



GUIDANCE ON POLICY FOR, AND ETHICS OF, IUGS PUBLICATIONS

1. Introduction

1.1 This note provides guidance on the proper behavior of Editors, Authors and Reviewers in the process of scientific publishing on behalf of the International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGS).

1.2 If evidence becomes available that an Editor, Reviewer or Author is in breach of these policies. The IUGS Publications Committee may take such action as it considers appropriate. That may include refusal to publish papers written by Authors, Reviewers, Guest Editors or members of the Editorial Board found to be in breach of the policies. It will refer any infractions to the IUGS Executive Committee

2. IUGS Executive and Publications Committee

2.1 The IUGS Executive is responsible for appointing a Publications Committee Chair, who acts for and advises the Executive Council on matters relating to Union publications based on the advice of the Committee. The Committee recommends policy to the Executive Council for all IUGS publications and appoints members of the Editorial Board of the journal Episodes.

3. Publisher of Episodes

3.1 Through a Memorandum of Understanding, IUGS entrusts the responsibility of providing editorial, production and distribution support to a specific publishing organization in a specific country. The terms of the Memorandum will be carefully observed. Any programs, policies and contractual aims of that organization that might have implications for Episodes should be reported to IUGS through the Publications Committee. Written consent from IUGS is required before negotiating and finalizing any agreement or contractual arrangement that might affect the journal.

4. Editors and Guest Editors

4.1 The publishing organization will appoint an Editor of the journal and a Managing Editor to oversee production of each issue, both of whom should be experienced in international online journal publication.

4.2 The Editor represents the Journal and also the organization that has taken the responsibility of editorial, production and distribution support to the journal and is responsible for:

- all decisions on manuscripts, subscriptions and finance;
- accepting manuscripts for reviewing, appointing an Editorial Board Member to arrange the review or a reviewer, or for rejecting manuscripts at submission stage;
- deciding whether the paper should be accepted or rejected after review and deciding which papers should appear in each individual issue of the journal; and
- reporting on these matters to both the organization publishing the journal and to the IUGS through the Publications Committee.

4.3 The term “Editor”, as used in the following paragraphs, refers to Editors and Guest Editors of all IUGS publications and Editorial Board members when delegated to serve in an editorial capacity.

4.4 Editors are expected to carry out editorial duties in a manner consonant with policies set by Council and consistent with the Statutes and By-laws of the Union. They should work closely with the appropriate publications staff.

4.5 Editors have full responsibility for editorial and technical decisions on content. Members of the IUGS Executive Council and Publications committee should not intervene or comment on editorial decisions on individual manuscripts unless specifically requested to do so by the responsible Editor.

4.6 Editors must give manuscripts unbiased consideration and should process manuscripts promptly and diligently.

4.7 The journal Editor has sole responsibility for acceptance or rejection of a manuscript. Editorial Board members and Guest Editors will make recommendations on acceptance or rejection of manuscripts following peer review. Personal prejudices should not influence recommendations or decisions.

4.8 The Editor and editorial staff should not disclose information about submitted manuscripts except to Reviewers, Guest Editors and Editorial Board members, and Geological Society Publishing House staff only as necessary to ensure fair treatment.

4.9 The Editor should not handle manuscripts for which there is a real or perceived conflict of interest between the Editor and either the Author(s) or Reviewer(s). Examples include, but are not restricted to, past or current collaboration, past or current employer or employee, past or current graduate supervisor or supervisee, personal or family relationship, institutional relationship, someone with whom the Editor has had a past or on-going scientific controversy, or situations where the Editor could stand to gain financially by publication or rejection of the manuscript. The meaning of “past” is “within the past 5 years”. In any of these cases, editorial responsibility should be delegated to another Editor or Editorial Board member.

4.10 The Editor should not use information, data, theories, or interpretations of any submitted manuscript in her/his own work until that manuscript is in press or published unless the Author has given permission to do so and appropriate acknowledgment is made.

4.11 If an Editor is presented with convincing evidence that the main substance or conclusions of a publication are erroneous, he/she should facilitate publication of a report (e.g. correction, follow-up manuscript, or other appropriate means) pointing out the error and, if possible, correcting it. The report may be written by the person who discovered the error or by the original Author.

4.12 The Managing Editor is responsible for:

- deciding about the sizes of the final printed versions of the images, font sizes etc;
- monitoring and controlling the production quality as well as costs of production (e.g. of maps/photographs images/tables, and other materials to be inserted in a paper);
- regularly checking the Journal’s mail and submitting papers as quickly as possible for the Editor’s attention, action and decision;
- in consultation with the Editor, either (i) corresponding with the reviewer/authors and/or (ii) sending timely reminders to the reviewers/authors to expedite the review and (iii) obtaining the final revised manuscripts.
- providing a list of the accepted articles, in order of seniority, for the Editor to select final list for a particular issue of the journal.
- securing “DOI” numbers for all keynote, review and research papers and inserting these in the manuscript during final printing of the paper.
- ensuring that the IUGS logo and dates of receipt and acceptance of each paper appear on the first page (and also the IGCP logo if appropriate).
- calculating the amount due, if any, for color reproduction of the photographs, maps and other images and sending invoices to the authors for their payments.
- liaising with the printer to (i) get timely provision of page proofs that shall be communicated to the authors (ii) secure corrections and ensure that these are taken into account (iii) sending the final list of papers (after getting approval from the Chair of the Publication Committee) to the printer for assembly of the issue in good time for electronic publication and (iv) ensure that the printer provides the to get printed copies of the the final version on time for distribution.

- maintaining and regularly updating the list all the Members (adhering and affiliated) of the IUGS to which electronic copies of the journal are to be dispatched in liaison with the IUGS Secretariat;
- maintaining and regularly updating the list of institutional and non-institutional subscribers;
- maintaining ledgers on all income and expenditure related to the journal and regularly informing the Editor of the balance and any emerging issues.

4.13 The Guest Editor of an IUGS publication should not be the author or co-author of more than one research paper in that issue (but can contribute also to any introduction).

5 Authors and Co-authors

5.1 Manuscripts, other than review papers, should contain original, new results, data, ideas and/or interpretations not previously published or under consideration for publication elsewhere (including electronic media and databases). Previous publications can be taken into account, in brief, but the manuscript must contain substantial new data and interpretation. Review papers should include significant comment on the previous work.

5.2 Authors should be encouraged to avoid fragmentation of their published submitted work where practical. For example, full data sets should be published where possible and in press and or unpublished references to data that are germane to the paper should be avoided at all times. Tables of data too large for print publication should be lodged as supplementary material on a relevant web site.

5.3 Authors should inform the Editor of related manuscripts under consideration elsewhere and provide copies if requested.

5.4 Fabrication of data, results, selective reporting of data, theft of intellectual property of others, and plagiarism are unacceptable.

5.5 Information obtained privately (for example, in conversation, correspondence, or discussion with third parties) should not be used or reported in a manuscript without explicit permission from the party with whom the information originated. Information obtained in the course of confidential services (for example, refereeing manuscripts or grant applications) should be treated similarly.

5.6 Manuscripts will contain proper citation of works by others, especially publications of the original hypotheses, ideas, and/or data upon which the manuscript is based.

5.7 Data and/or samples upon which a publication is based should be made available to other scientists, except in special circumstances (patent protection, privacy, etc.), in the manuscript or through accessible data repositories, databases, museum collections, or other means when requested.

5.8 Attribution of authorship will be limited to those who have made significant contributions to the concept, design, execution or interpretation of the work reported in a manuscript; others who have contributed should be acknowledged. The Author order should be agreed on by all Authors as should any changes in Authors and order that occur while the manuscript is under review or revision. Changes in authorship must be submitted to the Editor in writing and must be signed by all Authors involved. Authors and Co-Authors should review and ensure the accuracy and validity of results prior to submission. Co-Authors should have the opportunity to review the manuscript before submission.

5.9 Authors should reveal to the Editor any potential conflict of interest (for example, a consulting or financial interest in a company) that might be affected by publication of the results contained in a manuscript. The Authors should ensure that no contractual relations or proprietary considerations exist that would affect the publication of information in a submitted manuscript.

5.10 Authors are encouraged to disclose major funding sources (for example, government agencies, private foundations, private industry, universities) for reported research.

5.11 Pre-publication independently by the Author/Authors via internet or other methods is prohibited.

5.12 Authors are bound by the copyright policy of the publisher, as specified at the time of original manuscript submission.

6 Reviewers

6.1 A Reviewer should disclose any real or perceived conflict of interests to the Editor before agreeing to write a review, for instance: direct past or current collaboration, employment or supervisory links, personal or family relationship, personal gain or ongoing personal controversy with the author. A Reviewer should decline to review a manuscript if he/she feels technically unqualified or if a timely review cannot be done.

6.2 The Editor will preserve anonymity of Reviewers should a Reviewer elect to remain anonymous.

6.3 Reviewers should treat the manuscript as confidential. They should not use any material the submitted paper in their own work until that manuscript is in press or published unless the Author has given permission to do so.

6.4 Reviewers should ask the Editor for permission to discuss the paper with others for specific advice, giving names and reasons for such consultation. Reviewers should alert the Editor to similar manuscripts published or under consideration for publication elsewhere if they are aware of these. But it is the responsibility of the Editor, not the Reviewer, to decide on the proper course of action.

7. Breaches of this code

7.1 If an Editor, member of the Editorial Board, Reviewer or Author is found to have breached this code then the information should be passed to the Chair of the Publications Committee who will report to the IUGS Executive Committee.

7.2 The IUGS reserves the right to deal with such breaches of this code as it sees fit and to refuse publication of papers by Authors, Reviewers or Editors who are found to be in serious breach of this code. Authors, Reviewers or Editors found to be in breach of this code will be informed in writing of the decision of the IUGS, which could require resignation and banning from future IUGS activities. If there are grounds for appeal the evidence should be submitted to the IUGS Executive Committee.

8. Mission of the IUGS journal *Episodes*

8.1 The statement of mission and scope is that:

“Episodes will deliver high quality geoscience as a high impact, highly respected, journal. It will serve the whole, diverse IUGS Community and will particularly reflect scientifically important initiatives and results from IUGS activities and joint programmes with partner Unions.

The Journal will provide a combination of invited and unsolicited papers. Papers dealing with important recent data and which are novel or innovative will be prioritised

Invitations will include:

- *lead papers requested from eminent geoscientists mainly through presentations that they give at the IGC and inter-IGC Congresses and/or at major symposia organized in IUGS activities and joint activities; and*
- *thematic issues on topics of strong current geoscience interest with guest editors.*

Also, special issues may be considered. These will be larger than the normal size of the journal but will require enhanced funding from sponsors and/or imposition of author page charges. Issues associated with the International Geological Congresses are in that category.

Reports on IUGS activities and programmes (especially those from Commissions and the IGPP) are encouraged.

IUGS News will mainly be provided through the IUGS website, E-Bulletin and social media. But important IUGS policy statements, scientific declarations and current issues of concern will be included in Episodes as short papers. Editorials or short papers might include at least 1 per year from the President of IUGS, Secretary General, Publications Committee and Editor of Episodes.

The journal will also provide summary material on the IUGS annual report and announce approved IGCP projects.”