# Ahead of time: generative AI policies for the European Rehabilitation Journal

**Matthieu Guémann** 1 **and Clément Médrinal** 2

¹Sport, Physical Activity, Rehabilitation and Movement for Performance and Health (SAPRéM), Université d'Orléans, Orléans, France, ²Univ Rouen Normandie, GRHVN UR 3830, Institute for Research and Innovation in Biomedicine (IRIB), F-76000 Rouen, France

The use of generative AI and AI-assisted technologies is rapidly increasing, raising questions about scientific integrity [1]. Generative AI is an artificial intelligence technology that can produce various types of content, including text, imagery, audio and synthetic data. Examples include ChatGPT, NovelAI, Jasper AI, SciSpace, Elicit and DALL-E. All academic sectors, including writing, reviewing, editing and image creation, are concerned with AI use. As a result, publishers have established rules and directives about the use of generative AI in academic work [2]. The European Rehabilitation Journal (ERJ) is also concerned and wishes to inform all actors, from the authors to the readers, of their policies. The policies presented in this editorial aim to provide greater transparency and guidance about the use of generative AI.

## Guidance for authors

### The use of generative AI and AI-assisted technologies in scientific writing

In the medical and academic fields, clinicians, researchers, staff members and students all use AI tools. AI is part of our life and work [3]. We cannot and should not go against it. AI tools are meaningful and helpful in many aspects, and authors should understand when using AI is acceptable and unacceptable. *The ERJ allows authors to use generative AI and AI-assisted technologies to improve readability and language.* However, we strongly emphasise that AI should be applied with human oversight and control. AI should not be used to generate large amounts of text. The authors should carefully review, verify and edit every sentence generated by AI as the output can be incorrect, incomplete or biased. We remind the authors that they are fully responsible and accountable for the contents of the work.

As transparency is essential to scientific publication, *authors must disclose the use of AI and AI-assisted technologies.* We have introduced a new statement at the end of the manuscript that will appear in the publication. Disclosing the use of these technologies promotes transparency and trust between authors, readers, reviewers, editors, and contributors. *AI and AI-assisted technologies cannot be listed or cited as authors or co-authors.* Authoring scientific work is challenging [4]. However, authors and co-authors are rewarded with their names on the manuscript when they have contributed significantly to the project and drafted the article. Authorship entails responsibilities and roles that are exclusively human. All (co-) authors are responsible for answering questions about their work.

Matthieu Guémann, PT, PhD, Université Orléans, SAPRéM, Orléans, France, Email: matthieu.guemann@univ-orleans.fr

We remind that ERJ requires the final version of the manuscript to be approved by all authors. Approval cannot be granted by AI. Furthermore, authors must ensure the originality of the work, verify that all listed authors meet the criteria for authorship, and confirm that the work does not violate third-party rights. Those responsibilities cannot be held by an AI tool and remain comprehensive human decisions and actions.

> ### ERJ Guidelines for the use of AI in Scientific Publishing
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> 1. AI may be used to improve language and readability only.
> 2. Authors must disclose any use of AI or AI-assisted technologies.
> 3. AI tools cannot be listed as authors or co-authors.
> 4. AI-generated or modified images are not permitted in submissions.
> 5. AI must not be used to write peer reviews.
> 6. Editorial decisions must not rely on generative AI or AI-assisted tools.

### The use of generative AI and AI-assisted tools in figures, images and artwork

The ERJ editorial board agreed that *the use of generative AI or AI-assisted tools to create or modify images in submitted manuscripts is not allowed.* This includes modifying brightness, like enhancing or obscuring the image, and modifying elements within the image, like moving, removing, or introducing a specific feature.

If the project requires the use of AI-tools to detect or interpret research results (eg, in medical imaging), the tool and method of use should be described sufficiently clearly in the method section to allow its reproduction. This should include an explanation of how the AI or AI-assisted tools were used, the name of the model or tool, version and extension numbers, and the manufacturer.

## Guidance for ERJ editors and reviewers

### *The use of generative AI and AI-assisted technologies in the journal editorial process*

The policy of the ERJ for editors' and reviewers' use of generative AI and AI-assisted technology is clear. AI tools should not be used to generate a review. Manuscripts submitted to the ERJ are treated as confidential documents. Editors and reviewers should not upload any part of a manuscript into a generative AI tool. This process violates the authors' confidentiality and proprietary rights. This recommendation concerns all additional documents that could contain confidential information, such as cover letters or decision letters. For this reason, editors are advised not to upload their letters into an AI tool, even to improve language and readability.

Peer review is a cornerstone of the scientific community, and the ERJ upholds the highest standards of integrity in this process. Overseeing the editorial evaluation of a scientific manuscript is a responsibility that must remain human. Editors should not rely on generative AI or AI-assisted technologies to aid the evaluation or decision-making process, as the critical thinking and nuanced judgment required for this task lie beyond the capabilities of current AI. Additionally, AI could produce inaccurate, incomplete, or biased conclusions. Ultimately, the editor bears full responsibility for the editorial process, the final decision, and its communication to the authors.

If the manuscript states that the authors used generative AI or AI-assisted technologies in the writing process before submission to improve the language and readability of their paper, such a disclosure should be found at the bottom of the paper in a separate section before the reference list. In this case, Reviewers and Editors cannot reject the paper on the basis that the authors used AI tools. If the disclosure is not present and the reviewers and editors suspect that an author has violated the AI policies, the editor in chief should be informed. This is also the case if the editor suspects the use of AI tools by a reviewer.

## AI-statement and disclosure

The ERJ aims to follow scientific progress and promote the best research available. Regarding the use of generative AI, this editorial introduces the implementation of a new section in the authors' and reviewers' recommendations and a disclosure that should appear in the manuscript.

> **ERJ AI-Statement**
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> During the preparation of this work the author(s) used [NAME TOOL / SERVICE] in order to [REASON]. After using this tool/service, the author(s) reviewed and edited the content as needed and take(s) full responsibility for the content of the publication

### *Declaration of generative AI in scientific writing*

When authors use generative artificial intelligence (AI) or AI-assisted technologies during the writing process, these tools should be used solely to enhance readability and language. Such technologies must be used under human oversight, with authors thoroughly reviewing and editing the output, as AI can produce authoritative-sounding content that may be inaccurate, incomplete, or biased. AI and AI-assisted technologies cannot be credited as authors or co-authors, nor can they be cited as such, as authorship involves responsibilities and tasks that are inherently human.

Authors are required to disclose the use of AI or AI-assisted technologies in their manuscript by following the guidelines provided, and a corresponding statement must be included in the published work. The disclosure must appear at the end of the manuscript in the core manuscript file, before the References list. The statement should be placed in a new section entitled '*Use of Generative AI and AI-assisted technologies in the writing process*'. We also remind authors that they bear full responsibility and accountability for the content of their work. This declaration does not apply to the use of basic tools for checking grammar, spelling, references etc. If there is nothing to disclose, there is no need to add a statement.

## References

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