

Training for copyediting or proofreading

Why should you invest time and money in editorial training?

Maybe you've always been good with words or been the go-to proofreader at work. Maybe you've been editing for your company for years and are confident you know what you're doing. There's one good practical reason to keep your training current: if you are serious about making this your profession – and earning a living from it – you're going to have to compete in a crowded marketplace. What makes you stand out? Are you confident you can work to industry standards and are up to date with working practices and the evolution of language?

By the time I did my training and mentoring I felt ready. I felt that I could legitimately describe myself as a professional proofreader. It really prepared me, technically, practically and in a business sense, for life as a professional.

Howard Walwyn

This fact sheet lists some of the skills and knowledge you should learn to work as an editorial professional. Keep it to hand and review it regularly. Good editors go on learning throughout their career. There's always something you can do to keep up to date.

Core skills and knowledge

Everyone working as a proofreader or copyeditor, regardless of whether they specialise, needs to have the core skills and knowledge to do the job well and to industry standards. This means realising that there's more to it than being good at spotting typos.

You need to get into a professional mindset from the start. If you decide one day you want to change careers and become a plumber, you can't just rush out a website, print some business cards and start installing toilets. You'd have some unhappy customers. Taking core training will ensure that you are equipped to do the job, and to do it professionally. CIEP courses are modular, meaning you can take the level best suited to your existing skills and knowledge. Most of the courses are done online, with the support of a tutor, so you can work at your own pace, from anywhere in the world.

CIEP core skills training: Which level should I take?

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|------------------------|---|
| 1: Introduction | Beginners; some experience but little formal training |
| 2: Headway | Some knowledge, experience or training |
| 3: Progress | Good knowledge, some experience; career-break returners |
| 4: Mentoring | Editorial professionals with some training and experience |

If you're not sure what course to take, please ask: training_enquiries@ciep.uk.

Plan your training and CPD

Have you equipped yourself with the right skills and knowledge to work as an editorial professional? What can you update or learn next?

Core skills

Are you trained in the essential skills, knowledge and working practices for the job?

The essentials:

- Proofreading/editing basics
- Mark-up techniques
- Pricing a job
- The art of querying
- Hone your judgement: what to change and what to leave

Business

Have you got what it takes to set up and run a profitable business?

The essentials:

- Time management
- Money management
- Terms and conditions
- Tasks and hours record
- Job toolkit: eg query sheet, style sheet, invoice

Marketing

Do you know what you're offering and how to sell it? How will you get clients?

The essentials:

- CIEP membership logo
- Website
- Social media
- Directories
- Networking
- Branding

How?

- Start with basic training from the CIEP or another reputable provider such as the Publishing Training Centre.
- Challenge yourself to do a new course in a specialist area or skill every year.
- You'll find basic information on a range of editing and business topics in the CIEP guides and fact sheets.
- One of the best ways you can improve your editorial skills and knowledge is to learn from supportive colleagues. Join in the discussion in CIEP's member-only online forums and in-person local groups. You'll be amazed by what people willingly share.

Further information

Our [website](#) contains lots of helpful information about training and mentoring, including:

- ciep.uk/training/choose-a-course
- ciep.uk/training/tutors
- ciep.uk/training/mentoring

Written by Margaret Hunter, information director

The Chartered Institute of Editing and Proofreading (CIEP) is a non-profit body promoting excellence in English language editing. We set and demonstrate editorial standards, and we are a community, training hub and support network for editorial professionals – the people who work to make text accurate, clear and fit for purpose.

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