

## **Resolving disputable situations**

Every individual or institution may at any time report to the Editor and/or Editorial Board information on violations of ethical standards and other irregularities and provide necessary information/evidence.

Validating the arguments and evidence

1. Editor in Chief will, in agreement with the Editorial Board, initiate the process aimed at validating the arguments and evidence.
2. During this process all presented evidence shall be considered as confidential material and will be presented only to persons who are directly involved in the process.
3. Persons who are suspected to have violated ethical standards will be given an opportunity to respond to allegations made against them.
4. If it is found that there, indeed, were any irregularities, it will be assessed whether they should be characterized as a minor violation or as a gross violation of ethical standards.

Minor violation

Situations characterized as a minor violation shall be settled in direct communication with persons who have committed it without the involvement of third parties:

1. by notification of authors/reviewers that there was a minor violation, resulting from misunderstanding or incorrect application of academic standards;
2. a warning letter to the author/reviewer who has committed a minor violation.

Gross violation of ethical standards

Decisions regarding gross violation of ethical standards are made by the Editor in Chief in cooperation with the Editorial Board and, if necessary, a small group of experts. Measures to be taken can be the following:

1. disclosure statements or editorial which describes the case of violations of ethical standards;
2. sending official notices to managers or employers of authors/reviewers;
3. retraction of a published paper (in the electronic version of the paper which is retracted a HTML link is made with a notification on the retraction; the retracted paper is preserved in the original, but with a watermark on a PDF document on each page which indicates that the paper was retracted);
4. authors will be banned to submit papers to the journal for a specified time;
5. notifying the relevant professional organizations or authorities about the case in order to take appropriate measures.

When resolving disputable situations the Editorial Board is governed by the guidelines and recommendations of the Committee on Publication Ethics – COPE: <http://publicationethics.org/resources/>.