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## **AYRS EDITOR – DUTIES AND GUIDANCE**

Note: This is the first draft of an on-going “job description”. If you are seriously interest is taking on this task you should contact the AYRS Office email: [office@ayrs.org](mailto:office@ayrs.org) for the latest version.

### **Formal Responsibility (from the Articles of Association)**

AYRS’ Articles of Association state that there shall be an Honorary Editor, but do not prescribe any duties to them.

However from the title it is clear that they are responsible for the Society’s publications, both periodicals (Catalyst) and any technical booklets on specialised subject. These latter have not been published for many years, but there is no reason why the series could not be continued given enough material to produce a single-subject booklet.

One thing is clear, the Editor is responsible for the quality and frequency of the Society’s printed publications, and that implies a familiarity with the tools needed to do the job<sup>1</sup>. They need their own word-processing software, and to be familiar with its use, including the use of templates. They also need effective picture-processing and drawing programs. Ideally they should have and be familiar with professional desktop publishing tools such as InDesign or Quark, as word-processors do not normally give adequate control over the placing of text and images. They also need a reasonably fast Internet connection to send files to a printing company (that does not mean fibre, a good ADSL connection will suffice). Ideally they should have a reasonably recent copy of full Acrobat program as files are sent as PDFs.

Note: In the past, the Editor has set up and maintained the Society’s website. That was a matter of convenience, as the Editor at the time was best equipped to do it. It is, however, felt that maintaining the Society’s website (as opposed to maintaining the content on it – which might be seen as “publishing”) is a job assigned by the Committee to someone and is not the automatic responsibility of any Officer.

### **Guidance – How the Editor’s job has been done**

#### **Obtaining material for publication in Catalyst**

Articles normally arrive unsolicited, both from members and non-members, and also as press releases.

Simon feels that it is not the responsibility of the Editor to generate technical articles, although they are clearly responsible for writing the editorial page and any news and comments (book reviews etc). However, this is his opinion are not something future Editors should feel bound by. After all, John Morwood, Michael Ellison and Ian Hannay all wrote technical booklets for the AYRS, as did Simon himself in pre-Catalyst days!

Articles can also be solicited by the Editor asking for them. It is also a requirement of both the John Hogg Prize and applications for grants to the Howard Fund that they should be accompanied by an article suitable for publication in Catalyst. (This will carry forward for any future prize actions as it is a useful way of both getting material and of keeping the membership appraised of entries/applications to the funds.)

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<sup>1</sup> Simon has used MS Word 2007, PaintShop Pro, IrfanView, InDesign CS5.5, and Acrobat X Pro. He also had access to Photoshop and Illustrator but seldom uses them.

Articles typically may arrive as plain text, as Word or OpenOffice documents, as PDFs, or very occasionally as hand-written or typed letters. Pictures may be photos (both as files and as prints), PowerPoint or other graphics files, or even hand-drawn sketches. Access to a scanner can be useful. Note the format of files can make a difference as to what one can do with them. Line drawings sent as JPEGs should be returned to the sender asking them to submit in a different format as JPEGs when scaled and printed invariably produce jagged lines. PNGs are much better. Best of all is to ask for the files in their original formats although this may involve some difficulty in conversion. There are a number of free conversion tools available on the WWW.

### **Peer review**

AYRS does not operate a formal peer review process. It has always been the job of the Editor to check that ideas have some hope of practical application or utility and to weed out the more obvious perpetual-motion machines (yes, we get them!) etc. Past Editors have felt they have the knowledge necessary to do this, but there is no reason why future Editors should not get help. No author is going to object on being told his article is going through peer-review.

### **Editing Articles**

For this you need a good word-processing (WP) program that you know well.

Simon habitually prepares articles in MS Word<sup>2</sup>, and has templates for articles that define standard text sizes etc. The first task therefore is to strip all formatting from the submitted text and allocate the standard styles (both paragraph and font). All graphics should be exported and removed from the file to be inserted into the final document as separate entities. (If you are trying to prepare the final document in a WP program this step may become unnecessary, but great care is needed to over-ride the automatic layout features to get a respectable and consistent look to the various articles).

The prime task having got the formatting right is to check the whole article for spelling and other mistakes.

Problems may arise formatting equations.

### **Assembling Catalyst**

The design for Catalyst was originally drawn up by its first editor, Tom Blevins, and has slowly developed since. There is no reason why it cannot be changed, but it is strongly recommended that changes are introduced gradually so that there is an appearance of continuity. It should be noted that the page size is relatively non-standard (although it is becoming more common for magazines) in that it is 11 inches by 8.25 inches (279mm by 210mm) being designed to fit both A4 and US Letter binders. (The original idea was that Catalyst would be printed simultaneously in the UK and in the US).

Catalyst was originally assembled in PageMaker, and has now migrated to InDesign. Templates exist containing all the “standard” pages plus blanks for articles; these need to be customised for each issue to update the date and serial number in the footers. There are separate templates for the covers, which have usually been prepared as a separate file from the content. A “standard” issue runs to 28 pages which if printed on 80gsm paper or lighter comes in at just under 100grams so getting the cheapest rate of Large Letter postage.

The InDesign templates could be converted to Word, but it will need a separate template for each “standard” page as a Word template defines only a single layout, fonts, headers and footers. Assembly of Catalyst in Word will need a number of file INCLUDE instructions. Care will also be needed inserting new section commands into the middle of paragraphs, so as to avoid unjustified text when changing from one column layout to another. This is where a proper desktop publishing (DTP) program scores.

When you import your article into the publication file, a good DTP program will recognise the word-processor styles and replace them with its own of the same names. Care is needed though as sometimes it will simply create a new style!

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<sup>2</sup> Primarily because he’s used it for about 30 years.

## Technical Booklets

The last technical booklet was produced in about 2000, so there are no InDesign or Pagemaker templates, only Word 97. However there is no reason why this should not be updated.

## ISSNs and Barcodes

The technical booklet and Catalyst series each have their own ISSN (International Standard Serial Number). The booklets are ISSN 0144-1396, Catalysts are ISSN 1469-6754. Each issue needs a barcode on the back cover containing the ISSN and the sequence number e.g. ISSN 1469-6754, 57. Simon used the free barcode generator at <https://www.free-barcode-generator.net/issn/> which can produce codes in a PNG format which is handy for pasting into the document. Catalysts also have a QR code on the back cover which is simply a link to the AYRS website [www.ayrs.org](http://www.ayrs.org).

## Printing

At present (2020), all of AYRS printing that we do not do ourselves is done by Rapidity Ltd of London<sup>3</sup>. Point of contact is Hubert Williams. We send them two PDF files – one of the cover, one of the content; the idea being that these can be printed on different weight papers. We normally send them the InDesign files as well in case they need them to correct any errors (colour settings etc); but, as far as we know, they have never needed them, and for Catalyst 57 the files were too large anyway, so were omitted. The files are sent as attachments to an email, and there is a size limit for the whole message of 36MB. Larger files could be uploaded by FTP, but at present we do not have an FTP login to Rapidity's new servers.

There is no real reason to continue using Rapidity other than that they understand our needs, and we have a longstanding relationship.

Print settings in Acrobat: normal resolution is 2400dpi, photo images are downsampled to 300dpi and stored as JPEGs, line drawings (monochrome images) downsampled to 1200dpi. Half-toning is left to the printer to initiate. Acrobat joboptions files are available.

## Distribution

Someone needs to be responsible for distributing publications to members and subscribers. The Editor is best placed to distribute to electronic subscribers, as all that needs is for the file to be uploaded to the website, and an email sent to the members (preferably through the [editor@ayrs.org](mailto:editor@ayrs.org) account to avoid accusations of spamming. The messages are sent with the addresses in the bcc field, and a nominal address (usually [office@ayrs.org](mailto:office@ayrs.org)) in the main address field.

Distribution of paper copies requires that they be put in an envelope, labelled, stamped and posted. The raw data is in the Membership file. Stamps cost between £300 and £400 each time. Enveloping and labelling takes several person-hours. There is a mail-merge template that can read the membership file and print the labels (eight to a sheet).

## Archives

There are nominally eight sets of AYRS archives, not all of which are complete. They are scattered around various Committee members so that in the event of a disaster, not all of them are lost. In addition there is an electronic archive of everything produced since 2000 and one or two older items.

Physical archives are held by: the Secretary, who has two, The Editor, who also has two, and two with Graeme Ward (one of which is Graeme's own) and two with Margaret Ball (assuming these have not been lost).

The electronic archive is currently held by the Editor, but needs to be extracted from Simon's computers.

## Software requirements

As noted above, currently Simon uses MS Word, Adobe InDesign CS5.5 and Adobe Acrobat X Pro. These are all professional packages and need paid licences. AYRS owns a copy of PageMaker 5.5 and of Acrobat 3, but both are well outdated.

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<sup>3</sup> The original agreement was with a sailing club friend of Simon's who gave AYRS a discount. That company has now been absorbed twice by others to form Rapidity.

Free packages that might do the job, but which Simon has not evaluated, include LibreOffice/OpenOffice (word-processing), Scribus (desktop publishing) and various free software packages that can create PDFs.

MS Publisher, at least in the versions that Simon evaluated (pre-2010), is not recommended as insufficiently flexible.