

The Unicode/10646 Approval Process:  
A Short Report from the Script Encoding Initiative, UC Berkeley by D. Anderson

1. New characters must be written up in a proposal document, composed of:
  - Forms (downloadable from <http://std.dkuug.dk/JTC1/SC2/WG2/docs/n3002-form.pdf>)
  - A listing of the characters, with a representative image, a proposed name, character properties (i.e., is the character a number or a mark of punctuation or letter?)
  - Documentation showing how the characters are used in texts
  - Bibliography listing recent reference works

Useful guidelines are available on the Unicode website:  
<http://www.unicode.org/pending/proposals.html>

Good examples of successful proposals:  
Greek characters: <http://www.tlg.uci.edu/Uni.prop.html>  
Ancient and modern script proposals by Michael Everson:  
<http://www.evertype.com/formal.html>

2. Find scholars and specialists to review the proposals.
  - a. Explain clearly the role of encoding (i.e., that characters -- not variants -- are being encoded in the proposal)
  - b. Get information from scholars and users on:
    - Are all the characters included?
    - Are the glyphs representative?
    - Are the names appropriate?
    - Verify character properties are correct
  - c. Make changes based on scholars' input

Note: Scholars and users should agree on the proposal; deep disagreement amongst the users may prevent the proposal from being approved.

3. All new character proposals must be approved by two standards bodies:
  - a. ISO Working Group 2 (composed of 32 voting national body representatives)
    - Several rounds of balloting
    - Comments made by national body representatives during each balloting
  - b. Unicode Technical Committee (UTC)
    - There are often questions posed by the UTC that need to be answered before approval

Note: The entire process from first proposal until acceptance is usually **2-5** years