

EMS Policy on Co-authorship with Postgraduate Students (PG), Use of PG Student-Generated Data or Research Material, and Related Dispute Resolution Process

With credit to Prof Steve Cornelius, Faculty of Law

AIM OF THE POLICY

This policy is designed to give guidance to EMS faculty and postgraduate students regarding co-authorship of publications stemming from research undertaken as part of a postgraduate programme. As well, it describes a process to be followed in resolving disputes arising from these matters. It is acknowledged that each such situation is unique and will require idiosyncratic consideration.

SECTION 1

EMS General Philosophy on Co-Authorship of Publications

1.1 Earned Co-Authorship

A person (a student or staff member) has earned co-authorship on an individual publication when they satisfy each of the following 3 requirements. They must be directly involved in the:

1. planning of and contribution to some component of the work (e.g. the concept, the design);
2. writing or revising of a draft of the intellectual content; and
3. final approval of the version to be published

Each individual research product (e.g., journal article, book chapter) necessitates an honest assessment on a case-by-case basis of whether or not these 3 requirements have been met.

1.2 Responsibilities of Co-Authorship

Co-authorship means that each individual co-author takes responsibility for what is published in the work, that is, personally verifies its accuracy and integrity.

SECTION 2

Guidelines for Co-Authorship Between Staff and Postgraduate Students

2.1 Co-authorship on the Dissertation¹ or Thesis Itself

Per programme requirements, this must be the student's own work, and these research products should be sole authored by the student.

In the case of an article-based PhD, the sole authorship mentioned in 2.1 refers to the actual bound PhD thesis (where the student gets sole authorship). The sole authorship does not refer to the authorship reflected in the individual articles published as part of the article-based PhD.

2.2 Co-authoring of Publications that Stem from the Dissertation or Thesis

All publications from dissertations and theses should acknowledge that the research comes from [student's name]'s dissertation/thesis at the University of Pretoria, Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences.

2.2.1 Supervisor

It is a generally accepted practice that the supervisor will be a co-author on a first publication stemming from the dissertation or thesis. This is commonly accepted as reciprocity for the time and energy the supervisor has devoted to the student's research.

¹ The term dissertation is used in this document to denote mini-dissertations (coursework Master's degrees) as well as full dissertations (research Master's degrees).

2.2.2 Student

Even if the student does not meet each of the three requirements specified above in Section 1.1, the student should be the lead author on the first paper coming from the dissertation or thesis. In the case of two authors on a particular publication, the student will be the first author and the supervisor will be the second author.

2.2.3 Co-authoring of publications beyond the first publication stemming from the dissertation or thesis

Additional publications beyond the first publication must be scrutinized per the three requirements listed above in Section 1.1 to determine authorship. Supervisor or student co-authorship beyond the first publication is not automatic.

SECTION 3

Guidelines for Staff Publishing from Postgraduate Student Work Without Student Co-Authorship

3.1 Guidelines for Staff Publishing Work Related to a Student Dissertation or Thesis Without Student Authorship

A student has likely *not* earned authorship, and instead should be simply acknowledged in a staff member's publication in any of the following cases:

- When the student's work is just one of a number of sources the supervisor has consulted in saying something new in his or her publication.
- When the student's contribution doesn't meet the requirements listed in 1.1 above.
- When the supervisor takes material from a student's work to tell a "whole new story" in the publication rather than restating arguments/the story in the student's thesis or dissertation. In colloquial terms, this is the difference between "making a new meal" and "reheating a student's leftovers;" the former would be a case of no student co-authorship whereas the latter would necessitate student co-authorship.

3.2 Integrity Rights

A student may leave his or her connection with the university (e.g., upon graduation), and, from time to time, a supervisor may wish to use the student's data or other material compiled as part of the student's dissertation or thesis work. Supervisors must realize that there is an inherent risk of dispute of intellectual property rights in moving forward with publication of students' work without their co-authorship. Even when data or material is only tangentially related to the student's work, the supervisor is required to go back to the student to verify that:

- the student agrees with the supervisor's assessment that the student has not earned co-authorship on the publication. (Again, see requirements in 1.1 to guide co-authorship.) A waiver of the student's right to co-authorship on the publication should ideally be obtained by the supervisor or department.
- integrity rights have been met. That is, the student should provide his or her agreement with any modifications to the student's original work. Even where the student is not a co-author, the supervisor should obtain written agreement in the spirit of: "Do you agree with what I've done?" Agreement stated in an email is sufficient.

SECTION 4

Other General Recommendations

4.1 Discussion of Co-authorship of Publications at the Beginning of the Project

Supervisor and student should discuss co-authorship of future publications at the beginning of the project. When possible, co-authorship of individual publications stemming from the dissertation or thesis should be detailed in the already required Memorandum of Agreement between supervisor and student. Co-authorship should be revisited throughout the research process and upon completion of studies.

4.2 The Case of Postgraduate Students Who Are Staff at Other Institutions

Agreement on the co-authorship of future publications is especially crucial when students are staff at other institutions, and will be interested in further projects/publications based on the original research project and/or data. The student should obtain written permission from the supervisor or home department to engage in solo projects (without the supervisor) with the data/ideas following the initial publication(s). UP owns the intellectual property rights to the data collected in theses and dissertations. Because of this, even if the student is no longer affiliated with UP, UP must still be acknowledged as the sponsor of the research and the institution where the dissertation/thesis work was conducted.

SECTION 5

Dispute Resolution Process

When there is disagreement between supervisor and student on co-authorship on publications and/or ownership of data or other research material, and this policy has not been instrumental in resolving the matter, the following dispute resolution steps should be followed.

1. Supervisor or student should notify the EMS Deputy Dean (DD) for Research & Postgraduate Studies and provide all available documentation of the matter.
2. The DD will speak with both the supervisor and the student, either individually or together.
3. The DD will assess the situation and prescribe a course of action.
4. If the course of action is not satisfactory to the supervisor or the student, that party may escalate the matter to the Dean of EMS.
5. If the course of action is not satisfactory to the supervisor or the student, that party may escalate the matter to the UP Registrar, who will make the final determination.