

The Research Journal of English Language and Literature (RJELAL) - Code of Ethics

The Research Journal of English Language and Literature (RJELAL) aspire to select and publish, through peer review, the highest quality research. In order to achieve this goal, the entire peer review and publication process should be thorough, objective and fair.

Journal reputation depends heavily on the trust by all stakeholders in the fairness of the peer review and publication process. A formal code of ethics, outlining guidelines for good behavior and proposing solutions to ethical dilemmas facing Authors, Editors and Reviewers, can build stakeholder trust and improve journal reputation. With this goal in mind, the RJELAL Code of Ethics is designed to be a comprehensive policy for peer review and publication ethics in the Research Journal of English Language and Literature.

The Code describes RJELAL policies for ensuring the ethical treatment of all participants in the peer review and publication process. RJELAL Authors, Editors and Reviewers are encouraged to study these guidelines and address any questions or concerns to the RJELAL Editor, editor@rjelal.com.

RJELAL CODE OF ETHICS FOR AUTHORS

- **Originality:** When an Author submits a manuscript to RJELAL, the manuscript must be an original work.
- Authors must not submit the same work, in whole or in part, to two places of publication at the same time, or at any time while the manuscript is under review at RJELAL. It is also improper for an Author to submit a manuscript describing essentially the same research to more than one place of publication. Thus, an Author may not submit to RJELAL a work that is in whole or in part under review elsewhere, nor submit to another publication outlet a work that is in whole or in part under review at RJELAL.
- The manuscript must not have been previously published or accepted for publication elsewhere, either in whole or in part, whether in English or another language.
- If the manuscript contains materials that overlap with work that is previously published, or that is under consideration for publication elsewhere, the Author must cite this work in the manuscript. The Author must also inform the RJELAL of the related work and, if requested, send the manuscript to the Editor.
- Authors must explicitly cite their own earlier work and ideas. If exact sentences or paragraphs

that appear in another work by the Author are included in the manuscript, the material should be put in quotation marks and appropriately cited.

- Authors should not submit a manuscript to RJELAL that was previously submitted to RJELAL, sent out for review, and rejected after review by a RJELAL Editor. If an earlier version was previously rejected by RJELAL, and the Author wishes to submit a revised version for review, this fact and the justification for resubmission should be clearly communicated by the Author to the RJELAL Editor at the time of submission. Only under rare circumstances will a second submission be permissible.
- **Plagiarism:** All work in the manuscript should be free of any plagiarism or falsification.
- Plagiarism takes many forms, from "passing off" another's paper as the Author's own paper, to copying or paraphrasing substantial parts of another's paper without attribution, to claiming results from research conducted by others. Authors are expected to explicitly cite others' work and ideas, even if the work or ideas are not quoted verbatim or paraphrased. This standard applies whether the previous work is published, unpublished, or electronically available. Plagiarism in all its forms constitutes unethical publishing behavior and is unacceptable.
- In instances the Editor deems as "major" plagiarism, the paper will be rejected and authors may be barred from submitting to RJELAL for a period of time. In cases of "minor" plagiarism, the authors would be asked to rephrase the duplicate sentences.
- RJELAL reserves the right to evaluate issues of plagiarism and redundancy on a case-by-case basis.
- **Double-Blind Review:** RJELAL follows a double-blind review process, whereby Authors do not know Reviewers and vice versa. Authors should respect the confidentiality of the review process and should not reveal themselves to Reviewers, and vice versa. For example, the manuscript should not include any self-revealing information that would identify the Author to a Reviewer.
- Authors should not post their submitted manuscript (including working papers and prior drafts) on websites where it could be easily discovered by potential Reviewers.
- **Accuracy:** Authors have the ultimate responsibility for all materials included in a manuscript submitted to RJELAL. Authors should report their findings fully and should not omit data that are relevant within the context of the research question(s). Results should be reported whether they

support or contradict expected outcomes.

- **Co-Authorship:** All Co-Authors of papers should have made significant contributions to the work and share accountability for the results. Authorship and credit should be shared in proportion to the various parties' contributions. Other contributions should be cited in the manuscript's Acknowledgements or an endnote.
- The Corresponding Author who submits a manuscript to RJELAL should have sent all Co-Authors a draft and obtained their assent to submission and publication.
- **Copyright Laws:** Authors should check their manuscripts for possible breaches of copyright law (e.g., where permissions are needed for quotations, artwork or tables taken from other publications) and secure the necessary permissions before submission.
- Authors should avoid using biased language that could be interpreted as denigrating to ethnic or other groups; for example, plural rather than single pronouns ("they" rather than "he") are recommended.
- **Timeliness:** Authors should be prompt with their manuscript revisions. If an Author cannot meet the deadline given, the Author should contact the RJELAL Editor as soon as possible to determine whether a longer time period or withdrawal from the review process should be chosen.
- **Post Publication:** RJELAL holds the copyright to all published articles.

RJELAL CODE OF ETHICS FOR EDITORS

- **Independence:** RJELAL Editors must maintain their editorial independence and work to ensure that Authors have editorial freedom. Responsibility for acceptance or rejection of manuscripts rests with the Editors. Doing so normally entails advice from Reviewers; however, manuscripts that Editors deem clearly inappropriate may be rejected without such review.
- **Unbiased:** Editors should exercise their position of privilege in a confidential, unbiased, prompt, constructive and sensitive manner. Editors have the duty to judge manuscripts only on their scholarly merits. Editors should operate without personal or ideological favoritism.
- **Confidentiality:** Editors and their editorial staff including student workers shall not disclose

information about a manuscript to anyone other than Reviewers and Authors. Office procedures should be in place to maintain confidentiality of the review process. RJELAL Editors are expected to ensure the confidentiality of the double-blind review process. The anonymity of Reviewers can only be lifted if Editors receive permission from Reviewers to reveal their identities.

- **Review Quality:**The Editor should routinely assess all reviews for quality. In rare circumstances, an Editor may edit a review before sending it to an Author (for example, to remove a phrase that would identify the Reviewer) or not send the review to the Author if it is not constructive or appropriate. Ratings of review quality and other performance characteristics should be periodically assessed by the RJELAL Editor to assure optimal journal performance.
- **Accuracy:** An Editor presented with convincing evidence by a Reviewer that the substance or conclusion of an unpublished manuscript is erroneous should promptly inform the Author. If similar evidence is presented for a published manuscript, the Editor should ensure prompt publication of a correction, retraction, expression of concern, or other note, as appropriate.
- **Timeliness:**Editors should take steps to ensure the timely review of all manuscripts and respond promptly to inquiries from Authors about the status of a review.
- **Authority:**The RJELAL Editor must have ultimate authority and responsibility for the Journal. The Editor should respect the Journal's constituents (readers, Authors, Reviewers, Editors, editorial staff and publisher) and work to ensure the honesty and integrity of the Journal's contents and continuous improvement in journal quality. The Editor should select the members of the editorial team, including an Editorial Review Board; outline the rights and responsibilities of these individuals; and regularly assess their performance.

RJELAL CODE OF ETHICS FOR REVIEWERS

- **Reciprocity:**Reviewing for journals is a professional activity that provides value for the profession as a whole, and should be encouraged. Scholars who submit manuscripts to RJELAL are normally expected to reciprocate by accepting an invitation to review for the Journal.
- **Right of Refusal:**Refusals to review a manuscript are from time to time necessary. For example, a Reviewer who feels inadequately qualified to judge the research reported in a manuscript should refuse to review the manuscript. Reviewers should refuse to review a manuscript if there

is a potential conflict of interest. If asked to review a manuscript they have previously reviewed.

- **Double-Blind Review:** RJELAL has a double-blind review process. Reviewers should refuse to review manuscripts where they have provided written comments on the manuscript or an earlier version to the Author. If a Reviewer knows the identity of an Author or Co-Author, this would normally be grounds for refusal to review. Reviewers also have a responsibility to avoid writing, doing or saying anything that could identify them to an Author.
- **Conflict of Interest:** Normally, Reviewers should refuse to review manuscripts in which they have any conflicts of interest resulting from collaborative, financial, institutional, personal, or other relationships or connections with any of the companies, institutions, or people connected to the papers. Reviewers who might have a conflict of interest on a particular manuscript should reveal that conflict to the Editor, who will then determine their appropriate level of involvement.
- **Unbiased:** Reviewers should evaluate manuscripts objectively, fairly and professionally. Reviewers should avoid personal biases in their comments and judgments.
- **Confidentiality:** Reviewers should respect the confidentiality of the review process. It is important to recognise that the manuscript is confidential. Reviewers should not discuss the manuscript with anyone other than the RJELAL Editor, nor should they discuss any information from the manuscript without permission. If Reviewers suspect misconduct, they should notify the Editor in confidence, and should not share their concerns with other parties unless officially notified by the Journal that they may do so.
- **Accuracy:** In evaluating the manuscript and crafting comments to the Author(s), Reviewers should always keep in mind that their review captures their scholarly judgment about the manuscript. Reviewers should be honest with the Author in terms of their concerns about the manuscript. Reviewers should explain and support their scholarly judgments adequately; that is, they should provide sufficient detail to the Author to justify their recommendation to the Editor. Reviews should not be "two-faced", providing overly friendly reviews to the Author but very negative reviews in private to the Editor.
- **Timeliness:** Reviewers should be prompt with their reviews. If a Reviewer cannot meet the deadline given, the Reviewer should contact the RJELAL Editor as soon as possible to determine whether a longer time period or a new Reviewer should be chosen.