

Science Editors' Handbook. – European Association of Science Editors, West Clandon 2003. – ISBN 0-905988-13-2. GBP 18.00.

From 1994 onwards, the European Association of Science Editors (EASE) has been publishing chapters that tried to encourage good practice in editing (and of course also writing) publications in natural science. These chapters in a form of leaflet were sent to the members of EASE as a supplement to the EASE journal "European Science Editing". On the occasion of the last EASE conference that took place in June 2003 in Bath (U.K.), 33 new short chapters were added to the previously published 14 chapters that were reissued for this publication. 37 authors from ten countries (Austria, China, Denmark, France, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, U.K., and U.S.A.) prepared the reviewed Handbook. Five members of EASE, experienced editors of science publications, edited it: H. Maisonneuve (France), P.H. Enckell (Sweden), A.K.S. Polderman (the Netherlands), R. Thapa (France), and M. Vekony (Canada). Two other well known editors, M. O'Connor and J. Gretton, produced the final format of the Handbook. The Handbook was published as a collection of chapters in a practical hard cover loose-leaf binder that enables adding new chapters or replacing the present ones by updated version. Everybody can buy the Handbook now (contact e-mail: secretary@ease.org.uk).

The size of the chapters is two to four pages (longer texts were printed by smaller size letters). The chapters are arranged in four sections. Section 1 (Editing) comprises 20 chapters on editorial policy, editing procedures, reviewing, and ethical issues. Five introductory chapters contain information how to develop editorial policy of a journal (scope, peer review, format, style, conflicts of interest, *etc.*), how to form editorial board (member characteristics and duties, rewards in heaven or cyberspace?), how to find and choose editors, and what scientific authorship means (ghost and guest authors, team authorship, quality and quantity, form of citing). The following seven chapters show how to process manuscripts, edit scientific papers for journals and conference proceedings (manuscripts, proofs), how to edit an electronic journal and cite electronic documents, what to do with papers by non-native speakers of English, and how to copy edit on

paper and on screen. Next three chapters show how to refer papers and deal with referees, and how to prepare book reviews. The last five chapters on ethical issue deal with the ethics of scientific publication, frauds, conflicts of interest, and contacts with biomedical industry.

Section 2 contains eight chapters on standards and style. They show first how the first page of journal article should look like (article title, author identification, keywords, abstract, footnotes), what are the requirements for individual issues and entire volumes of a journal (title, ISSN, page numbering, indexes, *etc.*), and what is the recommended layout of lists. The following information is very practical: how should illustrations and tables look like, which statistical errors appear often in scientific articles (12 kinds of error), which formats of references are recommended (even if standardisation in this field is improbable), and how to deal with advertising. Unfortunately, sometimes the recommendations are not strict and may lead to continuation of bad practice (as *e.g.* in the chapter of Dong and Glen on multipliers in axis labels of graphs and tables). Why to show all possibilities if only one is clear enough?

Fourteen chapters of Section 3 deal with nomenclature and terminology. First three chapters are on general rules of correct use of units, quantities, numerals, and symbols of physical quantities. The following chapters are on special nomenclature in chemistry, physics, medicine, bacteriology, virology, zoology, botany, mineralogy, and geology. I miss nomenclature in genetics that already interpenetrated all fields of biology and medicine.

Last section contains five chapters that describe publishing and printing practices such as peer review and manuscript tracking, indexing journal volumes and books, printing techniques (paper origin and choice, pre-press actions, printing, binding), and dealing with the media.

I am sure that not only editors of journals and books will often use the Handbook. Also students and scientists will find here how to prepare perfect and rapidly publishable manuscripts.

Z. ŠESTÁK (*Praha*)