

# Authorship guidelines of the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration

*(approved by the Faculty Council of March 21<sup>st</sup> 2018)*

*(updated by the Scientific Research Committee on October 19<sup>th</sup> 2023)*

This document provides a number of guidelines regarding the authorship of scientific publications for the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration. The guidelines reflect (1) policy recommendations in accordance with the faculty's and university's research policy, (2) best practices that were distilled from the response of a faculty-wide survey of the research groups active in the research disciplines represented in the faculty and (3) wishes and complaints of the assisting academic and scientific staff.

The author guidelines that the document offers must be interpreted as such. These are guidelines that can guide the behaviour regarding authorship in the direction the faculty considers desirable. Its application is fully endorsed by both the Scientific Research Committee and the Well-being at Work Committee.

The faculty guidelines are published on the faculty website and communicated to all members and students of the faculty who are involved in scientific research.

This document will be signed by the PhD student and his/her supervisors at the start of a PhD project.

## 1. General principles

1. Good appointments make good friends. As a general principle, therefore, agreements are made between the (potential) co-authors at the beginning of the publication (i.e. at the start of the research necessary for the publication). These agreements concern at least the authorship itself (who is mentioned as author?) and the order of authorship. Changing these agreements during the publication process can only be done if there are good reasons for doing so and with the consent of everyone involved in the initial agreements.
2. The research disciplines represented at the faculty differ widely in terms of publication culture, including customs and traditions related to authorship. The agreements concerning authorship follow the guidelines of this document as closely as possible, without compromising the customs and traditions within the research discipline. The publication culture of the discipline prevails in case of conflicts.
3. Everyone mentioned as author of a publication takes full responsibility for the publication. This implies that the merits are assigned to the author (for example, the author has the right to mention this publication on his/her CV), but also the flaws, shortcomings, errors or infringements against standards and rules (e. g. upon detection of infringements, all authors are accountable).

## 2. Guidelines relating to authorship

1. In order to avoid gift authorship, it is essential that each author makes a substantial contribution to the publication. A substantial<sup>1</sup> contribution to a publication is made if **at least two of the following three conditions** are met<sup>2</sup>:
  - a. Substantial contribution to the *design of the research* (for example introduction of the research idea; formulation of problem definition, research question, objective or hypothesis; choice of research method(s), drafting the research plan;
  - b. Substantial contribution to *carrying out the research* (e. g. study of literature, collection of data, analysis of data, interpretation of analyses, assessment of other research activities);
  - c. Substantial contribution to the *writing of the publication* (for example write parts of the text, review the text which has led to significant redrafting, restructure the text in order to improve its readability)
2. In order to avoid ghost authorship, anyone who has made a substantial contribution to the publication (as defined in the previous point) should be mentioned as an author, without compromising agreements made about 'single authorship' (see point 4).
3. The status of supervisor, financier, head of department, etc. does not automatically entitle the holder to authorship.
4. It is recommended that researchers whose contribution to the publication is not considered substantial (e. g. friendly review, assistance with data collection or analysis, methodological advice), are recognised by means of a footnote, endnote or acknowledgement insofar as this is customary in the research discipline and allowed according to the guidelines of the journal or publisher.

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<sup>1</sup> We leave what is 'substantial' to the judgement of those who apply these guidelines. In assessing this, reference can be made to the customs and tradition of the research discipline.

<sup>2</sup> The "Policy on authorship and recognition of contributions to scholarly publishing" (<https://codex.ugent.be?regid=reg000282&lang=en>, 10 November 2022) has to be taken into account. It imposes stricter conditions for authorship:

### 7. NORMS FOR RESEARCHERS

#### B. CRITERIA FOR AUTHORSHIP

##### 2. Authorship is granted on the basis of the **contribution made**.

Researchers who contribute **significantly** to the creation of the publication are added to the authors list. "*that authorship itself is based on a **significant contribution** to the design of the research, relevant data collection, or the analysis or interpretation of the results.*"

This provision is a **minimum requirement** and further interpretations of the term 'contribution' should always be at least in line with this requirement.

3. In addition to a significant contribution, researchers contribute to the **writing or substantial revision** of the work.

### 3. Guidelines on the order of authors

Note: Obviously, these guidelines only apply to those who meet the conditions of authorship as stipulated above.

1. In some research disciplines represented at the faculty, it is customary to mention authors alphabetically, regardless of the size or importance of the contribution made to the publication. In this case, it is essential that this custom is known to all parties involved. Subject to mutual agreement between all parties involved, it is of course also possible to deviate from this custom for these disciplines if there are substantial differences in the contributions or with regard to publications resulting from doctoral research.
2. In most of the research disciplines represented at the faculty, it is customary to mention authors in order of the contribution made. In this case, it is essential that this order (and therefore the size and nature of the contribution) is agreed in advance. At least, prior agreements must be made about who is the first author.
3. Without prejudice to the previous guideline, for disciplines that mention authors in the order of their contribution, it is recommended that for publications resulting from doctoral research, the PhD student is the first author. Since the PhD student is responsible for the doctoral research and is expected to prove that he/she can function as an independent researcher by way of this research, it is expected that the PhD student is the main contributor in at least the majority of the papers in a doctoral dissertation and as such will be the first author.
4. The status of supervisor, financier, head of department, chairperson, etc. does not automatically entitle the holder to first authorship.

### 4. Single authorship guidelines

1. In some of the research disciplines represented at the faculty, it is customary for PhD students with academic ambitions (for postdoctoral research or professorship) to write a job market paper as a single author. In this case, it is essential that this custom is known to all involved parties. In addition, clear agreements must be made about this job market paper with regard to which study of the doctoral research will lead to such publication and to what extent researchers other than the PhD student (e. g. supervisor, members of the supervisory committee) may/can contribute to the publication.
2. It is recommended that researchers who have contributed to the publication without being mentioned as authors should be recognised by means of a footnote, endnote or acknowledgement insofar as this is customary in the field of research and permitted under the guidelines of the journal or publisher.

## 5. Guidelines concerning authors' affiliation

1. It is necessary that for any publication where members or students of the faculty are mentioned as authors, at least one of these authors mentions Ghent University as affiliation, regardless of whether or not this author is still associated with the faculty at the time of publication. Single authors who are no longer affiliated with the faculty at the time of publication are also expected to loyally mention Ghent University as (additional) affiliation<sup>3</sup>.

For a list of the affiliation tags that may be used when submitting an article for publication, see <<https://www.ugent.be/intranet/en/research/impact/scholar-publishing/policy-ugent.htm#Integrityandquality>> .

It is also strongly recommended that the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration (Dutch or English, in full or in abbreviated form) and/or the research group or department are also mentioned.

## 6. Who to contact in case of questions or conflicts?

For further information or for mediation in the event of conflicts that cannot be dealt with internally (i.e. between the authors as stipulated in the preceding agreements), the following contact points apply (and preferably in the following order):

- The ombudsperson for the Faculty's doctoral students (only for PhDs)
- The substitute ombudsperson for the Faculty's doctoral students (only for PhDs)
- The psychosocial well-being contacts of the Faculty (for everyone)

The names and contact details of the FEB persons are published on the faculty website.

- Ombudspersons: <<https://www.ugent.be/eb/en/degree-students/rules-and-regulations/ombudsperson/ombudsperson.htm>>
- Psychosocial well-being of staff: <<https://www.ugent.be/intranet/en/human-resources/health-safety/psychosocial-welfare/contactpersons/confidentialcontacts.htm>>

When asking for mediation in the event of conflicts, it is important to speak to a person who is 'neutral' (e.g. not of the same department(s) as the author(s), no hierarchical relationship with the author(s)).

## 7. University-wide guidelines

For information about university-wide guidelines on publishing and authorship, see

- Authorship in research <<https://www.ugent.be/intranet/en/research/impact/scholar-publishing/authorship.htm>>

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<sup>3</sup> On the other hand, the Faculty / research group can make the effort to connect recent PhDs longer to the FEB as an affiliated postdoctoral researcher.

- Policy on authorship and recognition of contributions to scholarly publishing (approved by the Board of Governors on 10 november 2022)  
<<https://codex.ugent.be?regid=reg000282&lang=en>>
- Policy on scholarly publishing (approved by the Board of Governors on 3 June 2022)  
<<https://codex.ugent.be?regid=REG000274&lang=en>>