

Australian Standards for Editing Practice

**Council of
Australian Societies of Editors**

First published 2001 by
Council of Australian Societies of Editors (CASE)

CASE Standards Working Group, 1998–2001

Kathie Stove, convenor (South Australia)

Catherine Gray, secretary (New South Wales)

Catherine Bruce (Tasmania)

Amanda Curtin (Western Australia)

Janet Mackenzie (Victoria)

Rhana Pike (New South Wales)

Loma Snooks (Canberra)

Janette Whelan/Mary-Jane Bosch (Queensland)

© 2001

All rights reserved. This publication may be reproduced without charge or written permission provided it is copied in total and without any change, and that appropriate acknowledgment is made of the source.

Copies of the standards are available from CASE member societies (see last page).

Design and layout by Digital Graffiti — Tasmania

Printed by ARTEGRAFICA — South Australia

This recycled paper was donated by Spicers Paper, South Australia,
in the interests of Australian print publishing.

ISBN 0-646-41254-X

Contents

Preface.....	i
A. The publishing process, conventions and industry practice	1
B. Management and liaison.....	5
C. Substance and structure	7
D. Language and illustrations	9
E. Completeness and consistency.....	11

Preface

Editors are central to any publishing project; they endeavour to reconcile the needs of the author, the reader and the publishing client.

Editors look at the publication as a whole as well as at the detail.

They ensure that the focus, structure, language, style and format of a publication suit its purpose and readership, and prepare the final copy to a standard of quality suitable for the publication.

Australian Standards for Editing Practice covers the knowledge and skills expected of experienced editors, although editors' workplace responsibilities and the requirements of particular projects will determine the relevance of each standard. Editors also recognise when they need to acquire and apply specialised knowledge from other sources or professions.

These standards have been developed for editors to use:

- as a basis for judging the comprehensiveness of their own knowledge and skills
- when promoting themselves and the editing profession generally.

They will also help publishing clients understand the range of services editors provide, and guide educational institutions in developing editing courses.

These standards were devised by the Standards Working Group of the Council of Australian Societies of Editors (CASE), approved by the members of all Australian societies of editors, and ratified by CASE. They are to be reviewed at least every three years; please address comments to the closest member society (see back cover).

The working group used the Editors' Association of Canada's *Professional Editing Standards* as a starting point and the Canberra Society of Editors' *Commissioning Checklist* as a reference. Members of the Australian societies of editors contributed valuable observations and criticisms on the draft standards.

A. The publishing process, conventions and industry practice

An editor needs to understand the steps involved in the publishing process and standard industry practices for both paper-based and screen-based publications to ensure that the editing input complements the work of the rest of the publishing team.

Editing therefore requires knowledge of the following matters:

A1 Overview

- A1.1** The different types of publications, purposes and readerships, and their implications for editing and production choices.
A publication may be print-based (e.g. book, report, pamphlet) or screen-based (e.g. web site, CD-ROM).
- A1.2** The implications for accessibility, cost, production processes and schedules of different types of publications and delivery modes.
- A1.3** The steps in the publication process, the relationships between these, and their impact on the final publication.
The steps include publication planning, editing, designing, formatting, proofreading, navigation, indexing, print production (e.g. production checking, binding, distribution), screen-based procedures (e.g. programming, testing, uploading or replication, site maintenance) and marketing.
- A1.4** The need to balance time, cost and quality to suit the purpose of a publication, and the effects that choices within each of these categories will have on the final product.
- A1.5** The scope of briefing processes for the publishing team.
Depending on the specific project, the expertise required for the publishing team may include project management, editing, design, illustration, photography, electronic publishing, word-processing, typesetting, proofreading, indexing, prepress, printing, web maintenance and marketing.
- A1.6** The technology and terminology used in the industry, and emerging trends.

A2 Editing and proofreading

- A2.1** The various roles that an editor may take in a publication project, and the need to have responsibilities, authorities and accountabilities properly defined.
- A2.2** The extent of editorial intervention appropriate to a particular publication project, and the need for this level of intervention to be agreed.
- A2.3** Standard reference materials for editors.

- A2.4** The ways in which readers access and absorb information.
- A2.5** The principles of clear writing.
- A2.6** The principles of structuring material for print and on-screen use.
- A2.7** Accepted spelling, punctuation, grammar and usage in Australia, and evolving trends in language use nationally and internationally.
- A2.8** The stages in the editing and proofreading processes, and when stages should be repeated in order to ensure editorial integrity.
- A2.9** The conventional parts of a publication and their usual arrangement.
- A2.10** The conventions for citing sources.
- A2.11** The standard symbols for text mark-up and proof correction.
- A2.12** The range of fee rates for professional editorial work.

A3 Legal and ethical concerns

- A3.1** Current definitions of libel, defamation, obscenity, discriminatory language, intellectual property, plagiarism, moral rights and copyright, and their implications for a publication.
- A3.2** The implications for publishing of legislation relating to trade practices and trademarks; privacy and freedom of information; social justice, access and equity; and subjudice matters and parliamentary privilege.
- A3.3** Legal deposit requirements and registration practices.
Registration practices include cataloguing-in-publication (CIP) data, international standard book number (ISBN) and international standard serial number (ISSN).
- A3.4** The information required by law to appear in a publication.
Information required by law includes publisher's name and address, acknowledgments and copyright notices.
- A3.5** Material that may need permission for reproduction, and the procedures and responsibilities for obtaining permission.
- A3.6** When to suggest that legal advice may be necessary.
Legal advice may be required on libel, plagiarism, moral rights and reproduction of materials from other sources.
- A3.7** Ethical concerns in editing practice.
Professional objectivity and confidentiality are two examples of ethical issues.
- A3.8** Cultural sensitivities.

A4 Design, typography and formatting

A4.1 The value of professional design input.

A4.2 The use of design elements to convey meaning and enhance readability.

Design elements include fonts, layout, colour and illustrations.

A4.3 Typographical characteristics and their effects on readability in different media.

Typographical characteristics include serif and sans serif fonts, kerning, leading, font weights, capitalisation, and line and column widths.

A4.4 Requirements associated with illustrations in different media, including techniques for adapting them to fit a given space and for ensuring their correct placement in the final publication.

'Illustrations' is used in the widest sense and includes drawings, cartoons, diagrams, charts, graphs, maps, photographs, computer-generated graphics and moving images.

A4.5 Technical requirements associated with different reproduction processes.

Technical requirements include colour systems, paper sizes, screen resolution and file size.

A4.6 Requirements for sample setting and estimating the length of a publication.

Sample setting is material selected as representative of the design elements of a publication and prepared as a proof so the design can be reviewed and modified if necessary.

A5 Technology relevant to editing practice

A5.1 The use of word-processing software for editing.

Features relevant to editing include styles; revision marking; finding and replacing items; reviewing headings; and checking spelling, grammar and language level.

A5.2 Techniques for handling electronic files.

Techniques include backing up, use of virus scans, transmitting and receiving files, and converting and saving files.

A5.3 The basic principles and requirements of software for design, formatting and web authoring, and the interaction of word-processing software with these programs.

A5.4 Typical errors that may arise with scanned material, text derived from voice-recognition software, and material transferred from word-processing software to formatting software.

A6 Reproduction

- A6.1** Prepress, print production and proof-checking processes.
- A6.2** The characteristics of different types of printing, embellishment, paper and binding styles.
- A6.3** Production requirements of the different options for screen-based dissemination.
Current screen-based options include disks, CD-ROMs and the Internet; evolving technology is likely to produce further options.
- A6.4** The production options available for enabling people with disabilities to access printed and on-screen material.
- A6.5** The procedures for web site and document maintenance.
Maintenance includes handling responses, updating and authorisation procedures.

B. Management and liaison

An editor might be expected to undertake a range of tasks from managing the entire publication process to performing one very specific part of it. Regardless of the size of the publication or the extent of the editor's role, all editors need to manage their own (and sometimes others') time and resources. They also need good communication skills, initiative, tact, perseverance, flexibility and respect for others' points of view.

Editing therefore requires knowledge of the following matters:

B1 Project definition

- B1.1** How to define exactly what the project is: its purpose, readership and delivery mode.
- B1.2** How to clarify who the client is and the lines of authority.
A client is the entity to which an editor is answerable for a publishing project. The client may be an individual, group of individuals or an organisation; the client may or may not be the author.
- B1.3** The components of the publication, the standard of quality required, and the resources that may be needed:
- (a) the different publishing skills and services
 - (b) the time
 - (c) the budget
 - (d) the materials, equipment and facilities.
- B1.4** How to negotiate an acceptable and achievable result from the available resources.
- B1.5** How to find and engage the necessary publishing team members, and define their accountability, responsibility and authority.
The publishing team may include project manager, editor, designer, illustrator, photographer, electronic publishing specialists, word-processing operator, typesetter, proofreader, indexer, prepress operator, printer and marketing personnel.
- B1.6** How to establish review and approval processes.

B2 Project documentation

- B2.1** How to prepare a project plan including:
- (a) the work required
 - (b) the equipment and facilities required
 - (c) a detailed, realistic timetable
 - (d) the budget and payment schedule
 - (e) approval processes

(f) a document management system.

A document management system controls drafts, filenaming, the tracking and marking of changes, the archiving of text and original illustrations, and back-up files.

B2.2 How to prepare briefs for members of the publishing team.

B2.3 How to establish guidelines for writing, editing, design and screen-based publishing.

B2.4 The need for formal agreements that detail at least:

- (a) the responsibility, authority and accountability of each party
- (b) the services and final output required
- (c) the schedule for receipt of material and handover of completed work
- (d) methods of communication
- (e) the process for agreeing on variations
- (f) remuneration.

There should be an agreement between the editor and the client, as well as between the editor (in whatever role) and any subcontractor.

B3 Monitoring

B3.1 How to track and record a project's progress against budget, schedule, scope of work and required standard.

B3.2 The need to liaise with the client and team members regularly to meet deadlines, contain costs and prevent major problems.

B3.3 How to keep copies of successive drafts and proofs identifying the sources of changes; see also B2.1(f).

C. Substance and structure

Editors ensure that the form, arrangement, focus and length of a publication are suitable for its purpose, taking into consideration the needs of the readership, the author's intention, the available resources and the type of publication.

Editing the substance and structure of a document requires knowledge of the following matters:

C1 Appraisal

- C1.1 How to appraise the suitability and quality of the original material.
- C1.2 The length, structure and focus appropriate for the purpose of the publication, the intended readership and the medium.
- C1.3 The ways that readers may find their way around the publication.
- C1.4 The types of material from the publication that could be used in promotion and marketing.

An editor may be required to draft a blurb or select representative sections of the publication for use in promotional material.

C2 Techniques

- C2.1 The need to liaise closely with the author and/or client in making all significant substantive editing decisions.
- C2.2 How to produce a complete, coherent and balanced publication by restructuring and rewording where necessary, and by adding and deleting material.
- C2.3 When material would be better presented in another form.
Material in tabular form may sometimes be better presented as part of the text, number-laden text as a chart or table, a descriptive passage as a diagram, and a lengthy digression as an appendix.
- C2.4 The use of paragraphing, emphasis and lists to help readers scan the text.
- C2.5 The use of cross-references or electronic links to guide the reader through the publication.
- C2.6 The need for headings and other labelling devices that are relevant, logically graded, consistent and appropriate to the publication, and that accurately reflect the contents to which they apply.
Labelling devices include menus, buttons, hyperlinks, headers and footers.
- C2.7 When supplementary material is required.
Supplementary material may include a map, chronological table, glossary, genealogical table and a list of further reading.

C2.8 Whether referencing is needed and, if so, what form is appropriate, given the nature of the publication and the brief.

Referencing includes citations, bibliography, list of references, endnotes, footnotes, margin notes, cross-references, glossary and index.

C2.9 The use of lists, abstracts and metatags to identify the content for potential readers.

D. Language and illustrations

Editors ensure that the building blocks of a publication — the language and illustrations — are suitable for its purpose, taking into consideration the needs of the readership, the author's intention, the available resources and the type of publication.

Editing the language and illustrations of a publication requires knowledge of the following matters:

D1 Clarity

- D1.1** The principles of clear language.
- D1.2** How to avoid ambiguity, repetition and verbosity.
- D1.3** The use of clear and logical connections between phrases, clauses, sentences, paragraphs and sections.
- D1.4** The use of punctuation to ensure clarity of meaning and ease of reading.

D2 Voice and tone

- D2.1** The type of authorial voice or voices appropriate to the publication.
The author may be one or more individuals, a committee or an organisation. The author may or may not be the client (see B1.2).
- D2.2** The reading level, formality and terminology appropriate to the publication, and the principles of tailoring language to a specific readership.
- D2.3** When and how to maintain consistency of tone.
- D2.4** The need to monitor the text for non-inclusive or potentially offensive language.

D3 Grammar and usage

- D3.1** The conventions of grammar and syntax in written English.
- D3.2** Words and their meanings.
- D3.3** The various conventions governing the expression of numbers, dates, percentages, measurements and statistical data.
- D3.4** The various conventions governing the use of italics, capitalisation, hyphenation, symbols and shortened forms.
- D3.5** The various conventions governing quoted material and the display of lists and quotations.

D4 Spelling and punctuation

D4.1 Australian spelling and punctuation conventions.

D4.2 Alternative spelling and punctuation conventions (including UK and US forms) and when to use them.

D5 Specialised and foreign material

D5.1 Requirements relating to the language and display of specialised material.

Specialised material includes poetry, music, mathematics and scientific notation.

D5.2 When and how to replace or explain technical and specialised terms.

D5.3 Conventions for expressing foreign and historical currencies and units of measurement, and the conversion of these figures where necessary.

D5.4 The use of diacritics and conventions for foreign words and names.

D6 Illustrations and tables

'Illustrations' is used in the widest sense and includes drawings, cartoons, diagrams, charts, graphs, maps, photographs, computer-generated graphics and moving images.

D6.1 The principles of presenting information in visual form.

D6.2 The style of illustration appropriate to the publication.

D6.3 When additional illustrations might be necessary.

D6.4 The appropriate placement of illustrations in the text.

D6.5 Where captions are required, and how to write or obtain appropriate caption copy.

D6.6 The different types of graphs and charts and their uses.

D6.7 The various elements of graphs and the conventions governing their use.

Elements of graphs include axes, scales and labels.

D6.8 The various types of maps and their elements.

Elements of maps include labels, boundaries, contours, scale, legend and orientation.

D6.9 The parts of a table and the principles of clear, logical and effective structure and layout.

D6.10 How to assess whether the technical quality of illustrations is appropriate for the medium.

Technical quality refers to resolution, clarity, file size and tonal contrast.

D6.11 Accessibility requirements relating to illustrations and tables for screen-based publications.

E. Completeness and consistency

Editors minimise unnecessary distractions for the reader by ensuring that elements within the publication are complete and consistent.

Editing for completeness and consistency requires knowledge of the following matters:

E1 Integrity

E1.1 The parts of the publication, including as needed:

- (a) preliminary matter or entry sequence

Preliminary matter may include cover, title page, publishing details, table of contents, acknowledgments, abstract and summary. Entry sequence may include splash screen and home page.

- (b) body

The body includes text, tables, illustrations, captions, labels and notes.

- (c) endmatter.

Endmatter includes appendixes, glossary, references, bibliography and index.

E1.2 The need for accuracy and completeness of cross-references and links:

- (a) within the text
- (b) between the text and the illustrations and tables in the body of the publication
- (c) between the table of contents and the headings, text and page numbers in the body of the publication
- (d) between the lists of illustrations and tables in the preliminary matter and the illustrations and tables in the body of the publication.

E1.3 The need to test screen-based publications for:

- (a) performance, including links, buttons, menu selection, navigation routes, download time and interactivity

Interactivity refers to aspects of a screen-based publication designed to elicit responses from the user.

- (b) functionality using different platforms and browsers, and site integrity and accessibility
- (c) usability.

E2 Tools and procedures

- E2.1** How to use an established style guide or manual.
- E2.2** How to develop and apply an editing style sheet specific to the publication, establishing a consistent and appropriate approach to:
- (a) terminology
 - (b) spelling and capitalisation
 - (c) punctuation
 - (d) use of fonts such as bold and italic
 - (e) shortened forms
 - (f) expression of numbers, dates, units of measurement and statistical data
 - (g) citations, bibliographies and reference lists.

E3 Text

- E3.1** The need to detect and correct errors and inconsistencies in, for example:
- (a) spelling, grammar, punctuation, capitalisation, hyphenation, shortened forms and italics
 - (b) style of numbers, dates, percentages, symbols and equations
 - (c) heading hierarchies
 - (d) alphabetical and numerical sequences
Alphabetical sequences apply to bibliographies, glossaries and indexes; numerical sequences apply to chapters, paragraphs, sections, pages, illustrations and tables.
 - (e) chronology, descriptions, names and terms.
- E3.2** When explanations of symbols, terms and shortened forms are required, and the most appropriate place for them.
- E3.3** When statements seem, from general knowledge, to require checking.
- E3.4** The need for completeness and internal consistency in all referencing. Referencing includes citations, bibliography, list of references, endnotes, footnotes, margin notes, cross-references, glossary and index.
- E3.5** How to prepare copy for preliminary material, headers or footers, and covers.
- E3.6** The need for lists to help readers find information efficiently.
Lists may be compiled for contents, shortened forms, illustrations, tables and dramatis personae.
- E3.7** How to assess the length and content of an index and the conformity of its style.

E4 Illustrations and tables

- E4.1** The need for completeness, relevance and consistency of non-text elements, including their captions, labels and legends.
- E4.2** The elements that need to be checked in tables, graphs, charts, maps and diagrams (see D6.7 and D6.8).
- E4.3** The need to identify any discrepancies between statements in the text and information in illustrations and tables.

E5 Format, layout and reproduction

- E5.1** The need to check format and layout against design specifications.
Format and layout considerations include type sizes and style, line lengths, alignment, leading, heading hierarchy, weights of rules and design features.
- E5.2** How to correct layout problems.
Layout problems may include widows and orphans; rivers of space; awkward breaks in words, lines, tables and lists; and placement of design features and illustrations.
- E5.3** The need to check page numbers, headers and footers.
- E5.4** What to check at different production proofing stages and during binding.
Proofing stages for print may include galleys, page proofs, dylines, colour proofs, machine proofs and press checks; see E1.3 for testing of screen-based documents.

Council of Australian Societies of Editors member societies

The Council of Australian Societies of Editors (CASE) comprises the presidents of the following societies.

Canberra Society of Editors,
PO Box 3222, Manuka ACT 2603
www.editors.dynamite.com.au

Society of Editors (New South Wales) Inc.,
PO Box 254, Broadway NSW 2007
www.users.bigpond.com/SocEdNSW

Society of Editors (Queensland) Inc.,
PO Box 1524, Toowong Qld 4066
www.editorsqld.com

Society of Editors, South Australia,
PO Box 2328, Kent Town SA 5071
www.editors-sa.org.au

Society of Editors (Tasmania) Inc.,
PO Box 32, Sandy Bay Tas 7005
www.tas-editors.org.au

Society of Editors (Victoria) Inc.,
PO Box 176, Carlton South Vic 3053
www.socedvic.org

Society of Editors (Western Australia) Inc.,
PO Box 99, Subiaco WA 6904
bryce.ii.net/soewa