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International Association of Geoanalysts



Ed Williams

GEOSTANDARDS AND GEOANALYTICAL RESEARCH – IAG'S OFFICIAL JOURNAL

After a somewhat informal, though close, collaboration between the International Association of Geoanalysts and the journal *Geostandards and Geoanalytical Research* (GGR), a significant development occurred at the beginning of 2007 when the IAG took over formal responsibility for the editorial direction of the journal. As part of this restructuring, the IAG joined with

Blackwell Publishing to produce the print and electronic versions of GGR. Hence, GGR became the official journal of the International Association of Geoanalysts.

In its 30 years of publication, the journal has filled a unique niche in the world of geochemical publishing, specialising in all aspects of geological and environmental reference materials, data quality and related analytical techniques. Much of the credit for this is due to the vision of Kuppusami Govindaraju, who not only founded and edited the journal, originally known as *Geostandards Newsletter*, but also co-ordinated a remarkable network of scientists – the International Working Group on Geostandards – that advanced significantly the development of geoanalysis as a distinct discipline. For the past 10 years, growth of the journal has been overseen by the present editors, Philip Potts (The Open University, UK) and Mireille Polvé (OMP Toulouse, France). The journal has also benefited from the continuing support of the Centre de Recherches Pétrographiques et Géochimiques (Vandoeuvre, France), where the publication office continues to be based. Since 1997, a number of phased developments have been introduced to improve the communication of science in the journal, allowing it to better serve the needs of authors and readers alike.

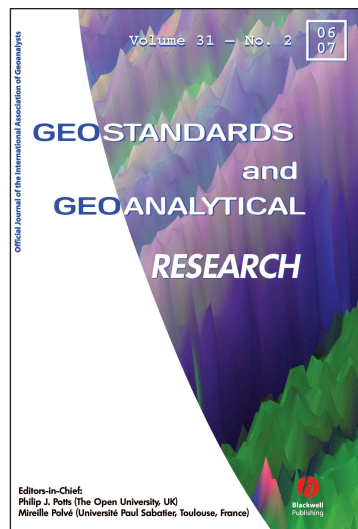
As managing editor of GGR, I would like to take this opportunity to elaborate on some of the earlier developments and to highlight the benefits provided by our new partnership with Blackwell Publishing. One of the earliest influences of IAG on the journal was the editorial decision to adopt International Standards Organisation (ISO) and International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry (IUPAC) terminology, guidelines and best practice in relation to reference materials. Since 1997, this policy has resulted in the rigorous application in articles published in the journal of a proper nomenclature for reference materials (elsewhere, often loosely referred to as 'standards'), as well as the increasing use of the concepts of traceability of measurement, fitness-for-purpose and method validation. As highlighted by Thomas Meisel in the June issue of *Elements* (p. 216), a number of important initiatives have been taken by the IAG in recent years that build on these themes, for example, the IAG's Certification Protocol, which was published in the journal following peer review.

On the practical side of publishing, decisions were made to increase the frequency of publication, which significantly reduced the time to publication, and to modify the title of the journal, decisions implemented in 2001 and 2004, respectively.

Geostandards and Geoanalytical Research is now well established and in its fourth year, and from 2007 onwards, official Journal of Citation Reports citation statistics (from Thomson Scientific) apply to the new title alone. The journal has had an electronic presence for many years through its website run from the publication office at the CRPG. This site (www.cprg.cnrs-nancy.fr/Geostandards/index.html) provides, and will continue to provide, tables of contents, indexes, English and French abstracts and keywords of published articles. It also gives links that allow easy access to the special series of articles that have appeared in the journal, such as the IAG's GeoPT™ proficiency testing programme reports, the still widely quoted reference material compilation Special Issues (SIGN I-IV) and the geochemical Reference Material bibliographies.

Our partnership with Blackwell Publishing, however, takes the electronic and print delivery of GGR to a new level. Publication is now quarterly – further reducing time to publication – and complete issues are available in PDF format on the GGR pages of Blackwell's *Synergy* in advance of print. We are also able to offer authors even earlier internet publication of their articles by taking advantage of the *Online Early* facility on *Synergy*. Colour printing is now available to those authors who require it for illustrations in their articles.

As I write, the complete archive of all journal issues back to volume 1 in 1977 has just become available online, and it can be consulted at www.blackwell-synergy.com/loi/GGR. Subscribers have full access to online content, and readers wishing to consult single articles can purchase 30 days of online access by secure web payment. These facilities, already operating in academic and institutional libraries worldwide, have enormously increased the diffusion of the science published in GGR.



However, this year's developments do not stop there. In the second half of 2007, the journal will begin to introduce online submission and tracking of manuscripts. We expect that this will result in further improvement in the processing of articles. We hope that authors will find this flexibility attractive when submitting to GGR and that reviewers will more easily interact with the editors to reach rapid decisions. The journal further intends to institute a new category of paper – Rapid Communications – intended for compact articles reporting the very latest developments in analytical techniques or analytical data in emerging areas of geoanalysis. Papers in this category will be processed to ensure the shortest possible time to publication.

All of the advantages described above apply to both major institutions and personal subscribers, and there is the additional incentive of a significant price reduction for personal subscriptions for IAG members. I urge readers of *Elements* to visit the websites of the IAG and GGR to see for themselves the latest developments I have described.

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