

## UCL Guideline: Fair Attribution of Technical and other Professional Services Staff and Research Facilities in Publications and on Funding Applications.

UCL is committed to ensuring all colleagues are recognised and valued for their contribution to research. This document covers guidelines to be used by the UCL research community regarding referencing Technical and Professional Services Staff in publications and on funding applications.

This guidance supports UCL's [Research Strategy](#) and aligns with the [Research Culture Roadmap](#) resonating an inclusive research culture. UCL is a signatory to the [Technician Commitment](#), a national initiative aimed towards increasing the visibility and recognition of technically focused professions and improving opportunities for career development for technical staff working in higher education and research. The guidance aligns with the [UCL Ways of Working](#), which set out expectations around how UCL employees work.

This Guideline aligns with other guidance on Publishing and Authorship adopted at UCL. See Annex 4 for list of guidance.

### 1. Governing principles

- Authorships and acknowledgements in papers are highly valuable to technical and other professional services staff who may have infrequent chances to demonstrate their contribution to research outputs.
- Authorships and acknowledgements are critical success metrics and enable allocation of funding to core facilities and technology platforms.

**It is vital that all contributions by UCL Technical and other Professional Services staff and Facilities are correctly attributed, and staff are credited for their work.**

- This guidance recommends that expectations regarding authorship or other forms of recognition are agreed between all parties before work commences.
- Authorships and Acknowledgements on papers and grant applications are earned, and a significant level of contribution from an individual will be required to be included as an author or co-applicant. This document outlines examples to aid in defining an appropriate level of contribution for inclusion as an author.

### 2. Expectations of recognition of Technical and other Professional Services staff in publications

Staff producing publications are expected to reference and provide recognition of Technical and other Professional Services staff contributions, and according to the level of input provide an 'acknowledgement' or 'authorship'. Generally:

- Wherever a Technical or Professional Services staff member has contributed significantly to a paper, they should be included as an author (see Annex 1 for guidance on determining required level of contribution). In line with the [ICJME recommendations](#), the staff member should also be given the opportunity to review the manuscript and approve before submission and will be expected to be contactable for relevant follow-up.
- Where a Technical or Professional Services staff member has contributed by providing expertise in the use of facilities or equipment, but had no direct hand in design, data collection, processing or analysis,

generally an acknowledgement would be expected (see Annex 2 for suggested wording for acknowledgements).

- In the rare circumstance that Technical or other Professional Services staff involved cannot be recognised by authorship or acknowledgement, the contribution of the staff member to the publication should be formally acknowledged through the UCL Appraisal, Review and Development Scheme, by email to the staff member and their Line Manager. This should include a detailed reason for exclusion. (see Annex 2 for suggested email template).

### **3. Expectations of recognition of Research Facilities and Science and Technology Platforms in publications**

When research outputs are enabled by access to a Research Facility or Science and Technology Platform, the facility should be acknowledged in all resulting publications (see Annex 2 for suggested wording for acknowledgements including quoting their RRID number). This is in addition to the recognition expected to single individuals that work in the facilities.

### **4. Expectations of recognition of Technical and other Professional Services staff in funding applications**

Increasingly funding bodies encourage Technical and other Professional Services staff to be applicants on funding bids.

- If Technical or Professional Services staff are integral to a funding application or required for the work arising from an application, they should be named as an applicant. This includes on capital grant applications to acquire new equipment, and on grants where a platform, facility or staff member is involved in the application and will be integral to the funded research.
- In the rare circumstance that contributing Technical or other Professional Services applicants are not allowed to be named by the funding body, the contribution of the staff member to the funding application should be formally acknowledged through the UCL Appraisal, Review and Development Scheme, by email to the staff member and their Line Manager. This should include a detailed reason for exclusion. (see Annex 2 for suggested email template).

### **5. Non-compliance procedure**

- Repeated failure to add contributors as authors or to appropriately acknowledge staff and/or facilities may result in a core facility or platform restricting access to the offending researcher's group. In extreme circumstances of repeated non-compliance, concerns will be escalated within the faculty in line with the [UCL Staff Grievance policy](#).
- For advice on how to proceed if staff members feel they have not been appropriately acknowledged in publication or grant application see Annex 3.

## Annex 1: Published frameworks underpinning the guideline

This guideline suggests following the recommendations by the Internal Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) in combination with the CRediT (Contributor Roles Taxonomy) framework.

**Journal's guidelines:** most journals in the biosciences, medical sciences and engineering fields comply to the guideline published by the Internal Committee of Medical Journal Editors ([ICMJE](#)), which recommends that authorship be based on the following four criteria:

ICMJE recommendation	Application to Technical and other PS staff
<b>Substantial contributions to the conception or design of the work; or the acquisition, analysis, or interpretation of data for the work; AND</b>	Based on CRediT Taxonomy, annotated below
<b>Drafting the work or reviewing it critically for important intellectual content; AND</b>	Staff member expected to be given the opportunity to read the manuscript in full before submission and contribute where required
<b>Final approval of the version to be published; AND</b>	Staff member expected to be given the opportunity to sign off on the final manuscript before submission
<b>Agreement to be accountable for all aspects of the work in ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved.</b>	Staff member expected to be given the opportunity to respond to questions on relevant parts of the work following submission

The Contributor Roles Taxonomy ([CRediT](#)) framework outlines fourteen roles typically demonstrated by contributors to scientific scholarly output. Contributions from UCL's Technical and Professional Services staff may fall under a number of the contributor Roles, with examples annotated below. *[Please note this is a non-exhaustive illustrative list of examples and absence of a contribution from the list does not mean a task is excluded from the requirement for recognition]*

List of CRediT Roles	Examples of Technical and Professional Services Staff contributions in different areas of work				
	Common to all	Lab research	Informatics research	Design inc. software	Collections
<b>Conceptualisation</b>	Discussion, thought experiments, pre-application note making	Formulation of research goals and aims; experimental design	Formulation of research goals and aims; experimental design	Design drafting; iterative design; prototyping	
<b>Data curation</b>		Data wrangling, data cleaning, accounting for missing values, applying nomenclature, reformatting.	Data wrangling, data cleaning, accounting for missing values, applying nomenclature, reformatting.	Prior state of the art; existing designs; patents; supporting data; images	Defining and extracting data and information from source material
<b>Formal analysis</b>		Extraction of insights from the cleaned data; statistical analysis	Coding and using existing tools to analyse dataset(s) and produce new insights	Testing of design or products; analysis of test outcomes	Formulation of arguments and insights based on data and information
<b>Funding acquisition</b>	Writing or contributing data to a funding application; taking part in pitch or				

	competitive group mechanism to allocate funding				
<b>Investigation</b>		Bench or clinic-based research applying defined tools and methodologies	Computer-based analysis using pre-defined datasets, coding or using existing tools	Manufacturing; Test-retest paradigms; minimum viable product	Extracting data and information from source materials, cross-referencing and aligning information
<b>Methodology</b>	Method selection and due diligence; experimental design; optimising or developing methodologies				
<b>Project admin</b>	Critical admin roles on the project				
<b>Resources</b>		Acquiring biological samples, animals and reagents; arranging equipment use and resources	Acquiring access to datasets; acquiring tools, code or software		Source material curation and verification
<b>Software</b>		Writing or altering software, code or macros Operating specialist software	Creating and editing code and software as required for the project		
<b>Supervision</b>	Supervision of other's work on the project				
<b>Validation</b>		Reanalysing samples or data to confirm a previous result	Testing or deployment in a real-world environment	Testing or deployment in a real-world environment	
<b>Visualisation</b>		Creating diagrammatic or graphed representations of concepts or data	Creating diagrammatic or graphed representations of concepts or data	Prototyping; Model-making; VR	
<b>Writing – original draft</b>	Generating original text; setting tone				
<b>Writing – review and editing</b>	Critically apprising writing and content				

## Annex 2: Suggested statement texts

- Example of core facility acknowledgement:

The authors acknowledge and thank the (“*core facility name*”, “*RRID ID*”, “*Division/Institute name*”, UCL for the use of “*equipment or technique*”.

“The Authors acknowledge and thank the UCL Transcriptomics Core Facility (RRID:ABC-000000) at the Institute of Neurology, Faculty of Brain Sciences, UCL for use of equipment to carry out single cell transcriptomics”.

- Example of staff member acknowledgement:

The authors acknowledge and thank (“*staff member name*”, *ORCID ID*) at the “*core facility name*”, “*Division/Institute name*”, UCL (if relevant) for their guidance and expertise in applying “*technique/equipment*”.

“The Authors acknowledge and thank Joe Bloggs (ORCID 0000-0000-0000-0000) at the UCL Transcriptomics Core Facility at the Institute of Neurology, Faculty of Brain Sciences, UCL for their guidance and expertise in applying single nuclei extractions to this study.”

- Template email recognising Technical Staff contribution

As described, this route of recognition is to be used in exceptional circumstances where published acknowledgement or application for funding is not possible, and should be sent to the Staff member, their line manager and their head of department.

Dear [Staff member, Line manager, HoD],

Re: Acknowledgement short of publication in recognition of work for [Staff member]

This email is to acknowledge the outstanding contribution of [Staff member] to our project entitled [project title], where they have contributed by [briefly describe contribution]. It has not been possible to recognise [Staff member] formally by authorship or acknowledgement due to [reasons for lack of formal acknowledgement]. In lieu of this, I would like it to be raised in the next performance review and recognised equally with authorship through the UCL Appraisal, Review and Development Scheme.

Best wishes,

[Lead Author or PI].

Dear [Staff member, Line manager, HoD],

Re: Acknowledgement short of naming in funding application for [Staff member]

This email is to acknowledge the outstanding contribution of [Staff member] to the application for funding [project title], where they have contributed by [briefly describe contribution]. It has not been possible to recognise [Staff member] formally by naming them as applicant or co-applicant due to [reasons for lack of formal acknowledgement]. In lieu of this, I would like it to be raised in the next performance review and recognised their contribution through the UCL Appraisal, Review and Development Scheme.

Best wishes,

[Main Applicant].

### Annex 3: Advice in case of non-compliance

If a Technical or Professional Services staff member feels they have not been appropriately acknowledged in publication or grant application, they can follow the steps below.

a. Publication, before submission:

- i. Approach your line or facility manager for support and/or contact your Division, Institute or Faculty Technical Staff Representatives (e.g. the Technical Services Hub) for advice on how to proceed.
- ii. Contact the corresponding author on the paper, briefly stating the contribution you believe you have had and why you think your work merits recognition through an acknowledgement or authorship based on this document.
- iii. If you feel it is not appropriate to contact the corresponding author directly, you should consider contacting the last (senior) author on the paper, or contacting your Division, Institute or Faculty Technical staff representatives.

b. Publication, after submission:

It is typically more difficult to change an authorship after submission or acceptance by a journal and requires strong justification to the journal, but corrections can be made. You should broadly follow the steps above, and it is highly recommended you engage support to help you build a case for submitting a correction prior to contacting the corresponding author.

c. Grant Application, before submission:

- i. Approach your line or facility manager for support and/or contact your Division, Institute or Faculty Technical Staff Representatives (e.g. the Technical Skills Development Hub) for advice on how to proceed.
- ii. Contact the lead applicant on the grant, briefly stating the contribution you believe you have had and why you think your work merits inclusion based on this document.

d. Grant Application, after submission:

As grants applications are judged quickly and are not intended as a lasting record of work, funding bodies typically do not allow the addition of authors after their submission. In some circumstances it may be possible to ask the funding body to be added a co-applicant after the award has been made, and the corresponding author will need to be engaged to enable this.

## Annex 4: Collected references

### UCL Guidance on Publishing and Authorship:

- UCL Statement of Principles on Authorship  
[https://rdr.ucl.ac.uk/articles/presentation/UCL\\_Principles\\_of\\_Authorship/24534358](https://rdr.ucl.ac.uk/articles/presentation/UCL_Principles_of_Authorship/24534358)
- UCL Research Integrity - guidance on publishing and authorship:  
<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/research/integrity/policies-and-guidelines/publication-and-authorship>
- UCL Code of Conduct for Research:  
[https://rdr.ucl.ac.uk/articles/media/UCL\\_Code\\_of\\_Conduct\\_for\\_Research/22717975?file=40352998](https://rdr.ucl.ac.uk/articles/media/UCL_Code_of_Conduct_for_Research/22717975?file=40352998)

### Useful frameworks:

- [The CRediT \(Contributor Roles Taxonomy\)](#)

CRediT Taxonomy is a high-level taxonomy, including 14 roles, that can be used to describe the key types of contributions typically made by contributors to the production and publication of research outputs such as research articles. The roles describe each contributor's specific contribution to the scholarly output.

- [ORCID iD system](#)

ORCID researcher identifier provides a persistent digital identifier that the research, technical or professional services staff member owns and controls, and that distinguishes them from every other research professional. Ensuring that technical and professional services staff use ORCID will allow their contributions to be tracked accurately.

While not compulsory or universally used, citing a Technical or other Professional Services 'ORCID' ID number in a publication, including in the Acknowledgements where allowed by the journal, may make it easier for that researcher to evidence their contribution.

UCL endorses the use of the CRediT Taxonomy and ORCID for all researchers, including professional services staff carrying out research: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/library/open-science-research-support/open-access/orcid-ucl-researchers>

- [RRID \(Research Resources Identification Portal\)](#)

Research Resource Identifiers are unique ID numbers assigned to research resources (e.g. core facilities, databases, reagents, model organisms, antibodies) cited in publications to increase data reproducibility, efficiency, tracking, searchability. RRID assigned to core facilities provide a trackable identifier to record and acknowledge contributions to research outputs.

### **External Guidance on acknowledgement of technical staff:**

- ICMJE recommendations on authorship:  
<https://www.icmje.org/recommendations/browse/roles-and-responsibilities/defining-the-role-of-authors-and-contributors.html>
- UKRI policy on good research practice including endorsement of ICMJE recommendations  
<https://www.ukri.org/publications/principles-and-guidelines-for-good-research-practice/>
- Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE)  
<https://publicationethics.org>

- Fair Attribution Guidelines for Technical and Specialist Support – University of Liverpool:  
<https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/media/livacuk/researcher/techhub/fair-attribution-guidelines-technical-specialist-support.pdf>
- Fair Attribution, including 5 use-cases – University of Warwick:  
<https://warwick.ac.uk/research/technicians/fairattribution>
- UKRI policy on Technical Skill Specialists:  
<https://www.ukri.org/what-we-offer/developing-people-and-skills/bbsrc/investing-in-research-teams/technicians-and-technology-and-skills-specialists/>
- Royal Microscopical Society Core Facilities Publication Policy:  
<https://www.rms.org.uk/library/core-facilities-publication-policy.html>