

Editorial

The current issue concentrates on education in control engineering. This is an exciting and important area in engineering education principally integrated in departments of Mechanical and Electrical Engineering but also vital in other fields such as Automotive and Chemical Engineering. It is a modern subject, calling on knowledge in computing and computers, devices and mechanical controllers, electronics, robotics and mechanical engineering, software systems and many other areas. It is the current prime representative of interdisciplinary subjects such as Metallurgical Engineering used to be in former times. Therefore it is a challenging area for engineering students and researchers. I am most grateful to our two guest editors Kiong Tan and Denis Gillet for assembling high quality papers from many corners of the world. They have succeeded in the difficult mission of presenting an outstanding selection of papers for publication.

It is a sign of the level of our contributors in this subject area that the acceptance rate for the special issue was nearly 60 percent of submitted papers. This is a significantly higher rate than we currently accept overall. Our acceptance rate for papers in the regular section of the journal is around 15 percent. As editor, I am concerned about this low acceptance rate. It is worrying because we do actually publish all papers which have been reviewed positively and have been revised by authors. There is no attrition due to our capacity which now runs to 140 full papers a year. I need to stress then, that we accept all papers we deem publishable. We can deduce from this that there are certain pervasive factors which influence the acceptability of submitted material. Here are a few of the surmised problems: many authors are unaware of what has already been published in the area of engineering education, some authors do not address the research and innovative aspects required for publication in our journal, quite a few authors are inexperienced in structuring papers and have little or no schooling in communication. Finally, a major ground for rejection is poor English to the extent that the authors' intentions are indecipherable. This is accentuated by submissions from countries with different cultures and expectations of what is a scholarly paper. We do copy-edit and try to improve the formulation and language of every paper. However there is a limit to what a copy editor can do, so that we often need to make an editorial decision of whether we can publish or not due to the language quality.

I hope for higher yields of publishable material in the future. The trend is positive, and even while we still have low acceptance rates I am pleased to say there is an improvement in sight.

Michael Wald