

Editorial

New format, but plagiarism continues

Following discussions with the Editorial Board, the Journal has been redesigned to allow publication of a greater number of articles and to include more colour reproduction.

Despite a previous editorial dealing with breaches of copyright there appears to be an increasing number of occurrences that are not taken seriously by many authors. As it is considered that such a failure may result in litigation we would again like to draw the attention of contributors to the *European Journal of Orthodontics* to the following:

What is a breach of copyright?

A breach of copyright is the use, without permission, of previously published material, including figures/illustrations, where copyright has been assigned. This also includes an author's own published figures, those where only minor changes are made to the original, and magnification of photomicrographs.

What is plagiarism?

Plagiarism is to take and use the thoughts, writings, etc. of another person and attempt to pass them off as your own. Be aware that this can be the use of a single sentence from another author's work where the original source is not acknowledged.

What you can do to avoid breaching copyright and/or plagiarism

1. Do not use the work of other authors without permission or acknowledgment of the original source.
2. Do not quote from an article without referencing the work.
3. Do not use figures, tables, etc. from the work of others without first obtaining permission from the authors/copyright holder.
4. Do not use your own figures that have previously been published without obtaining permission from the copyright holder, usually the publisher.
5. Do not use figures with minor modifications.

If in doubt obtain the opinion of the editor of the journal where your article is under consideration since it is always advisable to highlight a problem in the early

stages of publishing. Failure to do so can lead to delays in publication and subsequent litigation.

The Value of Copyright

When an author creates an original work and it is recorded in a fixed form, he/she automatically acquires the copyright of that work. Copyright is the legal right to prevent others from copying the author's work (with certain exceptions mentioned below). The importance of upholding this basic right to protect an individual's effort and creativity from plagiarism, uncontrolled distribution and other forms of abuse is too frequently forgotten, in orthodontics and elsewhere.

Use of another author's work

Contrary to popular belief, copyright law is not intended to restrict the dissemination of information, but to ensure that the efforts of original authors are protected and, where applicable, credited or rewarded. This means that if an author wishes to include in his/her publication or article an extract from a work that has already been published, he/she will usually have to ask for permission to do so and make an appropriate acknowledgement. There are situations where permission is not required, usually where the original article is being copied for the purpose of 'criticism or review'. A good proverb to bear in mind is to 'do as you would be done by'—if in doubt, always seek permission and acknowledge the original source. Unfortunately, some readers may know what it is like to discover that their own hard work has been reproduced, without due acknowledgement, under someone else's name. This is what we are trying to prevent.

Granting permissions and fighting infringement on behalf of the author

Historically, it has been the policy of the European Orthodontic Society to require *EJO* authors to assign copyright for their article to the EOS. This policy was recently reviewed and as a result, *EJO* authors are now asked to sign an exclusive copyright licence rather than a copyright assignment form. The new licence arrangement allows *EJO* authors to retain copyright of their material. In addition, authors are granted a number of rights concerning the future re-use of their article, with the proviso that any activity does not conflict directly with the business interests of the journal.

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If an infringement of copyright in the *EJO* occurs and is made known to us, the Journal will publish an apology on behalf of the author in breach; however, the costs associated with this must be borne by the author responsible for infringement. The *EJO* would expect other journals to do the same should copyright be breached on an article published in the *EJO*, and would pursue the matter on behalf of the author of the original work.

In addition, following a breach of copyright, articles by the offending author(s), or where they are listed as co-author(s), will not be considered for publication in the *EJO* for a period of twelve months.

In summary, copyright protects the interests of all involved in journals publication, both the authors who create the work and the publishers who invest in creativity.