Guidelines for Associate Editors

Introduction

This guide is intended as an instruction booklet for new Associate Editors and for existing Associate Editors who are new to ReView. It contains information on the role of the Associate Editor and a practical ReView guide, as well as detailed information on the type of decisions that can be made and how these fit into the peer review process.

When completing Associate Editor assignments, please bear in mind the journal’s aims to reduce response time to authors and maintain a high standard of papers being published. It is helpful if assessments are completed on time, and an individual paper is not subjected to more than one (and only exceptionally, two) ‘Major revision’ ‘benefit of the doubt’ revision decisions.

If you find a decision difficult and would like a second opinion, please feel free to email your concerns to your Journal Editor or directly to the Editor in Chief, for their consideration.

If you need any other assistance or have any queries on Assessment, please feel free to contact your Journal Editor (full list here). You can also report any ReView glitches or bugs to the same address.

The role of the Associate Editor

The role of the Associate Editor – always a member of the Editorial Advisory Panel - is to make acceptance/rejection decisions on academic and practice papers submitted for peer review.

You are most likely to volunteer to act as Associate Editor for papers within your personal area of experience, but this is not essential – your role is to read and generally review the paper, and to weigh up the reviewer’s advisory comments to arrive at a final overall decision.

Please return your decision within 3 weeks of receiving the task (time to decision may vary depending on Journal).

Important things to check during assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>This should be succinct, with no abbreviations. Total length should not exceed 90 characters including space.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstracts</td>
<td>These are an advert for an article and are free online. Authors should be asked to make them as accessible and clear as possible. Total length should not exceed 200 words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good illustrations</td>
<td>Figures should aim to add real value to the text yet still be easy for the reader to understand. Visit our Figure Guidance Page here for good examples of different types of figures. Authors should be asked to remove unnecessary figures or revise unclear ones (our guide to authors asks that they submit 1 figure per 500 words).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion sections</td>
<td>These should explain the relevance of academic work to practicing engineer readers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reference lists for project papers</td>
<td>These should cite the relevant published journal literature that made the work possible, particularly from ICE journals. Click <a href="#">here</a> to search past content.</td>
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<td>-----------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Length</td>
<td>The length of papers should generally be 5,000 words, but dependent on differing circumstances such as a themed issue submission or the panel’s opinion on the impact of the paper the word limit can be extended.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical merit</td>
<td>This is addressed by the reviewer reports (although you should feel free to add you own comments), and you should use these as one of the most important informers of your final decision.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>Authors with good technical content but borderline written English can be referred to our English-language editing service (click <a href="#">HERE</a> to access).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Copy-editing**

Accepted papers are subject to separate copy-editing before publication. It is the copy-editor’s role to check the grammar and spelling within the text, and to apply the house style to each paper for points 1–5:

1. Country names missing from titles and main text
2. Presence of abbreviations in abstracts (generally the Technical Editor removes these)
3. Units that are missing/non-SI
4. Overuse of capitalization
5. Libelous content.

**Six common peer-review decision types**

**Accept**

If you consider the paper is suitable for production editing as it stands and that all comments are either trivial or unfounded, you can simply accept the paper.

**Revise then accept**

Accept subject to minor revision. This usually relates to minor editorial changes as set out in the Assessor’s comments to Authors.

**Minor revision (back to Associate Editor only)**

If you consider the paper is potentially suitable for publication but needs minor yet important changes to content, and/or requires restructuring of the existing content, you need to advise the Journal Coordinator of and specify which comments should go to the author. It is important the comments are coherent and not conflicting and so you may need to edit some of the referees’ comments before they are passed to the author. You should of course also include your own comments. A ‘Revision required’ decision will result in the Journal Coordinator advising the author that the paper is under consideration for publication subject to the comments being satisfactorily addressed and re-reviewed and assessed.

**Major revision (back to Associate Editor to select reviewers)**

The paper is potentially publishable but requires major changes and/or additions to content and a second round of reviewing before Editorial Advisory Panel re-assessment. Given the increased workload and time involved, and the reduced chance of receiving a satisfactory revision, please only consider this option if you feel the journal
cannot afford to lose the paper. As for a ‘Minor revision’ decision you should provide appropriate edited, comprehensive, coherent, non-conflicting comments to enable the author(s) to consider whether to re-submit.

**Language correction - Invitation to revise and resubmit**

Authors with good technical content but borderline written English can be referred to our [English language editing service](#) or encouraged to ask a native English speaker to review their paper.

**Publish elsewhere (Transfer)**

Rejected for ICE Proceedings but potentially suitable for publication in another ICE/non-ICE journal or relevant conference (please name) so that the paper may be transferred.

**Reject**

If you consider the paper is not suitable for publication and is unlikely to be made suitable, you should reject it at pre-assessment. If you have received negative reviews for the paper, please select ‘Reject’.
Step-by-step guide to returning assessment decisions on ReView

1. Click on the weblink sent to you by the Editor in Chief ‘invitation to review letter’. Alternatively, log in to ReView as an Associate Editor. If this is your first-time using ReView, you will be asked for a password, please click ‘I forgot my password’, you will be sent an email so you can create one.

2. You can ’favourite’ the ICE Journals you work on regularly on the ReView homepage by clicking on the star next to any journal. This will move the journal ‘tile’ to the top of your screen when you log in.

Once logged in you will see the ‘Associate Editors dashboard’ with tiles indicating the action you will need to take. Please see dashboard below.
Click on ‘New submissions to assess’ followed by ‘View article’ to access the paper.

Article Icons
To the right of the article page there are 6 icons

- The pdf icon is a link to the paper.
- The pen icon is to edit the paper.
- Speech bubble is where notes can be added to the Associate Editor or Journals Editor about the paper.
- Flag icon can be used to denote a poor article, a themed issue paper, etc.
- Clock face provides as time line to see the steps the paper has been through to this point
- Email icon provides a log of correspondence about the paper, any letters that have been sent through the system.

The first time you see a new submission you will see the ‘Article view’ page which includes article details, author questionnaire answers, and any notes added by the Journal Editor (Staff check) or from the Editor in Chief.

To view comments from staff, you will need to click on + to open the ‘Staff check’ (right hand side of screen). Comments may be made on the paper to the author, see ‘Comments to Author’.
3. If the paper has been given any notes by the Editor in Chief (EiC) or Journals Editor, you will find these in the speech bubble icon on the right of the page this will show in red (unread) and change to green once read.

Or comments will be in the EIC Pre-Assessment form:

Pre-Assessment
At pre-assessment, you will be asked if the paper is eligible for peer review. The EIC may deem it suitable but will have assigned the paper to you for your specific knowledge so if you have a different opinion, please state it.

You can view the full PDF of the paper by clicking the PDF icon as shown in the ‘Article Icons’ section of this guide.

If the paper is **not suitable for peer review**, please provide reasons for your decision and pre-review desk reject. Then click ‘update and continue’ followed by ‘suggest rejection’.

If it is **suitable for peer review**, click ‘update and continue’ followed by ‘commence peer review process’.
Inviting peer reviewers

4. Clicking ‘Commence peer review process’ will allow you to search for and shortlist reviewers whom you wish to invite.

5. You can modify the number of reviewers you wish to invite by clicking the ‘Modify’ button. Please note the minimum number of reviewers should always be set at 2.

6. To select reviewers, you can select shortlisted reviewers recommended by the author, or you can search for your own reviewers, or add a new reviewer.

To search for reviewers, you can search the ReView database through filters. If you click on ‘add filter’ you will be given a list in the drop-down menu to search by:

- key words
- email
- name
- and more

An example of searching via keywords:
You can then shortlist your chosen reviewers and invite them:

You can customize the invitation letter to the reviewer if you have any specific comments on the paper you would like to share with the reviewer.

7. Once reviewers have been invited, the paper will move from the ‘Select and invite reviewer’ tile to ‘Papers awaiting review’ tile on your Associate Editor dashboard.

Making an Editor Decision
8. When all reviews have been received you will see the paper has come into ‘Awaiting my decision’ tile.
9. Click on ‘View article’ and scroll to the bottom of the page where you will now see the Reviewer comments and recommendations for the paper.

If you deem that more reviewers are necessary, you can initiate this by clicking ‘More Reviewers’ at the top of the page and from there you can invite more reviewers.

10. If you are happy with the reviews received, please proceed to complete the ‘Editor Decision’ form where you can add your own summary comments as Associate Editor.

Please ensure that all reviewer comments are constructive. To ensure the peer review comments are anonymous, please do not mention reviewer names or your own name in this box and check that any attachments uploaded by the reviewer are anonymous.
11. You can uninvite reviewers who are late or unresponsive before making your decision by clicking the blue button ‘Edit reviewer list’

An orange ‘Unassign’ button will appear. Click to unassign the reviewer(s). Emails will notify them of the unassignment.

Please note that dependent on your journal the decision letter will be sent directly to the authors.

If you have any difficulties, please contact your Journals Editor.