Guidelines for IES Publications

This document is intended as a practical guide for Authors and Reviewers that are the main treasure of an highly reputed journal. Then the document should also define the training process and the mandate as well as the role of Associate Editors (AE), Co-Editor-in-chief (Co-EiC) and Editor-in-chief (EiC) especially in interacting with authors and reviewers. Additionally Guest Editor (GE) role and his rights regarding the choice of the content of journal special section is defined.

Authors and reviewers should be encouraged to stay with the journal offering a timely, un-biased and insightful feedback about their work, and involving them in evaluation of works that are in their area of expertise and of interest with a reasonable load well distributed along the year.

AE should be subjected to a continue evaluation that should help them in improving their performance and understanding when it is time to step down.

EiC and Co-EiC should ensure continuity to the journal policy, demonstrating leadership in taking decisions regarding the review process quality and length, the timely publication of the journal, and in identifying those emerging areas where interesting content can be found encouraging scientific leaders in academia and in industry to submit papers, participate to the review process and to organize special sections of the journal.

EiC should also offer exhaustive report about the status of the journal allowing all the IES members to be informed and IES AdCom to take decisions on the basis of the publication committee suggestions. In this sense EiC should be continuously in contact with the President, the President-elect, the treasurer and the VP for publications (VPP).

VPP role is administrative and support EiC in his operation. It is recommended that VPP role in the editorial board of each IES journal is frozen during its mandate and he is not guest EiC of IES journal special sections. It is recommended that only VPP form ad-hoc committees related to specific issue of each IES publications or of all of them.

A. Policy on Paper Reviews for IES periodicals

The IES adopted policy is double-blind. Each paper requires at least three reviewers. Each recommendation made by the AE, Co-EiC, or EiC should be supported by a minimum of two reviewers. The AE makes a recommendation based on the reviewer reports and finally the EiC, Co-EiC or Guest-EiC makes the final decision as to the paper’s acceptance for publication in IEEE periodicals.
Authors have the natural right to appeal the decision of the reviewers. AE are not allowed to contact authors directly. Names of AE should not be known to authors, except when the paper is accepted and the AE name will be listed in the footnotes of the paper. Authors should address their appeal to the EiC; in case other Officers are approached with the disputes/appeals, they have to be routed to EiC. EiC alone will handle these appeals/disputes. He can ask for advice from the VP publications if necessary.

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

- Paper review procedure and any handling problem: This may be addressed at the EiC Level itself.
- Basic 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 reply the authors.
- Basic differences with more than one or all reviewers’ comments: EiC may ask a fourth reviewer or take respective AE’s or Co-EiC’s comments and finalize his/her remark based on that.
- A combination of all the categories or something altogether different: the EiC is empowered to resolve the dispute contained in the appeal in a manner that is fair upholding the integrity of the IES periodicals.
- If the EiC final decision is not accepted by the author, the latter can always address his complaint to the VP publications; the latter will evaluate the complaint, and can constitute a special committee to help taking the final decision. The VP publications' decision, when supported by the special committee, will be final, and without any further recourse to appeal.

B. Guidelines for Authors and Reviewers

Guidance for Authors

A paper that is worthy for going through a proper review process, it should comprise

- a succinct abstract limited to 150-200 words
- an overview introduction of the paper content,
- theoretical/conceptual background that can be justified either by mathematical formulation and/or heuristic/statistical analysis,
- demonstration via simulations and/or experimental results/measurements,
- comparative study on the basis of the state-of-the-art methodologies,
- concluding remarks, and
✓ up-to-date references, a significant part of them being published in journals and conference proceedings sponsored or co-sponsored by the IES.

Guidelines for Reviewers

A pinpointed summary should be firstly installed at the beginning of the review report. Most important of all, recommendation for accept, major/minor revision, or reject should be clearly singled out. Reasons should be given. These 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.

C. Guidelines for AE, Co-EiC, EiC

Guideline for AE

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

✓ at least 3-quality active researchers in the field of the paper as reviewers are to be secured. This can best be obtained using software such as Thomson Reuter (ISI) and/or Scopus;
✓ only allow detailed review reports for assessment, particularly for those rated accept and/or reject by reviewers, and
✓ if a paper has gone 2-rounds of “Major” reviews, the decision of “reject” is highly recommended, but advise the authors to make new submission if desired. This is to avoid long backlog of submissions.

Guideline for Co-EiC

The major task of co-EiC is to ensure the timeliness and quality of the paper to be published. A 6-months period from the start of submission to the final publication date should be upheld as far as possible. Steps to follow are:

✓ A habit for regular but frequent MC system checking is desirable. The norm is at least every 3-days,
determine the paper as 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:
- paper out of the journal scope (no references to journals and conference proceedings sponsored or co-sponsored by the IES is the first sign)
- paper outdated (old references are the first sign)
- paper not readable due to poor text and figures

assign the appropriate AE as soon as possible,
check the timeliness of the review regularly, and urge the AE to keep hold a short review time, from time to time, and
provide a precise judgment to the authors on basis of the AE and reviewers’ recommendations.

Guideline for approval of Special Sections and for operation of Guest-EiC

Special Sections are intended as a mean to target emerging areas. A Special section proposal should include at least the rationale and the biography of the Guest-EiC and Guest-AE’s. Specific rules are given by the IES journals. Guest-EiC should know the maximum acceptance rate. Final decision is made by the EiC. Guest-EiC can appeal to the VP for publication.

Guideline for EiC

As the helm man of TIE, he holds the ultimate responsibility of the journal. Apart from the administrative duty that is bestowed in this position, he has a no. of major responsibilities:

- continue to improve the journal reputation, by ensuring sufficient paper count for publication to avoid the long delay,
- ensure each accepted paper has the references correctly and timely cited,
- strictly control the Special Section application. The potential Guest Editor(s) should make to publish an overview paper first prior to the forming of a SS,
- communicate with co-EiCs should there be any information is derived from TAB and/or the VP for Publication;
- ensure the timeliness of papers, and
- introduce and consolidate the AEs from the list
- report about the status of the journal to the VP for publications.

D. EiC, Co-EiC and AE training and mandate

Training and mandate of AE
Whenever a new AE is appointed, the Co-EiC or AE who has nominated him should be his mentor. The Co-EiC should provide the appropriate guidance and advices as far as possible. This includes:

- the method for selecting reviewers,
- way to assess the review reports from reviewers, and
- the decision for making the appropriate recommendation for co-EiC to take action once enough review reports are received; and
- an adequate training period should not less than 12 months.

AE does not bestow with authorization duty, there will be little personal conflict of interest for this position. Nonetheless, the term of office should be 3 years, with the first year as probation period, but allow to be repeatedly renewed providing that he is an active AE and his/her expertise is not in question. EiC can eliminate any AE should the AE’s performance is in question.

**Training and mandate of EiC and Co-EiC**

Co-EiC is a position that has administrative authority. So Conflict of Interest is unavoidable. The term in office should not be more than one term and each term is limited to 3 years. Under an unusual circumstance, subject to the approval of the President and/or VP of Publications, he may be invited to remain in office for another 3 years if an appropriate co-EiC cannot be suitably appointed in time.

**E. Recruitment of reviewers and Appointment of Associate editors**

Authors, prospective authors and most importantly the reading public have the right to know the caliber and status of the IES reviewers, and associate editors. Therefore, All IES periodicals will publish the names of all the reviewers, AE, co-EiC and EiC in each December issue.

Continuous recruitment of reviewers is the mandate of EIC, Co-EiC and AE.

Updating the AE for known and emerging topics and areas is the responsibility of EIC and co-EiC also taking into account the inputs from IES officers and Adcom members.

The nomination of an AE should follow the following steps:

1. The AE nomination form should be filled properly by Co-EiC and sent to the EIC. In case the journal has only one EiC, AE will nominate new AE.
2. The EIC (Editor-In-Chief) acknowledges the receipt of the form and sends his/her recommendation to the VP for publications.
3. Upon the receipt of the filled form and following the decision of the EIC, the VP for publications, consulting the VP for technical activities, will take
the final decision and communicate it officially to the candidate within 1 month from the reception of the form.

The AE application 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 duties in other 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 review record of the journal for which the AE is nominated
- A clear indication of the need of the AE
- A statement about how the new AE will impact on the geographical distribution of the editorial board with particular attention to the presence in the editorial board of AE of the same institution

F. Conflict-of-interest policy

In order to maintain high ethical standard for IES periodicals and to avoid even an appearance of conflict of interest to the EiC, Co-EiC, and the AE, the following policy concerning the review of papers authored or coauthored by EiC, or by Co-EiC and submitted to IES periodicals is to be followed.

Policy on EiC authored/coauthored paper for IES periodicals

1- The EiC, authored or coauthored papers have to be sent to VPP of IES.
2- VPP will invite a well-known scientist to be special Associate Editor for these papers. The special Associate Editor will remain anonymous and will send his/her final report to the VPP.

3- The special Associate Editor will follow the regular policy applied to all IES periodicals to review the papers.

4- The special Associate Editor’s decision will be communicated to the authors by the VPP and this decision will be final and no appeal will be entertained.

5- The VPP will report the number of papers handled this way for each calendar year to the Officers’ committee in his/her report for their consideration.

Policy on Co-EIC authored/coauthored paper for IES periodicals

1- The Co-EIC authored or coauthored papers have to be sent to EIC of the corresponding IES periodical.

2- EIC will invite an anonymous well-known special Associate Editor for these papers. The latter remains anonymous and will send his/her final report to the EIC.

3- The special Associate Editor will follow the regular policy applied to all IES periodicals to review the papers.

4- The special Associate Editor’s decision will be communicated to the authors by the EIC which is final and no appeal will be entertained.

5- The EIC will report the number of papers handled this way for each calendar year to the VP publications, the latter will inform the Officers’ committee in his/her report for their consideration.

Policy on Guest Editor of Special Section or Issue for IES periodicals

1- In order to get an impartial review of the paper done, a 'double' blind process is applied to all papers. Neither the reviewers know the authors, nor do the authors know the reviewers.

2- It is important that the EiC should assign the papers of the Guest Editor of the Special Issue or Section to another Associate Editor for getting the review process fairly done. Therefore, the papers written by Guest Editors of Special Sections or Issues should get reviewed by other Associate Editors and the final result be conveyed to the Guest Editor.
3- Paper written by Guest Editor of the Special Section or Issue must be processed by the Associate Editors who do not have liaison with the Special Section or Issue.

G. Best practices

✓ EiC is to observe the page count at all time so that so that long backlog of “accept” papers is to be avoided
✓ Co-EiC should assign AE within 7 days once a paper appears in the MC
✓ AE should secure at least 3-reviewers within 7-10 days
✓ First round of review should not be more than 3-months.
✓ 2nd round of review should not be more than 1-month
✓ A paper that has “Major Review” for more than 2-rounds of review, Reject is desirable. But a new submission is permitted should that be the wish of the authors
✓ Post IES conference paper without sustainable improvement more than 40% of its original paper should be rejected.
✓ The team of GE for SS must comprise one of co-EiCs, and any GE other than co-EiC has no priority right to accept any paper within the SS

Prepared by Kim Man
July 21, 2011
Reviewed and enlarged by Marco Liserre
September 5, 2011

The document include, with modifications, the document approved in Oporto, October 2009: “IES Policy on Review Dispute and Conflict of Interest”