

From Disclosure to Decision-Based Accountability

Oxford University Press + Springer Nature: what changed and what it means for researcher responsibility.

Policy question	Oxford University Press	Springer Nature	Research-support takeaway
How is AI use differentiated?	By specific use and disclosure requirement: some routine uses may not require disclosure; many substantive uses do.	By Green / Amber / Red categories based on influence, risk, oversight, and transparency.	Do not treat every AI use as equivalent.
Routine assistance	Language clarity and reference formatting may be permitted without disclosure.	Green: expression, organization, efficiency; no new intellectual content or scholarly judgment.	Lower influence can justify lighter oversight, subject to venue rules.
Interpretive / substantive use	Substantial rewriting, translation, data work, code generation and other substantive uses typically require disclosure.	Amber: method suggestions, pattern identification, interpretation, evaluation; stronger verification, oversight and disclosure.	As AI influences scholarly decisions, accountability and documentation should increase.
Human responsibility	Authors must review and verify AI output and accurately describe their own role.	Human accountability is non-transferable; AI may support but not replace scholarly judgment.	Ask: What decision did AI influence, and what responsibility remained mine?
Confidentiality	Protect unpublished work, copyrighted material, and sensitive content.	Do not place confidential manuscripts or sensitive data into unsecured/public AI systems.	Tool and data environment are part of responsible research practice.
Red line	Do not misrepresent AI-created material as human-generated research data/results; some factual/scientific image uses are prohibited.	No AI replacement of accountable judgment, fabricated data/citations, undisclosed core reasoning, or delegated peer review.	AI cannot inherit authorship, accountability, or scholarly responsibility.

Publisher guidance is converging toward a functional model of accountability: what matters is what AI did, how much it influenced scholarly judgment, whether the output was verified, and whether a human remained accountable.

Sources: Oxford University Press AI-use/disclosure guidance and Sept. 10 announcement; Springer Nature AI guidance and Sept. 10 policy update. This is an intelligence summary, not a universal policy. Always confirm the target journal's current requirements.