
 - Reject the manuscript
 - Notify the **author's institution, employer, or funder** with documentation
 - Optionally **ban the author(s)** from future submissions for a defined period

6. Internal Documentation

- All cases and communications will be documented confidentially and

securely by the **Editorial Office**, regardless of outcome.

7. If Self-Plagiarism Is Involved

- If the content appears copied from the author's own previously published work, the case will be reviewed under the **Redundant or Duplicate Publication Policy** and handled accordingly.

• Handling Plagiarism in a Published Article

GCEJ takes all allegations of plagiarism seriously, including those made post-publication. When plagiarism is suspected in a published article, the editorial team will follow a consistent, evidence-based process to investigate and respond, in accordance with *COPE's best practice guidelines*.

Step-by-Step Procedure

1. Receipt of Allegation

- Allegations may be received from **readers, reviewers, editors, or other third parties**, including anonymous whistleblowers.
- The **Editorial Office** will **acknowledge receipt** courteously and **request specific and verifiable evidence** of the alleged plagiarism (e.g., source material, side-by-side comparison).

2. Initial Evaluation

- The editors will assess:
 - The **extent of copied material** (e.g., a few sentences vs. large portions of text or figures)
 - The **originality** and **source** of the material
 - Whether the copying involved **text, data, images, tables, or ideas**
 - Whether the **original source** was appropriately cited

3. Contacting the Authors

- If the concern appears valid, the corresponding author(s) will be contacted and:
 - Informed of the plagiarism allegation
 - Provided with a summary of the evidence
 - Invited to respond in writing within a specified time frame (must reply within 14 days)

4. Editorial Evaluation and Decision

- Upon review of the author's response, the editorial team may decide to:
 - Take **no further action**, if the explanation is satisfactory

- Issue a **correction** (e.g., to add missing citations)
- Issue an **expression of concern**, if further investigation is pending
- Issue a **retraction** if plagiarism is confirmed and the integrity of the work is compromised

5. Notifying Other Parties

- If plagiarism involves **duplicated publication** in another journal, or if copyrighted material is involved, the **editor(s) of the affected journal(s)** will be notified.
- In serious cases, the **author's institution or funding agency** may also be informed.

6. Documentation

- All actions, communications, and outcomes will be recorded and retained confidentially by the **Editorial Office**.
- *GCEJ* will ensure consistency and fairness in its decision-making and apply *COPE's retraction and correction guidelines* when determining next steps.

2. Ethical Policy for Editors and Reviewers

Together with the **Editorial Office**, all individuals involved in the peer-review procedure, comprising *Editor-in-Chief*, *Editorial Board Members*, Guest Editors, and Reviewers, must bear the responsibility of ensuring the integrity of *GCEJ's* *Editorial Process*.

If a reviewer encounters ethical concerns regarding a manuscript under review or post-publication, they should promptly notify the **Editorial Office**. The **Editorial Office** will initiate an investigation following the *GCEJ* Policy and adhering to *COPE guidelines*.

After receiving the submission and during the peer review, the **Editorial Office** will check the following issues:

1. Ethics approval and permissions for research involving human subjects or animals;
2. Plagiarism, duplicate publication, and necessary permission from the copyright holder for the use of previously published figures or images;
3. Clinical Trials Registration, and reference to the registration in the **Methods Section**.

When proposing review or editorial recommendations, especially for the final acceptance decision on a manuscript, Reviewers and Editors should carefully consider:

1. The submission must closely align with the journal's scope;
2. Authors are required to disclose any facts that could be seen as potential conflicts of interest, including those related to their manuscript or study, before submission;
3. Authors must truthfully present their research results and offer an unbiased analysis of the importance of their findings;
4. The paper should provide adequate detail on the data and methodologies utilized in the research to enable other researchers to replicate the study.

2.1 Potential Conflicts of Interest

We adhere to transparency, and individuals engaged in the peer-review process must openly disclose any conflicts of interest when engaging in reviewing, decision-making, and publishing a manuscript. Any affiliations that may influence or be perceived as influencing the impartial evaluation, peer review, and decision-making process must be disclosed.

If a Reviewer or Editor perceives that there is a conflict of interest, even if they believe it will not influence the peer review or decision-making process, they should excuse themselves from the procedure. This action is essential to prevent any perception of a conflict of interest and uphold the integrity of the peer-review process.

2.2 Types of Conflicts of Interest

- **Personal or Cooperative Conflicts**

Reviewers and Editors are advised against participating in the evaluation of manuscripts submitted by authors affiliated with their institution, research or project collaborators, personal friends, or family members. Additionally, they should refrain from engaging in the review or decision-making process for manuscripts submitted by authors who have served as mentors or mentees or have had collaborative or coauthoring relationships within the past two years.

- **Financial or Professional Conflicts**

Financial conflicts refer to any professional or business relationships, financial or commercial interests, or other competing interests that could potentially introduce bias into the review process. Reviewers and Editors should not receive professional or personal benefits, salary, board memberships, funding, or grants from companies with interests in the reported results or any other aspects of the manuscript, nor should they hold any interest in a company whose products are discussed in the article. Additionally, intellectual property

rights such as patents, royalties, and copyrights resulting from their contributions should not create conflicts. Reviewers and Editors must abstain from participating in the review or decision-making process of manuscripts where conflicts of interest that could lead to bias are present.

- **Other Types of Conflicts**

Any other conflicts of interest, whether actual or perceived, that could influence the peer review process or decision-making should be disclosed. Reviewers and Editors are expected to assess the manuscript's merit, originality, and relevance to the journal, following the *GCEJ* editorial guidelines. *GCEJ* is committed to ensuring that discrimination based on race, color, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, religion, nationality, physical ability, or socio-economic status has no place in the review process. Reviewers and Editors must also disclose any personal biases that might impact their evaluation of the manuscript.

In cases of conflicts of interest, alternative Reviewers and/or Editors will be appointed. If an Editor submits a manuscript to the journal, it will be reviewed by other Editors who do not have any conflicts of interest.

2.3 Confidentiality and Anonymity

Reviewers and Editors are required to maintain the confidentiality of the manuscript content, including the Abstract. If a Reviewer wishes to have a student or colleague complete the review on their behalf, they must inform the **Editorial Office**.

GCEJ follows a double-blind peer review process. Reviewers should take care not to disclose their identity to the authors, either through comments or metadata in reports submitted in Microsoft Word or PDF formats.

2.4 Editorial Independence

- **Non-interference in Editorial Decisions**

Editorial independence is paramount, and *GCEJ* will not interfere with editorial decisions. All articles published by *GCEJ* undergo double-blind peer review and are evaluated by our *Editor-in-Chief* or independent *Editorial Boards*. *GCEJ* staff do not participate in decisions regarding manuscript acceptance. When making an editorial decision, the *Editor-in-Chief* will make the decision based only upon:

- The scope and topic of the manuscript;
- Overall scientific quality of the manuscript;
- The suitability of reviewers and their review reports;
- Adequacy of authors' responses and the improvements in their revisions.

In all aspects of its operations, *GCEJ*'s policies are guided by the mission to make science

and clinical engineering research findings as open and accessible as possible, with a focus on speed and broad dissemination.

- **Editors and Editorial Staff as Authors**

Editors and Editorial staff shall not participate in the processing of their own submissions. Manuscripts authored by Editors or Editorial Staff will follow the normal peer review process, assigning at least two independent reviewers. Decisions regarding these submissions will be made by the *Editor-in-Chief* or *Editorial Board Members* who have no conflicts of interest with the author.

2.5 Responding to Anonymous Whistleblowers

The **Editorial Office** recognizes the important role anonymous whistleblowers can play in maintaining the integrity of the scientific record. Concerns raised anonymously—whether by researchers, readers, or third-party observers—will be handled with the same seriousness and due process as signed complaints, provided that sufficient, specific evidence is presented.

2.5.1 Receipt and Initial Assessment

All allegations of **plagiarism, image manipulation, authorship misconduct**, or other forms of publication ethics violations are **acknowledged promptly**, including those submitted anonymously.

The journal evaluates whether the claim includes **clear, specific, and credible evidence**, such as textual overlap, figure duplication, or citations to source material.

Vague or unsupported claims, especially those lacking identifiable articles or evidence, may not be pursued further.

2.5.2 Investigation Procedure

Allegations are reviewed in accordance with COPE guidelines and applicable publisher procedures.

If the concern is found credible, the **Editorial Office** may:

- Contact the corresponding author(s) for clarification;
- Conduct technical analysis (e.g., similarity reports, forensic image review);
- Seek external expert review, if needed;
- Notify the author's institution or ethics board in severe cases.

Where appropriate, **COPE flowcharts** are followed to guide consistent decision-making.

2.5.3 Anonymous Sources and Confidentiality

The identity of the whistleblower, if known, is **kept strictly confidential**, and all communication is handled professionally and respectfully.

Editors **do not disclose** the complainant's identity to the authors or other third parties without explicit permission.

Whistleblowers will not be asked to reveal their identity to have their claim considered.

2.5.4 Communication and Tone

In all correspondence, the **Editorial Office** maintains a **professional and courteous tone**, even in response to aggressive or accusatory messages.

Editors will acknowledge receipt, outline planned next steps, and may choose to limit further engagement if communication becomes unproductive or hostile.

Editors do not engage in personal exchanges and avoid unnecessary discussion once a decision is reached.

2.5.5 Decision and Outcomes

If **evidence supports the claim**, outcomes may include:

- Correction, retraction, or editorial notice;
- Editorial correspondence with the authors or institutions;
- Rejection of submitted work, if relevant.

If **no evidence** of misconduct is found, the matter is documented and closed without further correspondence.

Cases involving **older publications** will still be reviewed if valid ethical concerns arise, regardless of when the article was published or which editor was responsible at the time.

2.5.6 Conference Abstracts and Plagiarism

Allegations of plagiarism involving **conference abstracts** are assessed carefully. In general, journal articles that **appropriately reference** their associated abstracts are **not considered plagiarized**, as the abstract often represents a preliminary version of the work.

3. Policy on the Use of Generative AI and AI-Assisted Technologies

GCEJ recognizes the rapid advancement and integration of generative artificial intelligence (AI) and AI-assisted technologies in academic publishing, particularly within the fields of clinical engineering and biomedical engineering. These technologies may support various aspects of scholarly activity, including scientific writing, image analysis, data processing, and peer review. To maintain transparency, uphold research integrity, and ensure ethical publishing practices, *GCEJ* has established the following policy regarding the appropriate

use of AI tools.

3.1 Authorship and Responsibility

- Generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, Copilot) cannot be listed as authors or co-authors under any circumstances.
- Authorship requires the ability to take full public responsibility for the content, including the accuracy, originality, and integrity of the work. These responsibilities cannot be fulfilled by AI systems.

3.2 Acceptable Use of AI by Authors

- Authors may use AI tools in a **limited, transparent, and responsible manner**, primarily for:
 - Language editing and grammar correction
 - Draft refinement or improving clarity
- All AI-generated or AI-assisted content must be **reviewed, validated, and edited by a human author**, who accepts full responsibility for its accuracy and ethical use.
- Authors must clearly disclose the use of any AI tools in the **Acknowledgments** section. The disclosure must include:
 - Name and version of the tool used
 - Purpose of its use (e.g., grammar editing, summarization, etc.)
 - Description of how and to what extent the AI was used

3.3 Unacceptable Use of AI by Authors

- Authors must not use AI tools to:
 - Generate or fabricate research data, clinical results, or patient-related content
 - Create, alter, or enhance clinical or biomedical images (e.g., CT scans, MRIs, histology figures), unless such use is part of a validated and disclosed research protocol
 - Generate references, citations, or bibliographies without verification

- Translate or summarize clinical case reports without human oversight
- Any content suspected of being generated irresponsibly or misleadingly by AI will be investigated and may result in rejection, retraction, or reporting to institutions.

3.4 AI Use in Figures and Visual Data

- The modification of images using generative AI is prohibited, unless:
 - It is part of the research methodology (e.g., AI-assisted image segmentation or annotation in biomedical imaging)
 - The method is reproducibly described in the manuscript
 - All modifications are scientifically justified and clearly documented in the **Methods** section
- Adjustments to contrast, brightness, or color are permitted only if they do not distort or obscure original data.
- Authors must be prepared to provide original, unprocessed image data upon editorial request.

3.5 AI in Experimental Data and Device Testing

- In the context of clinical or biomedical engineering experiments, AI-based tools (e.g., machine learning models for signal analysis, predictive modeling) may be used **only if**:
 - Their role is described transparently in the **Methods** section
 - The model's training dataset, validation procedures, and limitations are disclosed
 - The authors retain full control and understanding of the output

3.6 For Reviewers

- Reviewers must treat all manuscript content as confidential and **must not upload** any portion of a manuscript into public AI platforms.
- Reviewers may not use AI tools to write or revise review reports, as the peer review process requires critical thinking, expert judgment, and subject-area expertise.
- If a reviewer uses an AI tool privately to check language or grammar (without

inputting manuscript content), this must be done responsibly and without compromising confidentiality.

3.7 For Editors

- Editors must not use AI platforms to generate or edit decision letters or internal evaluations based on confidential manuscript content.
- Editorial assessments and decisions must be conducted by qualified humans and cannot rely on automated tools.
- Editors are encouraged to remain vigilant regarding inappropriate AI use and to refer questionable cases to the **GCEJ Ethics Officer**.

3.8 Transparency and Disclosure

- Transparency is essential. All contributors must disclose their use of AI tools in any part of the research or writing process.
- Failure to disclose AI use, or evidence of misuse, may be considered a breach of publication ethics and handled accordingly.

3.9 Institutional and Tool-Level Requirements

- Authors must ensure that any AI tools used in research, analysis, or writing comply with relevant institutional policies, data privacy laws, and applicable software licenses.
- Use of AI in medical device evaluation, clinical workflows, or patient-related studies must meet regulatory and ethical standards.

3.10 Policy Review and Updates

- **GCEJ** will regularly review and update this policy in response to advances in AI technologies and evolving ethical standards. Authors, reviewers, and editors are encouraged to stay informed of updates through the journal's website.

For questions or concerns about this policy, please contact the **GCEJ Editorial Office** or the designated **Ethics Officer**.

4. Editorial Integrity and Ethical Oversight

GCEJ is committed to maintaining the highest standards of editorial integrity. All ethical

concerns, including allegations of misconduct, appeals, and complaints, are handled with impartiality, professionalism, and confidentiality. Editorial decisions, reviewer comments, and published content are subject to fair and transparent evaluation to protect the credibility of the scientific record.

To ensure ethical matters are addressed effectively and without bias, *GCEJ* appoints a dedicated **Ethics Officer** to receive, assess, and coordinate the investigation of reported concerns. All cases are reviewed in accordance with the **COPE guidelines**, and may involve a designated committee or responsible editor depending on the nature and scope of the issue.

For ethics-related inquiries, appeals, or to report potential misconduct, please contact:

- **Editor-in-Chief:** Dr. Yadin David, yadin@globalCE.org
- **Ethics Officer/In-house Editor:** Arthur Wang, arthur.wang@gcejournal.com

GCEJ is firmly committed to upholding the integrity of scholarly publishing and ensuring a fair, respectful, and ethical environment for authors, reviewers, editors, and readers.