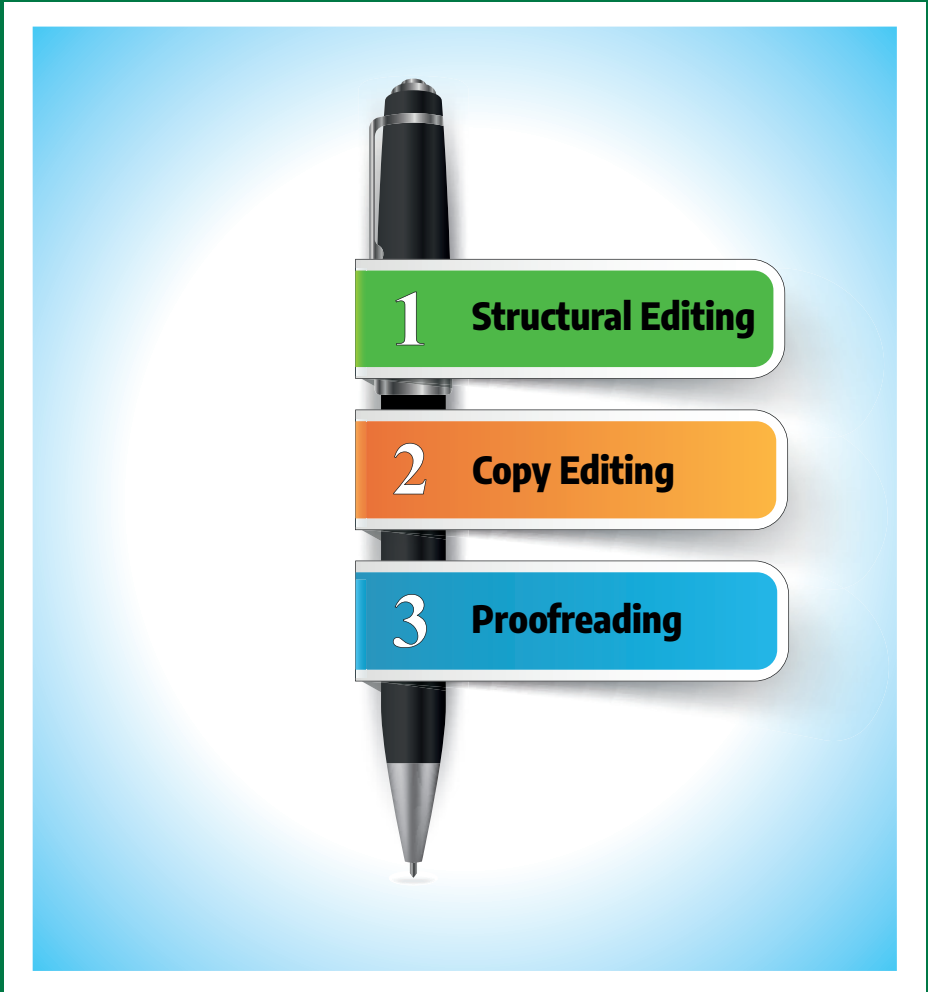


TO THE POINT



The Three Stages
of Editing

THE EDITING PROCESS: Polishing your manuscript

A badly edited book (or one that has not been edited at all) is usually a negative experience for both the reader and the author. Editing is the all-important first step in preparing your Word manuscript for publication and helps to ensure that the words on the page showcase your writing skills to their best advantage.

The benefits of having your written manuscript reviewed by a professional editor cannot be overstated. As an author, no doubt you've spent many hours labouring over your work to the point where you've become too close to the material to be objective. When you read your own writing, you're conscious of what you meant to say, so your brain fills in any gaps or overlooks any errors that may appear on the page. However, your text may be less clear to someone reading it for the first time.

An experienced professional editor brings a 'fresh set of eyes' to any publishing project – not only identifying and correcting punctuation, spelling or grammatical errors but also improving structure and flow for a smoother reading experience, without impinging on your writing style or author voice. Authors are always at liberty to decline an editor's suggestions, but most people are pleasantly surprised at the skills an editor brings to the table.



The book editing process should be a collaborative activity that involves an ongoing conversation between the author and the editor. Throughout the entire editing process, we encourage you to ask questions and to query any changes or editorial suggestions that do not resonate well with you. By working in close partnership with you, we can help you produce the best possible outcome for your written manuscript in terms of a high-quality published book you will be proud to share with the world.

THE THREE STAGES OF EDITING

1. **STRUCTURAL EDITING** (also called developmental editing) – the ‘big picture’ overview
2. **COPY EDITING** (also called line editing) – involves reviewing the fine details i.e. grammar, spelling and punctuation
3. **PROOFREADING** – the final polishing stage



STRUCTURAL EDITING

The recommended first step in any book publishing project is the structural editing stage. Sometimes referred to as developmental or substantive editing, it is usually the most creative and time-consuming stage in the editing process. Structural editing involves organising the sequence of your written content while polishing your use of language and maintaining your voice. The purpose of structural editing is to evaluate the overall presentation of your writing and to develop an effective framework for your story or message. A professional editor strives to ensure that your prose is cohesive and flows smoothly in order to provide your audience with an enjoyable reading experience.

During the structural editing process, we will carefully review the organisation and content of your manuscript and look at such aspects as voice/tone, length, structure and pace, as well as the overall sequence of your book's sections or chapters. In addition, we review your writing from a legal and ethical perspective to guard against any potential defamation issues or copyright infringements. In the case of fiction manuscripts, the structural editing stage includes focusing on cohesive development of your characters, plot and settings within the overall narrative arc. In addition, we will check to ensure that every scene contributes to the story's overall purpose.

Any problems with grammar, spelling and punctuation in your writing are not usually considered during the structural editing stage. These language issues will be dealt with during the copy editing phase once we've made sure that your book is as polished as possible from a structural perspective.



COPY EDITING

The aim of the copy-editing process is to produce a finished manuscript that is accurate, consistent and complete. This step is what many people immediately think of in relation to editing. Copy editing is designed to help you improve the quality of your writing and ensure that your reading audience's experience is the best it can be.

During the copy-editing phase, we check your manuscript for appropriate use of the nine parts of speech (i.e. nouns, pronouns, adjectives, verbs, adverbs, articles, prepositions, conjunctions and interjections), as well as verifying whether full stops, question marks, exclamation points and other punctuation symbols have been used correctly. We will also examine word usage and sentence structure within the text (including clumsy or awkward sentences that may detract from the rhythm of your prose) to ensure your intended message is expressed clearly and concisely. In addition, we will review your book to check it does not contain embarrassing omissions or mistakes (such as continuity errors) and make sure that any loose ends are tied up. Finally, we review your manuscript for any factually incorrect statements (i.e. check that all the names, locations and dates are correct).

For an additional fee, we can also prepare an editorial style sheet, noting such details as your preferred spelling of certain words (Australian or American), how numbers are presented and the formats used for abbreviations/acronyms so they will appear consistently throughout your book or other document.



PROOFREADING

The proofreading stage is the final quality check and ‘tidying up’ process after the editing stage for your book has been completed and your Word manuscript has been formatted/ typeset for publication using Adobe InDesign. Having your typeset book proofread by a professional provides you with peace of mind prior to publication and will ensure that your writing is not considered to be ‘amateur’.

The proofreading stage is the final quality review of your text and involves reading the written document to check for typos, words that are broken at the end of a line in odd places, mistakes in pagination or other technical or formatting mistakes. A second pair of professional eyes ensures that your book reads well, and that any minor last-minute errors in the text are eradicated.

Here are some typographical and grammatical aspects of your book we typically review during this final publication stage:

- Consistency of spelling, punctuation and style
- Uniform heading hierarchy/styles throughout the book
- Images/graphics have captions as appropriate
- Any widows/orphans/single word on a line
- Any unnecessary spaces
- Any missing sections (e.g. Imprint/Copyright page, About the Author)
- Contents page is correct, with page numbers and section/ chapter headings corresponding to listed entries
- Book sections are in the correct order.





Brisbane Self Publishing Service

KEEN TO FIND OUT MORE?

For more information about the different editing stages (including which editing service is the most appropriate option for your manuscript), please get in touch. You might also be interested in our **Diagnostic Snapshot** editing package (\$175) which offers a concise analysis of your writing based on 3,500 words from your book.

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