

Peer Reviewed Journals Appeals Policy

The following policy describes the time frame for making an appeal and the way in which SPE will address any appeals received for papers declined during the peer-review process.

Initial Decline (Before Review)

The paper is denied by the Executive Editor (EE) as unsuitable for review because it lacks one or more of the key elements required for publication: 1) originality / innovation, 2) relevance, 3) technical detail, 4) presentation and documentation, 5) writing quality, including English grammar, and 6) professional conduct.

The author has 90 days from the date of the decline letter to file an appeal. The author should send a letter to peer@spe.org outlining in detail why the paper merits review by the declining journal. If the EE finds the author's argument to be persuasive, the paper will be put into the normal peer-review process. If the EE believes that the appeal is without merit, then the appeal request and the original review details will be forwarded to the Editor-in-Chief, who will make a decision as to whether the paper should be reviewed by the declining journal or any other SPE journal. The decision of the Editor-in-Chief is final.

Decline Following Review

The author has 90 days from the date of the decline letter to file an appeal. The author should send a letter to peer@spe.org appealing the decision and responding in detail to the comments of the reviewers provided in the decline letter. The EE will review the appeal to determine whether the author's rebuttal is compelling and to be assured that the reviewers acted impartially in their review.

If the EE believes that the appeal is without merit and that the decline decision should stand, then the decline recommendation, along with the paper's original review details, will be forwarded to the Editor-in-Chief for a final decision.

If the EE finds that the appeal has (or may have) merit, he/she may pursue one of the following options:

1. Reverse the decision on the basis of the strength of the author's appeal and an evaluation of the paper's reviewer comments and history.
2. Select one (or more) additional reviewers who were not involved in the original review to further review the paper. These reviewers may be other members of the review team with appropriate expertise or individuals outside the review team with appropriate credentials. The reviewers will have access to the original review details and the author's appeal request.

In the case of Option 2, the EE will provide a recommendation to the Editor-in-Chief on the basis of the reviews submitted during the appeal. The Editor-in-Chief (EIC) may then do one of the following:

1. Accept the EE's decision. This will be the normal action by the EIC if the review process was found to be handled in an unbiased and fair way.
2. Reverse the decision on the basis of the strength of the author's appeal and an evaluation of the paper's reviewer comments and history.
3. Select one (or more) additional reviewers who were not involved in the original review to further review the paper. The Editor-in-Chief may elect to serve as this additional reviewer. Following this review, the Editor-in-Chief will make a final decision regarding the paper and communicate these results to the author, along with any comments provided by the independent reviewers and the EE. The decision of the Editor-in-Chief is final.