

IDS Editorial Policy

Revised March 2007

Background

An Editorial Policy Working Group was convened in 2002 to take forward the question of editorial policy on the IDS website, in our publications and in other related IDS information outputs. This followed two situations which had generated quite a lot of controversy within the Institute – the post-Sept 11 coverage on the IDS website, and the publicity surrounding the Prajateerpu citizen's jury report.

The Editorial Policy Working Group consisted of Geoff Barnard, Ros Eyben (Chair), John Gaventa, Kirsty Cockburn/Clare Gorman, John Humphrey, Jim Manor, Zoe Mars, Hazel Reeves, and Ian Scoones.

The peer review policy was updated by the Strategic Management Group in 2006 and the website section was updated following consultation for Oryx in 2007.

Purpose

The IDS Editorial Policy stems from a recognition that:

- The Institute's reputation is a key asset that has been built up over many years, and is a core part of our identity and comparative advantage.
- Our reputation rests on a multiplicity of factors. Our diversity of approaches and viewpoints and our willingness to advocate new and sometimes controversial positions are among our key strengths. So too are our high standards in terms of thoroughness and intellectual rigour. We also endeavour to be good and trustworthy partners to the many individuals and organisations we work with, and to be effective communicators and advocates for change.
- The 'quality' of the work we publish under the IDS logo and attribution has an important bearing on our reputation. However, research quality is not something that can be determined absolutely. This is particularly so in a multi-disciplinary research environment where views on what constitutes sound methodology and evidence can differ.

For these and other reasons, views on what constitutes 'good research', and what is in the best interests of the Institute, can vary for entirely legitimate reasons. This Policy aims to provide a framework for working out such differences of opinion and finding a practical and broadly acceptable way forward across a range of situations.

Principles

The core principles underlying this Policy are that:

- IDS believes strongly in the importance of **academic freedom**, which includes the right for IDS and its employees to publish controversial findings, to draw challenging conclusions, and to take a radical stance.
- With this freedom comes a **responsibility** to back up conclusions with thorough research, and to take care in the way views are communicated so as to contribute to informed debate.
- In the interest of the Institute as a whole, IDS should **exercise judgement** in sensitive cases. While respecting the right of individuals to publish their views in a personal capacity, the reputation of IDS and its collaborators must also be respected and protected.

Practicalities

In order to maintain the core principles, the Policy is implemented through two separate mechanisms, each with different functions:

- **An Editorial Review Group (ERG)** is responsible for overseeing the Policy. It is convened on an ad hoc basis to deal with specific matters drawn to its attention. This group provides advice on engaging with controversial issues in a productive, informed manner.
- **A Peer Review Procedure** to deal with routine publishing, both on paper and on the website. The process of Peer Review aims to ensure high quality of all IDS outputs, and reinforce existing good practice.

Editorial Review Group (ERG)

The remit of the Editorial Review Group is to:

- Oversee the operation of the Editorial Policy.
- Deal with cases drawn to its attention in order to protect the core principles outlined above.
- Provide advice and support to IDS staff in situations when they take up controversial positions, providing critical comment to help them make their arguments more robust, advising them on how best to present their findings, and supporting them when they are under unreasonable pressure to tone something down.
- Exercise judgement in difficult cases, and decide how to balance the trade-offs involved.

It can act both before and after publication, reviewing potentially controversial material prior to wider release, and helping the Director and colleagues deal with issues that crop up after publication.

Membership

- The ERG will usually have seven members, and will be made up of five researchers (not all of whom need necessarily be Fellows), one senior administrator, and the Head of Communications. There will be no alternates.

- Members will be appointed by the Director, who will seek to maintain a balanced membership in terms of, for instance, gender, academic background and age.
- Researchers on the Group will have a term of three years. Initial appointments will be for staggered terms to allow rotation of members while providing some continuity: two researchers will be appointed for three years, two for two years, and one for one year. The senior administrator and Head of Communications will be permanent members of the Group.
- The quorum for the Group will be four, including at least three researchers, and one of the non-researcher members. By having a relatively large group, the intention is that the ERG will be able to be convened at short notice, when required, and be quorate even when a number of members are away from the Institute.
- The Group will be responsible for selecting its own Chair, and Deputy Chair, as well as co-opting a secretary to act in a support role.
- When consensus cannot be reached, decisions will be made by a vote and simple majority. The Chair (or in their absence the Deputy Chair) will have an additional casting vote in cases where votes are tied.

Procedures

- The ERG will meet on an ad hoc basis to review matters referred to it. At the request of the Director or one of its members it may also meet to discuss more general issues concerning editorial policy. A review meeting should be held at least once a year, and a report prepared for the ELC summarising the activities of the Group, and highlighting issues arising that merit wider discussion.
- In advance of publication, matters can be referred to the ERG by any IDS staff member who seeks advice on how best to handle a sensitive publication or who is concerned about a forthcoming publication. Cases must be submitted in writing (on paper or e-mail).
- In other situations, the ERG can be called upon at short notice by the Director, the Head of Communications, or another IDS staff member, to respond to a specific issue.
- In both situations the Chair of the ERG (and in their absence the Deputy Chair) will decide whether a full meeting is needed, or whether the issue can be dealt with informally, or via individual consultation with ERG members.
- Relevant documents should be submitted to the ERG in advance of meetings, along with an explanation of the issues involved and any supporting material.
- The person referring an issue to the ERG may appear before the Group to discuss their written submission. The ERG may invite any other affected parties to also attend, and may choose to refer matters to additional internal or external reviewers to get their advice. The Director may also make representations to the Group, either in person or in writing, and may be called upon to provide input where relevant.
- While reviewing a particular case, the Group will keep its internal deliberations private, and will report its decisions to the parties directly involved, both in person and in writing. Decisions will be also communicated to the Director.
- The ERG will make its own decision on how widely to publicise its conclusions in a particular case, depending on the circumstances involved. Normally decisions would be posted on the Intranet. However, there will be some situations where further airing of sensitive material or decisions would not be in the interests of

IDS, or the parties involved, and it will be up to the ERG to use its discretion in such cases.

- In extreme cases the ERG will have the authority to conclude that a specific item cannot be published under the IDS logo and attribution, or be featured on the IDS website. In such cases, the authors involved are free to publish or disseminate the material elsewhere, provided it is not presented as reflecting the views of IDS.

Peer Review Procedures

Purpose

The following Peer Review Procedures build on the core principles of academic freedom, responsibility and judgement outlined above, and reaffirm standard good practice in academic publishing. They are intended to provide a pragmatic and trustworthy mechanism for ensuring that all IDS outputs are of a high quality.

The Procedures vary depending on the type of publication or output, and are outlined below.

IDS publications

Scope: The following rules apply to all the main IDS Publication Series (currently: IDS Working Papers, Discussion Papers, Research Reports, Development Bibliographies, Policy Briefings, IDS In Focus, and the *IDS Bulletin*) and any other one-off publications published under the IDS name.

- Prior to submission to the Communications Team, all manuscripts for publication must have been **peer reviewed** and signed off by the reviewers (**one internal, one external**), with a view to ensuring that the work is of sufficient academic quality.
- **Reviewers need to have an adequate background** to comment authoritatively, and should not be directly involved in the particular research in question. But they need not necessarily be Fellows and could be drawn from other Research Teams. It is up to Research Teams to establish their own guidelines for who is an appropriate reviewer in particular instances.
- It is the responsibility of the reviewer to specify whether:
 - 1) **Minor editorial changes** are necessary.
 - 2) **Minor substantive revisions** are required, in which case the reviewer would not ask to see a revised version prior to publication.

or

 - 3) **Major substantive revisions** are required, in which case the reviewer would ask to look at the piece again before submission.
- Under either scenario, the author must provide confirmation to the Communications Team that the proposed publication has been peer reviewed by providing the name of the 2 reviewers. It is the author's responsibility to keep a copy of the reviewers' comments and to be able to demonstrate if requested that they have been taken in to account. Further details about the process are available on the IDS intranet.

- On rare occasions, a reviewer and/or the author(s) may ask for the paper to be looked at by the ERG. This will be primarily to provide advice on how to engage productively with controversial issues, rather than being used as an additional review stage in relation to academic quality.
- The Communications Team has responsibility for **copy editing, layout and production** of IDS publications and has procedures in place for each of the various IDS series (see Intranet for details). It is also responsible for checking that appropriate disclaimers are included in publications.

Other Publications, media work and the IDS website

Peer review procedures for other types of outputs are based on the same core principles and are as follows:

Type of Publication/ Output	Procedure/Comments
IDS annual report	Responsibility of the Communications Team, who check the edited text of each section with relevant Team/Unit managers before publication. The whole text is signed off by the Director or a delegated senior member of staff.
IDS website Applies to all areas of the main IDS website (www.ids.ac.uk) that use the IDS design and logo, and where the primary attribution is to IDS	<p>The Communications Team (Web Editor and Head of Communications) has overall editorial control over content on the IDS website.</p> <p>The Communications Team ensures overall quality, consistency and clarity of the website in terms of design, branding and labelling of different types of content, navigation and functionality, language and writing style, and effective communication. For this reason, material submitted will be routinely edited. Where substantive editing is needed, this will always be done in collaboration with the author, but all authors should accept that their material may need to be amended.</p> <p>The Communications Team also takes responsibility for the home page, bookshop, and Institute-wide news pages, and makes decisions on which items to highlight on the home page at any given time.</p> <p>The IDS website is managed in a decentralised way with individual areas delegated to particular Teams or Units. Responsibility for the editorial content rests with the relevant Team/Unit, and the individual responsible for updating Team web pages should have clear instructions from the manager of that Team/Unit on who can make decisions.</p> <p>With the introduction of the new content management system in 2007, the IDS website will contain all IDS</p>

	<p>publications; all publications by IDS staff (regardless of where published); and publications by partners that have been published in connection with an IDS project of programme of work. This includes unpublished and grey literature (including conference papers, workshop reports and consultancy reports). The general rule is that any documents that go into Oryx must be written up in a formal way and subject to internal quality control as set out in this policy.</p>
<p>Media work: radio, TV and newspapers</p>	<p>IDS staff are encouraged to publish newspaper articles, letters to the editor and other media pieces, and to take part in media interviews. The Communications Team must be informed, so they can help target appropriate media, provide support and advice and to coordinate any further media links.</p> <p>If the Communications Team is not informed prior to publication/broadcast (for instance due to remoteness of location), they must be informed immediately afterwards (to assist with monitoring).</p> <p>Including the IDS name in media pieces is strongly encouraged.</p>
<p>Opinion pieces</p>	<p>If staff wish to put forward controversial views they should consider the core principles outlined in the Policy and consult the Communications Team if in doubt. The ERG can be called upon to advise in sensitive cases.</p> <p>Opinion pieces can be published on the IDS website, and do not need to go through the full publication review process. But these are to be labelled appropriately, so readers are made aware of their status and do not confuse them with official IDS publications, or viewpoints. They will generally be checked by a member of the Communications Team who may refer any queries to a member of the ERG.</p>
<p>Work in progress/grey literature</p>	<p>Draft papers and other work in progress can be published on the IDS website, and do not need to go through the full publication review process. But these are to be labelled clearly as work in progress and are circulated on the understanding that the author considers the content to be sufficiently developed as to merit/warrant dissemination. In the case of any concerns about the quality of grey literature, the Communications Team can request an internal peer review.</p>
<p>External publication in</p>	<p>There is no formal internal review process for books and</p>

journals and books	articles published through external publishers (whose own peer review processes are considered to be sufficient), though authors may at their discretion choose to ask colleagues to review drafts prior to submission.
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Joint publications and websites

IDS is involved in a variety of joint publishing arrangements, where the IDS role and responsibility varies in significance and prominence. The table below provides guidelines for different situations. It is the project manager's responsibility to determine which should apply in a particular case, with advice from the Communications Team.

Type of Publication/Output	Procedure/Comments
IDS publications involving a non-IDS author	Same as for an IDS author – peer review by one internal and one external referee. ERG can be called upon to advise on or consider individual cases.
Publications produced by joint initiatives where an IDS project manager is responsible for quality control , and the publication carries the IDS logo and attribution, but it is not one of the standard IDS series Also websites developed by such initiatives as satellites to the main IDS site, or separate sites, where IDS is credited as the lead organisation	The project Manager should ensure papers are reviewed by one internal referee and are signed off by the project manager. The status of material published, and the role being played by IDS, needs to be made clear in the preface and on the website. The ERG can be called upon to advise on or consider particular cases, recognising that there are other stakeholders involved, so IDS interests are not the only factors to bear in mind.
Publications where IDS is a co-author or partner, and the organisation publishing it would like to include the IDS logo	In consultation with the Communications Team, the IDS researcher involved makes decision on whether to include the IDS logo. If it is to be included, the Communications Team must be told, so they can advise and assist. Researcher must be satisfied that appropriate quality control mechanisms are in place, and that the IDS involvement is not open to misinterpretation.
Publication from a joint programme where IDS is involved, but no IDS logo or attribution is to be included	No IDS peer review procedures required. However the Communications Team should be informed so they can make

	appropriate links from the IDS website, and deal with any queries that arise.
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Information Projects

The IDS Information Department, and some Research Teams, are responsible for managing a variety of information projects involving the collection, summarising, synthesis and dissemination of material from a variety of sources, both online and in print. These initiatives often involve multiple stakeholders, and IDS may or may not be in the lead position in terms of setting quality control criteria, or deciding on how to treat sensitive cases. They also involve a variety of branding arrangements, providing various levels of prominence to IDS. Guidelines covering these kinds of initiatives are as follows:

Quality control	Projects are responsible for developing and implementing their own quality control criteria and procedures, consistent with the strategy being followed by the project, the stakeholders and audiences involved, and the guidance provided by its relevant advisory or management boards.
IDS attribution	The IDS logo and attribution may be used on websites and other published outputs, provided the IDS role is made clear. The Communications Team should be informed of where and how the IDS logo is being used, and the quality control procedures in place, so they can assist and advise as appropriate, and make relevant links from the IDS website.
The role of the ERG	<p>If any IDS colleague has major reservations about the quality or nature of material being disseminated by an information project, and believes the project is damaging the Institute's reputation, they should in the first instance share their concerns with the information project manager. They may then decide to submit their concerns to the ERG for review.</p> <p>The ERG may also be called upon by an information project to provide advice in individual cases.</p>