

Forum

Readers are invited to offer thesis and dissertation abstracts, review articles, scientific/technological notes, book reviews, comments on previously published papers and discussions of relevant scientific/technological interest, for publication in the **Forum** of *Cave and Karst Science*. All views expressed are those of the individual authors and do not represent the views of the Association unless this is expressly stated. Contributions to the *Cave and Karst Science Forum* are not subject to the normal refereeing process, but the editors reserve the right to revise or shorten text. Such changes will only be shown to the authors if they affect scientific content. Opinions expressed by authors are their responsibility and will not normally be edited, though remarks considered derogatory or libellous will be removed, at the editors’ discretion.

“History and Motivation — Inputs and Outputs”...

*[Life is like a sewer – what you get out of it depends on what you put into it. *]*

*Our Journal began its life as **The Transactions of the British Cave Research Association**. Volume 1(1) was published in January 1974, following the BCRA’s creation in June 1973. As was described in that first-ever Issue, the remit of the Transactions covered: “...all aspects of speleological science, including geology, geomorphology, hydrology, chemistry, physics, archaeology, and biology in their application to caves, as well as technological matters such as exploration, equipment, surveying, photography and documentation.” In 1982 the Journal was rebranded as “Cave Science” (The Transactions of the British Cave Research Association) and when the present editors took over in 1994 the title was changed to “Cave and Karst Science” (The Transactions of the British Cave Research Association) to make it clear that we welcomed submissions with a focus on surface karst in addition to those on caves. Throughout these improvements the Journal has kept faith with its original ethos and mission, to encourage submissions from, and to publish material relevant to, cavers with an interest in cave science, as well as from academic researchers – a policy that we support and endorse. Let us lose sight amid the plethora of journals servicing “ever more specialized” research options, we provide the reminder table below, which expands upon the basic advice that is included both on the Journal’s inner-front cover and at [<https://bcra.org.uk/pub/candks/guidelines.html>]*

*David Lowe and John Gunn, with thanks to *the late Tom Lehrer.*

Submission types	Guidelines to main potential content type	Guidelines to nominal content size	Nature of any associated review	Ancillary comments
Paper	Scientific or technological aspects linked to any relevant speleological or karst topic, including archaeology, biology, chemistry, conservation, geology, geomorphology, history, hydrology, physics, surveying and IT in a broad sense.	Normally up to 6,000 words but may be longer, subject to editorial agreement, depending upon the specific topic and the make-up of the content. Illustrations may include tables, photographs, maps and other forms of drawn graphic figures.	Submitted manuscript papers should already be at a high standard. They will be subject to peer review by two specialist referees, possibly but not always from the CaKS Editorial Advisory Board (EAB).	In the highly unlikely event that no suitably qualified reviewer(s) can be obtained for a highly specialist or esoteric submission, the editors will seek advice and recommendations from at least two individuals with “as-close-as-possible” topic-related expertise.
Report	Interim (progress) reports on the aspects of science or technology outlined above. Less rigorous submissions of descriptive material, including reports of caving and/or karst-related expeditions, are also welcome.	Typically from 500–3,000 words, but – depending upon type/content – this is negotiable “at the editors’ discretion”. Illustrations can include tables, photographs and drawn figures (as above).	Normally submissions will be reviewed by an EAB member, unless the subject matter is outside the available fields of expertise. In the latter case, assessment by a recognized specialist will be sought.	In the broad case of expedition reports , scope exists for the inclusion of narrative and/or logistical material that is perceived as being of potential value to others intending to visit the area(s) under description.
Feature	Articles dealing with core topics (please also see the Ancillary Comments) that fall outside the broad guidelines (above) either for the Paper or Report categories and/or are considered too long to appear as normal Forum contributions (see below).	Topic dependent. Generically, features may span, or – more rarely – exceed the ranges of sizes described above for papers and reports . Authors may make a case for longer than “standard” articles; such cases will be considered by the editors, taking advice from the EAB or from a recognized specialist on the topic.	As with Reports , depending upon topic, once accepted, most features are subject to review by a member of the EAB . If there is no suitable EAB reviewer, as with other submission types, a single or, occasionally, an additional review, might be requested from another specialist.	Examples of items include: new translations/presentations of historical milestone publications; appreciations of the ideas of major contributors to any cave and karst science and technology field; or considerations of past activities and/or future ways forward in cave- and karst-related studies and activities.
Forum	Personal statements or targeted comments on topical issues; discussion of published material and invited or independent book reviews. <u>Where appropriate</u> , statements should put forward an argument and provide a supporting case, backed by examples used as evidence. Please also see “ Abstracts ” (below) and Ancillary Comments.	Though, by definition, Forum provides space as an “informal talking shop” among its various functions, a target submission size is normally up to c.1,000 words, but, reflecting the variety of material that is acceptable, the sizes allowed are flexible. Intending contributors should be aware that publication might be delayed due to competition for space in some issues.	Most submissions (see Ancillary Comments) are reviewed by the Editors, who will rule on aspects of “appropriateness” as well as the interest of the content. A standard condition (featured in the Forum banner) is that there is no rigid editing of informal contributions, but: “... <i>remarks considered derogatory or libellous will be removed, at the editors’ discretion.</i> ”	Please refer also to the “ Abstracts ” entry below. Originally envisaged as a vehicle for “ <i>Letters to the Editor</i> ” and short, informal, pieces of “ <i>Scientific Correspondence</i> ”, Forum ’s scope also allows for episodic contributions, as yet best typified by an ongoing series of “ <i>Notes for Authors</i> ”. Basically, the editors are “receptive to useful ideas”.
Abstracts	Authors (or supervisors) of undergraduate or postgraduate “theses” (or “dissertations”) on cave or karst themes should submit their abstracts . When doing so, it helps to state whether the thesis is available via an on-line link or as an inter-library loan, giving details of any access restrictions or conditions. Abstracts of presentations at BCRA (and related) conferences or symposia are also welcome. Normally, Abstracts will appear as part of Forum .	The Forum guidelines above provide a useful guide, but the potential variety of material requires policies to be relaxed and flexible within reason. Research degree abstracts are text-only and cannot be revised, so must appear as facsimiles of the originals. Most other abstracts are also initially “text only” but, for re-use in CaKS, illustrations can be added (space permitting). Please refer also to points in the Ancillary Comments.	As for Forum in general, the editors will normally provide a preliminary assessment of the submission, following which they will advise on its suitability, enquire about scope for modification/clarification of the text, and/or enquire about the availability of any suitable illustrations.	Conferences and symposia are commonly regarded as transient events; hence preparation (and vetting) of abstracts is not inevitably rigorous. Commonly they contain (at best) “typos”, but may also include accidental misinformation. In an ideal world an Abstract should be “set in stone”, but the editors of CaKS prefer not to publish errors, and would request that all authors preparing abstracts take enough time to check (or recheck) and revise their submission.
Photo Feature	Images and explanatory text that introduce a feature or topic of potentially wide interest...	<u>Ideally</u> up to 3 photos and a supporting explanatory text of c.150–250 words.	As for Forum/Abstracts , the editors will comment and advise on interest and suitability.	Ideally Photo Features should aim to promote and stimulate feedback and ongoing discussion.