



# **HITEC UNIVERSITY TAXILA**

## **Department of Islamic Studies**

### **Policy Document** **HITEC ISLAMICUS Journal**

#### **PEER REVIEW POLICY**

##### **1. Introduction**

**HITEC ISLAMICUS** is dedicated to advancing scholarly research in the fields of Islamic Studies, Quranic and Hadith Studies, Islamic thought, history, civilization, contemporary Muslim issues, and related social sciences. The journal is committed to maintaining the highest academic standards by publishing original, high-quality, and ethically-sound research.

To uphold academic rigor, **HITEC ISLAMICUS** follows a double-blind peer review process, ensuring that both reviewers and authors remain anonymous. This policy outlines the procedures, criteria, and ethical guidelines governing the review and publication process.

##### **2. Review Process**

###### **a. Manuscript Submission**

All submitted manuscripts undergo an initial editorial screening. The editorial team evaluates:

- Relevance to the aims and scope of HITEC ISLAMICUS
- Compliance with formatting guidelines
- Academic quality, originality, and ethical soundness

Manuscripts failing to meet basic criteria may be returned to authors for revision or declined at this stage.

###### **b. Double-Blind Review**

Manuscripts that pass the initial screening are sent for double-blind peer review.

- Each manuscript is assigned to two independent reviewers who possess relevant expertise.
- Reviewer selection is based on academic qualifications, experience, and absence of conflicts of interest.

###### **c. Reviewer Responsibilities**

Reviewers are expected to:

- Provide constructive, objective, and scholarly feedback
- Evaluate the manuscript's originality, contribution, methodology, structure, academic quality, and relevance
- Identify issues related to plagiarism, unethical content, or research misconduct
- Provide clear recommendations (Accept, Minor Revision, Major Revision, Reject)
- Submit timely reports as per journal guidelines

###### **d. Author Response**

Authors receive reviewers' comments through the editorial office.

They must:

- Address each comment carefully
- Submit a revised manuscript
- Provide a response/revision report detailing changes made

Failure to adequately address concerns may result in further review cycles or rejection.

### **e. Editorial Decision**

The Editor-in-Chief, in consultation with the Editorial Board, takes the final decision based on:

- Reviewers' reports
- Quality of author revisions
- Alignment with journal scope and academic standards

Possible decisions include Acceptance, Minor Revision, Major Revision, or Rejection.

### **3. Review Criteria**

Reviewers evaluate manuscripts based on the following criteria:

#### **a. Originality and Contribution**

- Does the manuscript offer new insights into Islamic Studies or related interdisciplinary areas?
- Does it add value to existing scholarship?

#### **b. Methodology**

- Are the research methods appropriate, rigorous, and clearly explained?
- For religious texts, is the interpretive approach academically sound?

#### **c. Analysis and Interpretation**

- Is the analysis logical, coherent, and well-supported?
- Are interpretations accurate, balanced, and grounded in credible sources?

#### **d. Scholarly Presentation**

- Is the manuscript written clearly and academically?
- Is it well-structured and logically organized?

#### **e. References and Citations**

- Are citations complete, accurate, and consistent with journal format?
- Are primary Islamic sources and contemporary scholarship appropriately referenced?

#### **f. Ethical Considerations**

- Does the research adhere to ethical standards?
- Has the study avoided plagiarism, fabrication, or misrepresentation?
- For qualitative research involving human subjects, are ethical protocols followed?

### **4. Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest**

#### **a. Confidentiality**

- The journal maintains strict double-blind confidentiality.
- Reviewer identities are not disclosed to authors, and author identities are concealed from reviewers.
- Reviewers must not share or use manuscript content for personal research.

#### **b. Conflict of Interest**

Reviewers must declare any potential conflicts, including:

- Personal, academic, or professional relationships with the authors
- Financial or institutional connections that may bias judgment

In case of conflict, reviewers will be replaced to maintain fairness and objectivity.

The **HITEC ISLAMICUS** Peer Review Policy ensures that published research meets the highest standards of academic integrity, scholarly contribution, and ethical practice. Through a rigorous double-blind review system, the journal strives to contribute meaningfully to global discourse on Islamic Studies and related fields.

## ORIGINALITY AND PLAGIARISM POLICY

HITEC ISLAMICUS is committed to upholding the highest standards of scholarly integrity and academic excellence in the fields of Islamic Studies, and related interdisciplinary areas. The Journal publishes only original, unpublished, and ethically sound research that contributes meaningfully to academic discourse.

This policy outlines the Journal's definition of plagiarism, methods for detection, procedures for handling suspected cases, and responsibilities of authors to ensure the originality of their work.

### 1. Definition of Plagiarism

Plagiarism refers to the misappropriation of another person's ideas, words, findings, or creative expressions without proper acknowledgment. HITEC ISLAMICUS considers any of the following acts as plagiarism:

#### a. Direct Plagiarism

Copying text, data, tables, figures, translations, or any other material verbatim from another source without quotation marks or proper citation.

#### b. Paraphrasing Plagiarism

Rewriting another author's work with minor changes in wording or structure without appropriate citation, giving the impression of original authorship.

#### c. Self-Plagiarism

Reusing substantial portions of one's own previously published work (text, data, analysis, or findings) **without citation or acknowledgement**. This includes publishing the same research in multiple outlets.

#### d. Mosaic Plagiarism

Combining phrases, sentences, or ideas from multiple sources to create a seemingly original narrative **without referencing the sources**, even if the wording is changed.

#### e. Ghostwriting / Third-Party Writing

Submitting work that has been written by another individual, agency, or AI tool as one's own original research.

#### f. Inaccurate Citations

Using incorrect, incomplete, fabricated, or misleading citations to mask copied content.

### 2. Identification and Detection of Plagiarism

To maintain academic credibility, HITEC ISLAMICUS uses a multi-layered system for detecting plagiarism:

#### a. Plagiarism Detection Software

All submissions undergo similarity checking using reputable plagiarism detection tools. Manuscripts with excessive similarity may be returned to authors for revision or rejected.

#### b. Expert Editorial Screening

The editorial team reviews flagged content and evaluates whether similarities constitute plagiarism, improper attribution, or acceptable academic overlap.

#### c. Peer Reviewer Oversight

Reviewers, selected for their academic expertise, are requested to identify suspicious content or unethical academic practices during the double-blind review process.

#### d. Complaints and Post-Publication Reports

Readers, scholars, and institutions may report suspected plagiarism. All reports are investigated promptly and confidentially.

### 3. Consequences of Plagiarism

If plagiarism is confirmed at any stage of the publication process, HITEC ISLAMICUS will take the following actions:

**a. Immediate Rejection**

Any manuscript containing plagiarized content will be rejected outright without further review.

**b. Formal Notification**

The Journal reserves the right to notify:

- The author(s)
- The relevant department or institution
- Funding agencies (if applicable)

**c. Blacklisting of Authors**

Authors found guilty of significant plagiarism may be prohibited from submitting future manuscripts to the Journal for a defined period or permanently in severe cases.

**d. Action on Published Articles**

If plagiarism is discovered after publication, the Journal may:

- Issue a formal retraction
- Publish a correction or erratum
- Remove the article from the Journal's website while maintaining the ethical record

**e. Institutional Cooperation**

HITEC ISLAMICUS fully cooperates with academic and ethical bodies to investigate and address misconduct.

**4. Author Responsibilities**

Authors are expected to uphold ethical research standards by ensuring the originality of their work. Authors must:

**a. Cite All Sources Properly**

Every idea, quotation, interpretation, or dataset taken from another source must be properly cited in accordance with the Journal's referencing guidelines.

**b. Use Quotation Marks**

Direct quotations must be enclosed within quotation marks and accompanied by appropriate citations.

**c. Paraphrase Ethically**

Paraphrasing must reflect genuine rephrasing of ideas in the author's own words, not superficial changes.

**d. Avoid Redundant Publication**

Authors must not submit the same work to multiple journals or republish content already printed elsewhere.

**e. Seek Permission for Copyrighted Material**

Where necessary, authors must obtain written permission for using copyrighted content such as extended quotations, figures, or datasets.

**f. Submit Original Work Only**

All submitted manuscripts must be original contributions that have not been published previously or concurrently submitted to another journal.

**HITEC ISLAMICUS** maintains a zero-tolerance policy toward plagiarism. Through strict detection mechanisms and clear ethical guidelines, the Journal aims to preserve academic integrity, protect intellectual property, and promote original scholarship within the field of Islamic Studies and the broader academic community.

## **PUBLICATION ETHICS POLICY**

HITEC ISLAMICUS is committed to ensuring the highest standards of ethical conduct, academic integrity, and scholarly excellence. This policy outlines the ethical responsibilities of authors, reviewers, editors, and the journal to maintain transparency, fairness, and quality throughout the publication process.

### **1. Responsibilities of Authors**

Authors must submit only original, unpublished work and properly acknowledge all contributors. Plagiarism, self-plagiarism, and duplicate submissions are strictly prohibited. Authors are responsible for the accuracy and authenticity of their data, and any form of fabrication or manipulation is unacceptable.

Research must follow ethical standards, including informed consent and respect for privacy where human subjects or sensitive content are involved. Authors must disclose all conflicts of interest and present methods and findings transparently to support reproducibility. Supporting materials should be shared when ethically and practically appropriate.

### **2. Responsibilities of Reviewers**

Reviewers must treat manuscripts with strict confidentiality and avoid sharing or using the content for personal purposes. Reviews should be objective, unbiased, and constructive, focusing solely on scholarly merit.

Reviewers must accept assignments only within their expertise, complete evaluations within the given timeframe, and inform editors of any delays. Any conflict of interest that may affect impartiality must be disclosed.

### **3. Responsibilities of Editors**

Editors must ensure a fair, unbiased, and independent editorial process. Manuscripts are evaluated on quality, originality, and relevance without influence from external factors. Editors are responsible for selecting competent and impartial reviewers.

Editorial decisions are based on reviewers' reports and the academic merit of the manuscript. Editors must provide a fair process for appeals and must recuse themselves from handling submissions where they have a conflict of interest.

### **4. Responsibilities of the Journal**

HITEC ISLAMICUS upholds strict ethical standards at all stages of review and publication. The Journal maintains a clear retraction and correction policy for dealing with plagiarism, fraud, and ethical misconduct, following COPE guidelines.

The Journal enforces conflict-of-interest policies for all editorial and review staff and ensures the long-term preservation and accessibility of published work through reliable archiving systems. All procedures are conducted with full transparency and professional integrity.

The HITEC ISLAMICUS Publication Ethics Policy affirms the Journal's dedication to ethical scholarship and high-quality academic publishing. All parties including authors, reviewers, editors, and publishers must adhere to these standards to sustain the integrity and credibility of the scholarly record.

## **PRIVACY STATEMENT**

**HITEC ISLAMICUS** Journal is committed to protecting the privacy and personal information of all authors, reviewers, and readers. Any names, email addresses, or personal details provided to the Journal will be used solely for the purposes of managing the editorial and publication process. This information will not be shared, sold, or used for any purposes other than those stated.

The Journal ensures that submitted manuscripts and reviewer reports remain confidential throughout the review process. Personal data is stored securely and accessed only by authorized editorial staff.

By submitting a manuscript or engaging with the Journal, users consent to the collection and use of their information strictly in accordance with this Privacy Statement.

## WITHDRAWAL POLICY

**HITEC ISLAMICUS** aims to maintain a fair, transparent, and ethical publication process. This Withdrawal Policy outlines the procedure and conditions under which authors may withdraw a manuscript submitted to the Journal.

### 2. Grounds for Withdrawal

Authors may request to withdraw their manuscript before publication for the following reasons:

- **Significant Errors:** Discovery of major inaccuracies or mistakes requiring substantial revision.
- **Ethical Issues:** Identification of plagiarism, data fabrication, or any ethical concern after submission.
- **Authorship Changes:** Major changes in authorship that require resubmission under a revised author list.
- **Duplicate Submission:** Unintentional submission of the same manuscript to multiple journals.
- **Unsuitability or Loss of Interest:** If the authors decide the manuscript is no longer appropriate for HITEC ISLAMICUS.

### 3. Withdrawal Procedure

To withdraw a manuscript, the corresponding author must submit a written request to the **HITEC ISLAMICUS** editorial office via email. The request must include:

- Manuscript title
- Names of all authors
- Submission date
- Manuscript reference or tracking number (if available)
- Clear reason for withdrawal

The editorial office will acknowledge receipt and confirm the withdrawal once the process is completed.

### 4. Consequences of Withdrawal

- Withdrawal prior to publication does not limit the authors' ability to submit the manuscript elsewhere.
- If the manuscript is already under peer review, authors may be asked to provide a brief explanation for the withdrawal to maintain transparency with reviewers.
- Frequent or unjustified withdrawals may be recorded to prevent misuse of editorial resources.

### 5. Appeals

If a withdrawal request is questioned or declined due to procedural concerns, authors may submit a written appeal to the Editor-in-Chief. The Editor-in-Chief will review the appeal and issue a final decision.

## REFUND POLICY

### 1. Open Access and Fee Structure

HITEC ISLAMICUS operates as an open access journal and does not charge Article Processing Charges (APCs) or publication fees from authors. As no publication fee is required, refund requests generally do not apply to standard manuscript submissions.

### 2. Situations Eligible for Refund Consideration

Although publication fees are not charged, certain administrative or optional service payments (if applicable) may qualify for refund in the following exceptional cases:

#### **Duplicate Payment:**

If the same fee is accidentally paid more than once, the Journal will issue a full refund of the duplicate transaction.

#### **Technical Errors:**

If a technical malfunction during submission or payment results in an incomplete process, and verifiable evidence is provided, a full refund may be granted.

#### **Withdrawal before Processing:**

If an author withdraws the manuscript before the editorial office initiates any review or processing, any optional service fee (if paid) may be refunded in full.

#### **Processing Completed but Editorial Rejection:**

If optional pre-review services or similar paid services were utilized and the manuscript is subsequently rejected, no APC refund applies, but optional service refunds may be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

### 3. How to Request a Refund

Authors seeking a refund must submit a formal request to the **HITEC ISLAMICUS** editorial office via email. The request should include:

- Full name and contact email
- Manuscript title
- Submission or payment reference number
- Reason for requesting a refund
- Any supporting documentation (e.g., payment receipts, screenshots of errors)

Requests lacking essential documentation may take longer to process.

### 4. Processing Time

The Journal aims to process all eligible refund requests within 15 business days after confirming the details. Refunds will be credited through the original payment method used for the transaction.



## **COPYRIGHT AND PUBLISHING RIGHTS POLICY**

HITEC ISLAMICUS is committed to maintaining the highest standards of academic integrity and legal responsibility in scholarly publishing. This policy outlines the rights and obligations of authors, reviewers, and the Journal concerning the ownership and use of published material.

### **1. Open Access and Licensing**

HITEC ISLAMICUS is an open access journal, ensuring that all published articles are freely accessible to readers worldwide immediately upon release.

### **2. Author Rights and Responsibilities**

#### **Copyright Ownership:**

Authors retain full copyright of their work.

#### **Publishing License:**

By submitting a manuscript, authors grant HITEC ISLAMICUS a non-exclusive license to publish, archive, and disseminate the work in print and digital formats.

#### **Self-Archiving:**

Authors may deposit the final published version in institutional repositories, personal websites, or academic networks, provided the published citation and link to HITEC ISLAMICUS are included.

#### **Originality and Compliance:**

Authors are responsible for submitting original work, properly citing all sources, and ensuring that their manuscript does not infringe on any copyright or intellectual property rights.

#### **Collaboration during Review:**

Authors must cooperate fully during the editorial and peer-review process and address required revisions promptly.

### **3. Reviewer Rights and Responsibilities**

#### **Confidentiality:**

Reviewers must treat all manuscripts as confidential documents and may not share or use their contents for personal purposes.

#### **Integrity and Impartiality:**

Reviews should be objective, constructive, and free of personal or academic bias.

#### **Conflict of Interest:**

Reviewers must disclose any conflicts that may affect their ability to provide an unbiased review.

### **4. Journal Rights and Responsibilities**

#### **Editorial Oversight:**

HITEC ISLAMICUS oversees peer review, editing, publication, and long-term archiving of all accepted manuscripts.

#### **Intellectual Property Protection:**

The Journal safeguards the rights of authors and reviewers and takes necessary action against plagiarism, copyright violations, or unethical scholarly conduct.

#### **Dissemination and Promotion:**

The Journal reserves the right to index, archive, and promote published articles across academic platforms, repositories, and databases.

## **5. Policy Revisions**

HITEC ISLAMICUS, under HITEC University, reserves the right to update or amend this policy as needed to reflect evolving academic and legal standards. Any modifications will be communicated through the Journal's website and relevant announcements.

## **Patron in Chief**

H.E. Prof. Dr. Shiekh Kamran Afaq  
(Vice Chancellor HITEC University Taxila)



