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Northern Editorial

**Editor, proofreader and writer
specialising in history and the arts**

What to expect from the editorial process



You're on your way to publication

You've written your book (or your business documentation), done all your groundwork, sorted out your budget and found an editor you'd like to work with.

So what happens next?

What can you expect when working with an editor?

Understanding the process helps you be prepared

Every editor is different.

Just as there are different types of editing, there are different ways of approaching an edit, but generally the process will remain the same.

Let's break it down into stages ...



Hi, this is me!
Remember, if in doubt ask your editor.
No question is a daft one.

1. SORT OUT YOUR BASICS

First find the editor you'd like to work with.

When you approach your editor you're going to need to find out if they have space in their schedule.

By emailing them and giving them details of your project you're going to find out if you can work together. Tell them your genre, word count and any other information you feel is pertinent.

You'll either be invited to send more details, or they may decline the edit.

(If an editor declines the edit at this stage it will usually be because their schedule is full, or they don't work on your genre.)

Make sure your manuscript is ready.

When you approach your editor of choice, you're going to have to give them a sample of your work (three chapters from the middle of a book is good if you don't want to send the whole manuscript).

You'll then agree on the type of editing that will need to be done (a big picture developmental edit, a copyedit, a lighter proof-edit or a proofread) and a budget.

(If an editor declines the edit at this stage it will usually be because your manuscript isn't ready to be edited. Try not to take this personally - editing is an investment and before an edit is carried out it may be better for you to rewrite or self-edit. An editor will help you get the best out of your writing, but won't write your book for you.)

2. BOOK INTO THEIR SCHEDULE

Plan ahead.

Next you will have to book your work into their schedule. Never expect that as soon as you are ready to go your editor will have space for you. Depending on the scope of the edit you may have to wait a while.

Generally, editors like to know that they have work scheduled, so many will have booked work a few months in advance. Some book as much as a year in advance, some six months, and some, like me, like to book in around three months in advance to allow for the fluidity that sometimes comes with editing. If editors work in a highly specialised field you may have to wait longer.

Expect to wait a while before they can start work on your manuscript. Use this time to think about your marketing and getting a small author website up and running.

Don't see this as a bad thing – once you've found an editor who you feel you can work with the wait will be worth it.

3. SEND ALL YOUR DETAILS

Think about what your editor will need.

Before the edit starts you'll need to send all your relevant details. This includes not only the manuscript that they will be working on, but your preferences for style.

If you are an author, let the editor know if you have been using a style guide such as New Hart's Rules or the Chicago Manual of Style, and which dictionary you prefer. If you are writing for a company send the editor your company's style guide.

If you have made your own style sheet too, let your editor know.

You'll be working together to make your writing the best it can be, so collaboration is key – don't expect your editor to be a mind reader. But don't worry if you haven't used a style guide or sheet, we can decide on one and create a style sheet for you.

4. LEAVE THEM TO IT

Let the editor do their job.

Once your slot has come around you will be contacted by your editor, who will let you know that work will be starting. Now is the time to sit back and let them get on with it.

Do not hassle them with 'oh, by the way ...' or 'can you just ...' or 'when will you send ...' or 'have you finished yet?'

Editing is both an art and a science. It takes time and concentration. If your editor has questions that are important to the flow of the job they will contact you. Just sit back and wait. Patience is a virtue.

Remember: you need to send your final manuscript to your editor - once they have it please don't work on it further yourself. We don't work in a completely linear fashion so any extra writing/editing on your part will complicate the job in hand.

5. REVIEW THE DOCUMENT

Now it's time to read through and look at the changes.

If you've communicated with your editor you should know how they work on your manuscript and how many passes or rounds of editing are involved.

The terminology can be loose, but generally a pass means how many times your editor has gone through your manuscript, a round can mean how many times it goes between editor and author.

For example, when I edit your work I will generally carry out two or three passes in one round of editing. My first pass will be to look through your document for obvious layout errors, spelling mistakes, stylistic errors etc. (a fairly mechanical process). My second pass will be where the majority of work is carried out: the nitty gritty editorial process using Word's tracked changes. The third will be a final tidy up to make sure I've not missed any consistency errors.


Once the edit is complete the document will be returned to you for review and any queries and comments will be addressed.

That round of editing is then complete. Any further rounds will require payment as a new edit.

Take your time.

When you get your document back for review take your time to read it through and address any comments from the editor.

You may want to just go through it yourself, thank the editor for their time and move on, or you might want to ask the editor a few questions. This is the time to do it.



You are perfectly within your rights to reject any changes that have been made by your editor, but you must take into account that rejecting one change may make an impact the sentence and those around it.

If you really don't like, or understand, the change this is your chance to talk it through.

Remember that an editor is a trained professional, but this is your document and you must feel comfortable with the edit. All edits are suggestions for the enhancement of your work, and you have the final say (and responsibility) over your work.

As noted earlier, editors are there to make your writing as good as it can be. We don't rewrite unless it is agreed in the brief, and heavy re-writes usually fall under the role of ghostwriter.

A professional editor will never alter your authorial voice, or change wording without a good reason.

6. THE NEXT STAGE

Now's time to move onto the next stage of your publishing process.

Once you've reviewed the edit, and you're happy that the document is ready, it's time to either move on or add another round of editing.

Some people will go back and rewrite after an edit, focusing on the editors comments, while others will accept all the changes and feel that the job is done. It all depends on the type of edit carried out – a developmental edit is one at the beginning of the process, whereas after a copyedit you should be ready for the final stages of publishing.

When you're happy, it's time to get your manuscript ready for publication, either by designing yourself following the guides on self-publishing platforms or by hiring a designer/typesetter.

Finally, don't forget to hire a proofreader for that final look-over.

IT'S NOT A MYSTERIOUS PROCESS WHEN YOU KNOW HOW IT WORKS

So, you see, the editorial process isn't at all mysterious.

The main thing to remember is to talk with your editor, communicate well and don't take comments personally. It's very easy to get protective of your work, but trust your editor – they want what's best for you and your work.

Where to find a professional editor or proofreader:

- [Chartered Institute of Editing and Proofreading \(CIEP\)](#) – UK based
- [Association of Freelance Editors, Proofreaders & Indexers of Ireland \(AFEPI\)](#) – Ireland
- [Editors Canada](#) – Canada
- [Editorial Freelancers Association \(EFA\)](#) – US based
- [ACES – The Society for Editing](#) – US based
- [The Institute of Professional Editors Limited \(IPEd\)](#) – Australia and New Zealand
- [Professional Editors' Guild](#) – South Africa
- [SENSE - Society of English-language professionals](#) – Netherlands
- [Unión de Correctores – Association of proofreaders](#) – Spain
- [Mediterranean Editors and Translators](#)

A trained editor will respect your voice, will take on board your preferences and will suggest changes that can be made to enhance your writing. But the final decision is yours, and at the end of the day, the text will still sound like you.

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We have found Sara very professional, with all our work requirements meeting the required deadlines for our leading worldwide clients, which include Cunard, Isle of Man Government, Brittany Ferries and P&O.

**Miiles Cowsill
Lily/Ferry Publications**

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Sara has brilliantly managed to tighten the flow and get to the real heart of what the prose is trying to say. As a writer, it can be difficult to expect that people like one's work, but with this edit I feel confident that I can push onto the next stage of the process.

Reginn author

WANT TO WORK WITH ME?

HOW IT WORKS

01.

We make contact

AND TALK THROUGH
WHAT YOU NEED

After deciding what you need we'll agree a start date, the length of time needed for the project and the price.

Then I send you the link to my Terms and Conditions page. You'll find a booking form at the end of the page, which you fill in and submit. This provisionally books you into my schedule.

Shortly before the start date, I send you an invoice for the deposit.

02.

I get to work

THIS IS WHERE THE
MAGIC HAPPENS

Once you've paid your deposit and sent me the text, or given me your writing or research brief, I get to work.

You might hear from me during the working stage, or I might keep any questions or comments until the end of the job. It will depend on what we are working on.

This is the bit where you sit back and relax.

03.

The project is returned

IT'S TIME FOR YOU TO
LOOK EVERYTHING OVER

If I've been editing for you you'll get your document back in a couple of documents – one with Word's tracked changes showing and one 'clean' where the changes have been accepted. This makes it easier for you to read.

A proofread will have notes attached to your PDF, along with any queries that arise.

If I've been working on an assessment for you, you'll receive your report along with some practical advice on how to proceed.

Once you're happy I'll send you the final invoice. It's that easy!



Author services

Editing and proofreading make your writing the best it can be.

- Copyediting / line editing
- Proofreading
- Triage edits
- Manuscript assessments / critiques
- Mini manuscript assessments
- Developmental edits



Business services

Don't struggle with your written content. My editing and writing services are just what you need.

- Editing
- Proofreading
- Re-writing
- Writing
- Plain English editing
- Website edits and assessments



Brand guides

Don't rely on post-it notes. I'll get you organised so you stay consistent.

- Single-sheet brand guidelines
- Comprehensive brand guidelines
- Writing style guides



Historical services

Got an interesting story to tell? I can research your building's history or write your business story for you.

- Building histories
- Document transcription service
- Photograph research
- Writing services
- Genealogical services

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Honestly, I couldn't be happier
Sara Donaldson's edit was
thorough, professional, and
illuminating. She spotted logic
flaws missed by all other readers.
She is just straight up fun to talk to
and work with.

Mysti Berry, Technical writer and award-
winning author

”

Sara has been a great resource for
our business

Sara has been invaluable to our
company. The work is completed to
a very high standard.
She gives us the confidence in the
quality of our message on our
labels.

Martin Murray, Dunnet Bay Distillers
(Rock Rose Gin & Holy Grass Vodka)

”

Greatly encouraged by Sara's
professional support and
adhering to the salient points
made, I am writing with a lot
more care and more confidence.

Jo Elvery, author

Wordy stuff is what I do

I know just how to help

As a business owner sometimes you'll need to outsource. You can't do it all yourself or you'd never get your work done.

My services, tailored around your needs, include professional editing services (copyediting, developmental editing, document assessments and website assessments), proofreading, writing, historical research and maintaining consistency in your brand through editorial style guides and brand books. Basically I'm your go-to consistency consultant.



As an author you know that to look your best you sometimes need help. My editing services for authors include copyediting, proofreading and manuscript assessments. I specialise in historical fiction and non-fiction.

Contact me now

[**northerneditorial.co.uk**](http://northerneditorial.co.uk)