IES Periodicals Editorial Policy and Guidelines

Approved by IES AdCom on AdCom meeting in Montreal, Canada
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1. Preamble
Quality publishing is very important for disseminating the latest knowledge and technological developments to IES membership and beyond. It is a team effort involving authors, reviewers, editorial staff and readers. IES Publications Committee aims to provide a framework that allows all constituents to participate in the publication process fairly and effectively.

This document outlines guidelines, roles and responsibilities of Author, Reviewer, Associate Editor (AE), Co-Editor-in-Chief (Co-EiC), Editor-in-Chief (EiC), and Guest Editors (GE) for special sections in the quality publishing process. It also stipulates necessary policies and procedures for IES periodical operations.

2. Guidelines for Authors, Reviewers, AEs, Co-EiCs, EiCs and GEs

Author
Authors submit their work to IES periodicals because of the reputations and effective publication processes for dissemination of research results. Authors should be aware that a paper that is worthy going through a proper review process should comprise:

- A succinct abstract limited to 150-200 words;
- An overview introduction of the paper content;
- Theoretical/conceptual background that can be justified by either mathematical formulation and/or heuristic/statistical analysis;
- Verification via simulations and/or experimental results/measurements;
- Comparative study on the basis of the state-of-the-art methodologies;
- Concluding remarks about the research findings and issues;
- Up-to-date references with demonstrated evidence of relevance to the scope of IES periodicals and conference proceedings.

The following aspects should be considered by all authors:

- Authors should be aware of the Field of Interest (FOI) of the IES which defines the scope of IES periodicals;
• Papers should be addressed to the industrial audience and contain useful procedures and methodologies. Theoretical and academic divagations (theorems and proofs) should be avoided;
• Papers should be within the scope of the IES periodical;
• Authors should focus not only on the technical subject, but also on how to present the subject in an easy-to-understand way. This can be accomplished by synergistic use of the text, graphics, equations, examples, and experiments;
• Presented results should be compared to results obtained with other methodologies. (Solving one particular problem with one particular method is not enough);
• The subject of the paper should be broad enough for the interests of general IES membership.

Reviewer

Quality review is the key to maintain the integrity of IES periodicals. The aim of the review process is to ensure that an appropriate and timely publication decision is made. A quality review should include a pinpointed summary of comments that should be installed at the beginning of the review report. Most important of all, recommendation for accept, major/minor revision, or reject should be clearly spelled out. Reasons should be given, which include:

• The technical nature of the paper which can signify the possible contribution to science, engineering and technology, or otherwise if reverse;
• Major points for revision needed to be listed item by item, similarly for minor points; and
• Advise the authors to update the references.

Authors, prospective authors, and most importantly the readers, have the right to know the caliber and status of the IES reviewers and AEs. Therefore, All IES periodicals will publish the names of all reviewers, AEs, Co-EiCs and EiCs involved in the year’s review process in each December issue.

Continuous recruitment of Reviewers is the responsibility of the EiCs, Co-EiCs and AEs, taking into account the inputs from IES Officers and AdCom members.

Associate Editor

AE is the most important position for the safeguard of review quality. Proper procedures must be strictly followed in order to ensure a paper is properly reviewed. AE should read the paper in the first instance prior to the assignment of reviewers, and ensure that

• At least 3 active quality researchers in the field of the paper are secured as reviewers. This can best be obtained using specialized software and databases such as Thomson Reuters (ISI), Scopus, and IEEExplore;
• Only accept detailed enough review reports for assessment, particularly for those rated accept and/or reject by reviewers;
• If a paper has already gone one round of “major revision” review and further major revision is deemed necessary in the second round of review, the decision of “reject” is highly recommended and the authors should be advised to make a new submission if desired. This is to avoid a long backlog of submissions.

AEs are subjected to a continued evaluation that helps them improve their performance.

**Co-Editor-in-Chief**

The major task of a Co-EiC is to ensure the timeliness and quality of the papers to be reviewed and selected to publish in their responsible technical areas. A six month period from the start of submission to the final publication should be upheld as close as possible. Steps to follow are:

• A habit for regular but frequent MC system checking is desirable. The norm is at least every three days;
• Determine whether or not the paper is worthy for review. If not, straight ‘reject’ without review is highly recommendable. The reasons for a straight ‘reject’ are limited to:
  o paper out of the periodical scope (no references to periodicals and conference proceedings sponsored or co-sponsored by IES is the first sign),
  o paper outdated (old references are the first sign),
  o paper not readable due to poor text and figures;
• Assign an appropriate AE as soon as possible;
• Check the timeliness of the review regularly, and from time to time follow up with the AE to maintain a short review time;
• Provide a precise judgment to the authors on basis of the AE and Reviewers’ recommendations.

Co-EiCs should ensure that their handlings adhere to the IES policies and guidelines, demonstrate leadership in managing an effective quality review process, timely publication of the periodical, and assist in identifying emerging areas and encouraging leaders in academia and industry to organize special sections in IES periodicals.

**Editor-in-Chief**

EiCs hold the ultimate responsibility to maintain the quality of IES periodicals. Apart from the administrative duties, the EiC has a number of other responsibilities, such as

• Continue to improve the periodical reputation, by ensuring sufficient paper counts for publication to avoid the long delay;
• Ensure each accepted paper has the references correctly and timely cited;
• Manage the selection of Special Section applications;
• Communicate with Co-EiCs regarding any information from TAB and/or the IES Vice-President for Publications (VPP);
• Ensure the timeliness of paper publications;
• Introduce and train new AEs and monitor the performance of existing AEs;
• Report to the VPP about the status and progress of the periodical operations.

EiCs should ensure that their handlings adhere to the IES periodicals editorial policies and guidelines, demonstrate leadership in managing effective quality review process, timely publication of the periodical, and assist in identifying emerging areas and encouraging scientific leaders in academia and industry to organize special sections of the periodical.

3. Appointment and Training of AE, Co-EiC and EiC

Associate Editor

Associate Editors are very important appointments to maintain the quality of IES periodicals. The minimum requirements of qualifications and experience for an AE include:

• Substantial professional standing and experience (e.g. associate professorship or above in recognized universities and industries);
• Being an active IEEE IES member;
• A demonstrated excellent publication record in IEEE transactions, in particular, IES periodicals such as Transactions on Industrial Electronics (TIE) and Transactions on Industrial Informatics (TII);
• Proven editorial experience (e.g. guest editorship, associate editorship in other scientific journals, conference special session organizers).

The nomination of an AE should follow the following steps:

1. The AE nomination form should be filled properly by a Co-EiC and sent to the EiC. In case the periodical has only one EiC, any AE can nominate a new AE;
2. The EiC acknowledges the receipt of the form and sends his/her recommendation to the VPP;
3. Upon the receipt of the nomination from the EiC, the VPP in consultation with the VP for Technical Activities, makes the final decision and the EiC will communicate it officially to the nominee within one month upon receipt of the form.

The AE nomination form contains the following data:

1. Name (first and last);
2. Title;
3. Affiliation;
4. Contact information;
5. Previous editorial experience;
6. Short (half page) résumé, including IEEE-IES membership and actual/past editorial experiences in other reputable journals;
7. List of keywords which describe your area of expertise;
8. List of journal papers published (a minimum of 5 Transactions in the last 3 years should have been published by the candidate for eligibility of AE from academia).

The nominator should also attach the following:

- The review record of the periodical of the AE nominee;
- A clear indication of the need of the AE position;
- A statement about how the new AE will impact on the geographical distribution of the editorial board.

Whenever a new AE is appointed, the Co-EiC or AE who has nominated him/her should be his/her mentor. The Co-EiC should provide the new AE appropriate guidance and advice, including:

- Method for selecting reviewers;
- Ways to assess the review reports from reviewers;
- Making appropriate recommendation for Co-EiC to take action once enough review reports are received.

An adequate training period should be not less than 12 months.

The term of AE should be 3 years, with the first year as probation period. It can be renewed providing that he/she is an active performing AE.

The Co-EiC or EiC should remove an AE whose sustained performance is demonstrably unsatisfactory. Such decisions must be approved by the VPP and VP for Technical Activities.

**Co-Editor-in-Chief and Editor-in-Chief**

Co-EiC/EiC has administrative authority. The term in office of Co-EiC/EiC is defined in the IES Publications Committee’s Operations Manual.

**4. Special Sections and Guest Editors**

Special Sections are intended as a means to target emerging areas in the FOI of IES. A Special Section (SS) proposal should include

- Special Section Call for Papers;
- Rationale (1-2 pages) with indication of the names of the coordinating GE;
- List of related papers published recently in the IES periodical targeted;
- Biographical information for all proposed GEs;
- The title of the proposed state of the art (SoA) paper authored by GEs (optional).
The decision about the acceptance of the SS is made by the EiC following proper approval procedures. If approved, the EiC will assist the GEs in managing the solicitation and review process of the SS submissions. GEs can appeal the decision to the VPP.

5. Conflict-of-Interest Policy

In order to maintain high ethical standards for IES periodicals and to avoid conflict of interest situations, the following policy concerning the review of submitted papers authored or coauthored by EiCs and Co-EiCs should be followed.

*EiC Authored/Co-Authored Paper*

- The EiC authored or coauthored papers should be sent to the VPP;
- VPP invites a well-known expert as a special AE for these papers. The special AE will remain anonymous during the review process and send his/her final report to the VPP;
- The special AE will follow the regular policy applied to all IES periodicals to review the papers;
- The special AE’s decision will be communicated to the authors by the VPP and this decision will be final and no appeal will be entertained;
- The VPP will report the number of papers handled in this way for each calendar year to the Publications Committee.

*Co-EiC Authored/Co-Authored Paper*

- The Co-EiC authored or coauthored papers should be sent to the EiC of the IES periodical concerned;
- The EiC invites a well-known expert as a special AE for these papers. The special AE will remain anonymous during the review process and send his/her final report to the EiC;
- The special AE will follow the regular policy applied to all IES periodicals to review the papers;
- The special AE’s decision will be communicated to the authors by the EiC which is final and no appeal will be entertained;
- The EiC will report the number of papers handled in this way for each calendar year to the VPP who will report it to the Publications Committee.

*GE Authored/Co-Authored Paper*

- The EiC should assign the papers authored/co-authored by the GE(s) to the same SS they are responsible for to another AE to handle. The AE should not have any liaison with the SS concerned;
- The final publication result will be conveyed to the GEs by the EiC.
6. Paper Reviews for IES Periodicals

The IES adopts a double-blind policy for paper reviews. Each paper requires at least three reviewers. Each recommendation made by the AE should be supported by a minimum of two meaningful reviews (three reviews are expected). Finally the EiC or Co-EiC makes the final decision as to the paper's acceptance for publication in IES periodicals.

AEs are not allowed to contact authors directly. Names of the AE should not be known to the authors, except when the paper is accepted and the AE name is then listed in the footnotes of the paper.

Authors have the natural right to appeal the decision. Authors should address their appeal to the EiC. In case any other IES Officer is approached for the disputes/appeals, it must be directed to the EiC who is responsible for handling these appeals/disputes. He/she can ask for advice from the VPP if necessary.

When there is an appeal, the EiC can take the following path to address the appeal. The EiC should review the quality and appropriateness of the appeal and if it falls into one of the following categories, an appropriate action should be taken accordingly:

- Paper review procedure and any handling problem: This may be addressed at the EiC Level;
- Fundamental differences with one reviewer’s comments: EiC may request the AE or Co-EiC to address this issue and add his/her comments, if necessary, to the comments and response to the authors;
- Fundamental differences with more than one or all reviewers’ comments: EiC may ask for the fourth review or take respective AE’s or Co-EiC's comments and make his/her final decision;
- A combination of all the categories above or any other different matters: the EiC is empowered to resolve the dispute in the appeal in a manner that is fair upholding the integrity of the IES periodicals.

If the EiC’s final decision is not accepted by the author(s), they can always address their complaints to the VPP, who will evaluate the complaints, and can constitute an adhoc committee to help make the final decision. The VPP's decision, when supported by the adhoc committee, will be final, and without any further recourse to appeal.
7. Best Practices

Over the many years of operations, many good practices have been formed within IES which should be followed as guides of best practices. Following are some aspects of them.

**Periodical Management**

- EiC should observe the page counts at all time so that a long backlog of “accept” papers is avoided;
- Co-EiC should assign a paper to an appropriate AE within 7 days from the paper appearing in the MC;
- AE should secure at least three reviewers within 7-10 days;
- The first round of review should not be more than three months;
- The 2nd round of review should not be more than one month;
- For a paper that has “Major Revision” for more than two rounds of review, reject should be considered but a new submission is permitted should that be the wish of the authors;
- Post IES conference paper without substantial improvement (over 40% of) over its original paper should be rejected;
- The team of GE’s for a SS must comprise one of Co-EiC’s or AEs, and any GE other than the Co-EiC has no authority to accept any paper in the SS;
- EiC should provide regular comprehensive reports about the status of the periodical to IES Publications Committee and IES AdCom. Regular interactions between the IES President, the President-Elect, the Treasurer and the VPP should be maintained;
- The VPP’s role is administrative to support an EiC in his/her operation. It is recommended that the VPP role in the editorial board of each IES periodical be frozen during its mandate and he/she is not a GE of any IES periodical’s SS;
- It is recommended that only VPP can form ad-hoc committees related to specific issue of each IES periodical or of all of them.

**Periodical Review Criteria**

**(1) Quality of the research, the results and the application prospects reported in the manuscript**

- Are there new research results in the manuscript?
- How significant is the contribution?
- Does the contribution have a potential to stimulate further research in the area addressed?
- Does the contribution offer prospects for implementation?
- Is the manuscript well written? (English is only part of the issue).
- Is there a critical evaluation of the related work to establish novelty?
- Is the manuscript technically correct?
- Are the results properly validated by analytical/simulations/prototyping methods?
The reputation of the journal, and ultimately its success, depends on the quality of research presented in the published papers. A journal with a high “reputation” will ultimately help the authors to attain higher visibility within the research community and, as a result, a larger number of citations. It is imperative the authors establish a claim to significant novelty by a critical evaluation of the most recent articles related to their claim, and provide an adequate bibliography. Of course, poorly written and out of scope papers are not acceptable.

(2) **Estimate the interest of readers**
- Is the described subject of current interest to the journal readers? (consider that this includes an industrial audience focused more on practical solutions and applicability)
- Is the title interesting and adequate?
- Is the abstract attracting attention?
- Is the length of manuscript adequate?
- Is the manuscript clearly written?

In the age of electronic publications it is not easy to be noticed (IES alone receives over 5,000 conference and journal papers per year). Therefore, very careful wording should be used in the title and in the abstract. Without a proper title and abstract a great paper might never be downloaded from IEEE Xplore and read. Often manuscripts receive negative reviews because reviewers are not able to understand the manuscript. This is the authors' (not the reviewers') fault. If reviewers have difficulties, then other readers will face the same problems and there will be no reason to publish the manuscript. Is the length of the manuscript adequate? Manuscripts should be written on the proper level. They should be easy to understand by qualified professionals working in industry, but at the same time, please avoid describing well known facts (use proper references instead). **Authors must do everything possible to ensure the paper will be noticed and read.**

(3) **Is the manuscript up-to-date and within the scope of IES periodical concerned?**
- Are authors aware of recently published papers from journals and conference proceedings?
- Is the manuscript within the scope of the journal?

It is important that the authors show they have a good knowledge of the state-of-the-art in the subject area. Reviewers should ensure that authors refer to the most recent papers that are relevant to the research. Citations of textbooks and web pages should be used only rarely. If there is doubt about the scope of the manuscript the editor may recommend resubmission of the manuscript to another journal with a more closely related scope.