



## Editorial Agreement

This Editorial Agreement (the Agreement) shall be entered into between the person whose name and signature are provided at the bottom of this agreement, (The Author), and The Manuscript Agency (The MAA). The Agreement shall set forth the rules, conditions, and restrictions regarding our agreement to provide editorial feedback (appraisal / editing / mentoring) for the below titled manuscript.

### 1) General Notes.

- a) The Author must be at least 18 years of age or have a parent or guardian's written approval to submit the manuscript.
- b) All manuscripts must be original works. They must be submitted by the Author or Authors or with the written permission of the Author.
- c) Privacy of the Author will be respected.
- d) The Author retains ownership of their manuscript and related content at all times, The MAA makes no claims of ownership in any way on the content of the manuscript.
- e) The names and identities of appraisers used by The MAA shall always remain anonymous to ensure their privacy.
- f) While every care is taken to preserve the manuscript and associated submissions, no responsibility is accepted by The MAA for any loss or damage. It is strongly recommended that the Author retain the original of all manuscripts and associated documents submitted.
- g) Appraisal and structural reports are not to be published without The MAA's approval, and quotes and/or extracts must not be used out of context.
- h) An appraisal report may be sent to a publisher or literary agent by the Author in its entirety with the accompanying version of the manuscript that was reviewed for the appraisal.
- i) The MAA reserves the right to refuse a manuscript for appraisal.

### 2) Fees.

- a) This Agreement is valid under the conditions that The MAA receives the agreed payment from the Author for the service prior to commencement of the appraisal / editing / mentoring of the Author's manuscript. The MAA will not proceed with the service until full payment has been received.
- b) **Editorial Fees.** The agreed fees are based on Word Count. If the manuscript's word count is determined to be significantly higher for the second round of editing from the first, then the Author agrees to pay any additional charges that result from a higher word count.

### 3) Work Performed.

- a) The MAA agrees to assign the Author's work to a competent and professional editor/appraiser who the agency has vetted and supports.
- b) For appraisals, The MAA agrees to provide a minimum of four pages of written evaluation by an experienced industry professional, looking at areas such as:

presentation, accompanying material, style, narrative flow, character development, tone, voice, plotting, target audience, general interest and commercial viability. Not all appraisals will cover all of the above elements; each appraisal is unique to the manuscript we are working on at the time and the feedback will be tailored to the work submitted.

- c) The manuscript appraisal report is just that: a report. Everything the Author will need will be found within the pages of the report. The MAA will not mark-up the manuscripts in any way (unless otherwise agreed and agreed payments are made). The MAA will, however, provide page references of examples where appropriate for the Author so it is important that the Author retain a copy of the manuscript that they send to The MAA (ie without further edits) so the Author is able to refer back to this copy in relation to the appraisal report.
  - d) In the case of mentoring or editing, the Author gives The MAA permission to make modifications to the work according to the description of the editorial service (see outline below – under ‘Types of Editing’). The MAA and Author acknowledge that the assigned editor will do their best to identify and correct errors and improve the quality of the manuscript to conform to professional publishing standards.
  - e) Authors will have access to The MAA Managing Editor (Kit) for general queries but the editor/appraiser and author will not communicate directly throughout the appraisal or editorial process.
  - f) The Editor will complete the edit based on the below outline (found in Appendix 1).
- 4) Delivery.**
- a) The MAA agrees that they will deliver the appraisal report within 6-8 weeks, unless otherwise agreed.
  - b) Schedules for Editing will be communicated via email with the Author. Generally, each round of editing will take 6 weeks and there will be two rounds of editing. The Author will have the opportunity to respond to the first round of edits and will be provided approximately 4 weeks to respond. If the Author is engaging The MAA for a structural edit *and* copy edit there will be one additional round of editing by the editor and an additional occasion for the Author to respond to these edits (The MAA allows 4 weeks for the Author’s response). Any changes to the manuscript after the final edit has been delivered to the Author are the responsibility of the Author.
  - c) For Editing, the Author is expected to adhere to the above (section 4b) scheduled timeframes in order for The MAA to complete the work. All works are scheduled and disruption to the schedule by the Author will impact The MAA’s ability to deliver the outlined work.
  - d) The MAA provides appraisal reports as a PDF document, which will be sent to the Author via email, using the email address provided by the Author.
  - e) If the Author has queries about their appraisal report, all queries must be made in writing within 2 weeks from the date the appraisal report was sent to the Author. If a query about the appraisal is sent outside this timeframe, The MAA cannot guarantee a comprehensive response to the Author’s query. If the Author requires a telephone consultation, fees apply.
  - f) For all editing and mentoring work, The MAA will send the Author a marked-up Word document manuscript (using tracked changes and comments) for review. The Author agrees to make any changes to the edited manuscript on the Word Document, and to return it to The MAA. If The MAA has been contracted for structural editing work, they will also provide the Author with a structural letter outlining the main points for the structural edit.

- g) For all editing and mentoring work, The MAA will assist the Author to work with tracked changes to the best of their ability, with the understanding that The MAA is not an expert in every version of Word and therefore has limited capacity to help the Author to work with tracked changes. Whilst The MAA will assist the Author to understand the basics of tracked changes for the purpose of working with the edit, it is ultimately the responsibility of the Author to educate themselves in this program so that they are able to attend to the edits.
- h) For editing services, The MAA agrees to send to the Author a marked-up Word document for review. The Author agrees to make any changes to the edited manuscript on the Word Document, and to return it to The MAA. The Author will be held responsible for all changes made to the manuscript as they appear in the final proof version.
- i) The Editor will assist the Author to work with tracked changes to the best of their ability, with the understanding that the Editor is not an expert in every version of Word and therefore has limited capacity to help the Author to work with tracked changes. Whilst the Editor will assist the Author to understand the basics of tracked changes for the purpose of working with the edit, it is the responsibility ultimately for the Author to educate themselves in this program so that they are able to attend to the edits.
- j) All mentorships must be completed within 6 months of the start date.
- k) The details of each mentorship differ and will be agreed to via email. The above-stated timeline (section 4H) applies to all mentorships unless otherwise agreed to in writing.

**5) Indemnification.**

- a) Editing, appraisals and mentoring is a process of offering advice and suggestions to the Author. While The MAA will make every effort to bring questionable material to the attention of the Author, the Author agrees to indemnify and hold harmless The MAA from any and all claims and demands, including legal fees, arising out of any alleged libel or copyright infringement committed by the Author in creating The Work.
- b) Editing is intrinsically a subjective process of offering advice and suggestions to the Author. The MAA's sole function is to aid and assist the Author in editing the manuscript. In this light The MAA will make their best efforts to advise and suggest changes to improve the manuscript. The decision to accept or reject the editor's suggestions is finally and solely the Author's.
- c) Editing/Appraisals offer no guarantees of publication. The publishing industry is a highly competitive field and the acceptance of a manuscript for publication is the subjective decision of a literary agent, a publisher and its editors. This decision is subject to the whims of taste and perceived marketability of the manuscript. The MAA, whilst working to aid the Author in preparing the best manuscript possible given the submitted material, has no way of judging the market or the whims and caprices of the publishing industry.
- d) The MAA does not publish manuscripts and cannot guarantee that an appraisal or editing will secure the author a publishing opportunity with literary agents and/or publishers. It offers a commercial evaluation, feedback and (where appropriate) guidance on the content submitted for appraisal.

**6) Refunds and Reappraisal.**

- a) The MAA does not provide refunds for the appraisal, editing or mentoring work completed. Where The MAA deems it appropriate, they might offer a revaluation/reappraisal by a different editor/appraiser from within The MAA. The MAA will require sufficient and detailed evidence from the Author that the appraisal report or edit was lacking in order for The MAA to agree to a

reappraisal or revaluation; disagreeing with the edit and/or the appraisal content is not grounds for a refund or reappraisal.

- b) If, in the event The MAA feels a refund is applicable, printing and admin fees will not be refunded. The MAA will also retain 15% of the total fee paid (excluding printing and admin fees) to cover the time invested in the ongoing communications with the Author and general administration.

**7) Transmission of Agreement.**

- a) The Editorial Agreement will be binding upon sending a signed copy of this agreement to The Manuscript Agency to PO Box 356, Katoomba NSW 2780. Alternatively, electronic transmission to The MAA (kit@manuscriptagency.com.au) by the Author of the executed version of this Agreement will have the same force and effect as the original and will constitute the Author's agreement.
- b) The Agreement contains the entire agreement between Author and The MAA.

Author agrees to the terms of this agreement by completing and signing below.

## Declaration

Title of Manuscript \_\_\_\_\_

Author's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate by circling or highlighting the service paid for:  
Appraisal / Focused Appraisal / Copy Editing / Structural Editing / Proof reading /  
Submission Edit

Number of words in submitted manuscript: \_\_\_\_\_

Genre: \_\_\_\_\_

### Payment

Printing cost total (if submitted electronically): \_\_\_\_\_

Total payment included: \_\_\_\_\_

### Declaration by the author.

I declare that I am the author of the above work submitted to THE MAA for appraisal/editing/mentoring and that I have read the information on the company website and agree with the conditions set out therein and within this document.

Author Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 1: Notes On Editing

### What are the different types of editing?

Editors usually offer different levels of editing depending on the client's needs. Below is an outline of the editorial services that we have on offer at The MAA\*:

- **Manuscript Appraisal:** A broad overall assessment of your manuscript, outlining strengths and weaknesses – provided in the form of a report. Specific problem areas may be flagged, and general suggestions for improvement may be made, but a critique won't provide line editing or scene-by-scene advice for revision. An appraisal does not include manuscript mark ups, all comments and notes will be included in the report. The report will include a critique specific to your manuscript in relation to areas such as narrative development, plot, voice, tone, writing style, characterisation etc. It will provide an overview of where your manuscript's strengths lie and where work is required.
- **Focused Appraisal:** This service will cover all of the above, but will also include in-manuscript comments (and possibly a few edits). These will not be comprehensive like a structural edit (or even a mini structural edit), but will provide a little more guidance than receiving the appraisal report on its own. The comments will be responses to your manuscript as the editor reads through your work, rather than offering editorial solutions. These comments are useful to see how the reader is responding to your narrative. These comments tend to be more heavily utilised at the beginning of the manuscript to show what is working and what is not, it will then be up to the author to look for examples of this writing style throughout the text.
- **Structural Editing:** Focusing on structure, style, and content. The editor flags specific problems – structural difficulties, poor pacing, plot or thematic inconsistencies, dialogue concerns, undeveloped characters, stylistic troubles, point of view issues, tone inconsistencies etc. The editor usually flags these as issues with the reader through a structural letter and mark-ups on the manuscript itself, offering thoughts and recommendations at times where appropriate.
- **Copy Editing:** Editing at the sentence level, focusing on paragraph and sentence structure, word use, dialogue rhythms, tone consistency, POV consistency etc., with the aim of creating a smooth prose flow. It also includes correction of common errors (grammar, spelling, punctuation), incorrect word usages, logic lapses, and continuity problems. The editor will also often fact-check the work to the best of his/her ability.
- **Proofreading:** Checking for typos, spelling/punctuation errors, formatting mistakes, and other minor mechanical problems. Looking for outstanding errors. This is the last 'line of defence' prior to publishing and should usually be completed on the typeset/designed pages, not on the Word document.

*\*Some other editors and agencies define the above terms differently or use different terminology – this is the terminology we use at The MAA to outline the service we provide.*

### What editing can't buy...

When working with an editor, keep your expectations realistic. There are things even the best editor can't do for you. There's no set formula for dynamic plots or well-rounded characters or even good prose. And even the most accomplished editor can't turn a bad manuscript into a good one, or a mediocre manuscript into a blockbuster. They can only work with what's already there. Editors are trained to

edit within the parameters of your work. They are not ghost writers and won't rewrite your manuscript for you. They *will* highlight what isn't working and perhaps make suggestions of how to fix it, but at the end of the day *you* are the writer and the onus is on you to make the necessary changes.

Good editing can improve your manuscript, but finding publication depends on more than just the quality of your work. Effective targeting of your submissions, editors' judgment of readers' tastes, the perceived marketability of your book, and what the publisher is already publishing all play a part. An excellent, polished manuscript is essential, but it's just one piece of the total picture. There are no guarantees that it will secure you a publishing deal.

### **Who are our editors?**

Our editors are professionals with vast experience in the publishing industry and in the wider book industry. We have editors who specialise in a number of different genres – this means we should have someone who will suit your manuscript genre and style.

*Please note: we use the Style Guide (published by John Wiley & Sons) and the Macquarie Dictionary – if you have any other style you would like us to adhere to, please feel free to discuss this with us.*

### **How is the edit performed?**

We make all edits on the electronic (WORD) version of your manuscript, using track changes.

*Please note: When your manuscript is with the editor at any stage, do not make any further changes to your copy of the MS file, there will only ever be ONE working file.*

### **Structural Editing**

- **Editor's First Read** – The editor will read through your 'final' MS and make structural notes and edits. The editor will address 'issues' by using the 'comment' and 'edit' function in track changes. You will also be provided with a *formal letter* outlining all structural elements (pace, tone, voice, dialogue, characterisation etc), suggestions of where revisions could be made, and how you might tackle these suggestions – this will be a detailed document that you will be able to use to make all suggested *big* changes. (approximately 6 weeks)
- **Your read** – You will work on implementing and responding to the edits within an agreed timeframe. Your editor/or myself (Kit) will be on-hand to respond to queries you might have. Once you have finished responding to and implementing these edits you will return the MS to the editor for the copy edit. (approximately 3-4 weeks)
- You may receive one more copy of the MS addressing *just* the structural concerns, however this is dependent on the MS and its needs. (approximately 6 weeks)

### **Copy Editing**

- **Editor's First Read** – The editor will use track changes to mark up all edits and queries. This is the process where we look at elements such as inadvertent typos, punctuation errors, misspellings, page formatting, sentence structure, paragraph arrangement, and clarity – while maintaining your unique voice. (approximately 6 weeks)

- Your read – you will need to respond to the copy edits by accepting the ones you agree with and leaving the ones you don't wish to implement – you will need to leave a comment to outline your reasons. Please address all 'editor comments' in this read; to the best of your ability. Please respond to all edits and comments in this read-through so that the editor can take the MS into the next edit phase when it is returned to them. Return the MS to the editor – this document should look 'cleaner' than the one you received, with just comments, additional author edits and rejected edits marked-up. (approximately 3-4 weeks)
- Editor's Second Read – This should be the editor's final read of the MS. They will address your edits and finalise other edits in this read – it will often come back to you at this point (just to confirm one or two 'areas of concern'). They do a close read to pick up any missed/necessary mechanical copy edits and prepare the document for typesetting/or submission to publishers/agents. (approximately 6 weeks)

### **Structural Edit + Copy Edit**

- Editor's First Read – The editor will read through your 'final' MS and make structural notes and edits. The editor will address 'issues' by using the '*comment*' and '*edit*' function in track changes. You will also be provided with a *formal letter* outlining all structural elements (pace, tone, voice, dialogue, characterisation etc), suggestions of where revisions could be made, and how you might tackle these suggestions – this will be a detailed document that you will be able to use to make all suggested *big* changes. (approximately 6 weeks)
- Your read – You will work on implementing and responding to the edits within an agreed timeframe. Your editor/or myself (Kit) will be on-hand to respond to queries you might have. Once you have finished responding to and implementing these edits you will return the MS to the editor for the copy edit. (approximately 3-4 weeks)
- Editor's Second Read – In this round of editing, we look at elements such as inadvertent typos, punctuation errors, misspellings, page formatting, sentence structure, paragraph arrangement, and clarity – while maintaining your unique voice. We will also finalise the structural issues during this read. (approximately 6 weeks)
- Your read – you will need to respond to the copy edits (and outstanding structural edits). Please address all 'editor comments' in this read; to the best of your ability. Please respond to all edits and comments in this read-through so that the editor can take the MS into the next edit phase when it is returned to them. Return the MS to the editor – this document should look 'cleaner' than the one you received, with just comments, additional author edits and rejected edits marked-up. (approximately 3-4 weeks)
- Editor's Final Read – This should be the editor's final read of the MS. They will address your edits and finalise other edits in this read. They do a close read to pick up any missed/necessary mechanical copy edits and prepare the document for typesetting/or submission to publishers/agents. (approximately 6 weeks)

### **Combined Copy and Structural Edit**

This is primarily a copy edit. However, we will make note of where structural changes would be advised. The onus would be on you, the author, to make these changes if you choose to.



Generally, a combined edit will include two read-throughs of your manuscript. This should only be used in the instance where it is primarily a copy edit with the requirement of a few additional comments on the structure. Please note that if major structural changes are made it could affect the relevance of some of the copy-editing mark-ups.

- Editor's First Read – The editor will mark up any structural concerns through the 'comments' function. All copy edits will be included as outlined in Copy Editing above.
- Your read – See Copy Editing (above).
- Editor's Second Read – See Copy Editing (above).

### **Proof read**

Once the manuscript has been through the editing process it can be sent to a proof reader.

We will read through your printed manuscript and make notes and mark-ups on the electronic document, using tracked changes – this will help you to see any missed typos, punctuation/spelling errors and note any outstanding glaring structural issues.

(approximately 4 weeks)

### **Do I have to agree with all the edits?**

Absolutely not! However, I would urge you to consider all edits and ask yourself: 'Why is this being queried? Is there a better way of approaching this in my manuscript?' If one reader is stumbling over something in your text, then I can guarantee that it will be a stumbling block for others. But, at the end of the day, it is your work and it will be your name on the dust jacket so you have to stay true to yourself 😊

### **Disclaimer**

Please note that editing offers no guarantees that your work will be published. Publication is a commercial transaction between a business (publishing house) and an author, and not even the most experienced literary agents can be sure that they can place a manuscript with a publishing house. What it does offer is an opportunity to benefit from professional advice that will help you get your manuscript to a standard acceptable to a publisher.

MAA reserves the right to take on a manuscript and author for its editorial services. The editorial service relates to one particular manuscript; it cannot be spread across a number of manuscripts.

The editorial fee is payable in advance to The Manuscript Appraisal Agency.