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Purpose of exam

The purpose of the accreditation exam is to assess candidates' knowledge and skills against the IPEd standards for editing practice. The exam focuses on copyediting and essential skills such as project definition and the ability to identify ethical and legal issues such as accessibility, defamation, privacy and copyright infringement.

The 2024 exam is based on the new, 3rd edition of the IPEd standards, titled *IPEd standards for editing practice*.

Testing competence

The exam is a test of competence rather than excellence, and candidates who pass the exam are certified as capable of applying the editorial skills described in the standards.

Editing experience

The Accreditation Board recommends that you do not attempt the exam unless you have gained some experience as a professional editor (about 2–3 years full-time or 4–6 years part-time or casual). The [sample exams](#) will help you decide whether you are ready to sit the exam.

A word of warning

Any person who attempts to take the exam for another person or enlists the help of others will be permanently disbarred from accreditation.

Exam content and structure

The exam content reflects the variety of work that editors do, with examples drawn from various kinds of publishing. The exam consists of 3 parts:

The LANGUAGE part (1 PDF form, labelled “L”)

The KNOWLEDGE part (1 PDF form, labelled “K”)

The MANUSCRIPT part (2 Word files), comprising an extract (labelled “M-E”) and a style sheet (labelled “M-S”).

To become familiar with how to work in the exam documents, make sure you:

- attempt the sample exams
- attend the demonstration session on how to use the 2024 exam documents, or watch the recording if you are unable to attend – fully registered candidates receive free access to the session and the video
- read the detailed instructions in the document *Guide to using the 2024 exam documents*, which will be made available to registered candidates after exam registrations close.

Approved remote candidates will also receive detailed step-by-step instructions on the extra systems and software set-up they will need.

Marks required to pass

The exam is pass/fail. The pass mark is a score of 80% overall *as well as* a minimum of 65% in *each of*:

- the 3 parts
- the 3 components in the MANUSCRIPT part
- the 2 compulsory questions in the KNOWLEDGE part.

Marking is absolute, not relative (that is, there is no bell curve). If all candidates score at least the minimum pass marks, then all candidates will pass. However, the parts have different weights, as set out below.

LANGUAGE part (L)

L part is worth 20% of the total marks for the exam. You must answer 20 of 24 questions (each question is worth 1 mark), but you may choose to answer up to 24 questions to give yourself a safety margin if you wish. However, even if you answer all 24 questions, you can only score a maximum of 20/20.

20% of the total exam equates to a working time of approximately 30 minutes for this part, including time to review answers, but you should decide for yourself how to allocate your time in the exam.

L part is a fillable PDF form (see “[Editing on-screen](#)” below), in which 20 of the questions require you to type into a text box and 4 questions are multiple-choice.

MANUSCRIPT part (M)

M part is worth 40% of the total marks for the exam. It is a copyediting exercise that comprises 3 components:

- 1) copyediting a text extract of about 1,200 words in accordance with the brief provided, completed in the M-E file (32%)
- 2) writing author queries that arise during the copyedit, also completed in the M-E file (4%)
- 3) creating a style sheet for the extract, completed in the M-S file (4%).

You must obtain a minimum of 65% in each of these 3 components to pass this part.

40% equates to a working time of approximately 75 minutes. We suggest spending 1 hour on completing M part and the other 15 minutes on reviewing your work, but you should decide for yourself how to allocate your time in the exam. If you're running over time on M part, and still have questions in the other parts to complete, you should move on to the other parts and go back to M part if you have time left.



Mark allocation for the part

M part provides a maximum of 200 raw marks, allocated as follows:

- 160 marks for copyediting the extract
- 20 marks for writing 10 author queries
- 20 marks for creating the style sheet.

Your total out of 200 is divided by 5 to produce a mark out of 40. You need to attain sufficient marks to reach the required minimum of 65% in each component, but of course you should aim to achieve as many marks as possible within the time and at least 80% to pass the exam as a whole.

Mark allocation for the extract editing component

The extract contains more than 160 attainable marks, so you will not need to pick up every single possible edit. Some things will just need correcting (e.g. typos), but other edits will be issues of style. When you make a style decision, include it clearly in your style sheet.

In the extract, you will:

- receive a mark for every correct edit that you make, including the correct application of your own style sheet (even if it does not involve making a correction)
- lose a mark for any edit that creates an error or that does not follow the style decision you made and entered in your style sheet.

You will not lose a mark where a change can be considered both right and wrong (e.g. some commas) – the markers are editors too and will not needlessly mark you down.

Your aim is not to achieve the perfect edit but to attain enough marks to pass the component and the exam overall:

- 80% (overall pass mark) = 128 marks
- 65% (component pass mark) = 104 marks.

Mark allocation for the author query component

You will be awarded marks for only 10 queries, even if you raise more than that. You won't be penalised for raising more than 10, but you should focus on quality, not quantity. The danger with raising too many queries is that it takes up valuable time and, more importantly, introduces the risk of not making enough editing decisions. The advice from markers is that, in previous exams, people who performed less well in M part did not take responsibility for querying things they should have, and queried things they ought to have been able to resolve easily (e.g. by checking a dictionary or, in matters of style, by using their judgement and listing their decisions in their style sheet).

Each query is worth 2 marks (1 for content, 1 for expression), up to a maximum of 20 marks. Your aim is to attain enough marks to pass the component and the exam overall:

- 80% (overall pass mark) = 16 marks
- 65% (component pass mark) = 13 marks.



Mark allocation for the style sheet component

For the style sheet (M-S), remember to fill out both parts. The first part is where you record the *general* style decisions that apply to your edit; the second part is where you alphabetically enter your style decisions relating to individual words and phrases (choice of variant spelling, capitalisation, etc.). Make sure you conform to your entries in the style sheet as you do the edit.

Each correct style sheet entry is worth 1 mark, up to a maximum of 40 marks, which is divided by 2 to give a total out of 20.

You will not lose marks for incorrect entries, but don't be tempted to record unnecessary entries in your style sheet because this wastes valuable time.

Your aim is to attain enough marks to pass the component and the exam overall:

- 80% (overall pass mark) = 32 correct entries = 16 marks
- 65% (component pass mark) = 26 correct entries = 13 marks.

In other words, if you don't make at least 26 entries (all of which would need to be correct), you will not pass the part.

KNOWLEDGE part (K)

The emphasis in K part is on an understanding of the principles, practices and conventions of the editing profession, as much as on the application of particular editing skills.

K part is worth 40%. There are 6 questions; you must complete **4** in total, comprising **2 compulsory questions** and your choice of 2 out of the other 4 questions.

The 2 compulsory questions are drawn from Part A of the IPEd standards:

- Question 1 – Professional practice
- Question 2 – Ethical and legal matters.

The 4 elective questions are drawn from Parts B to E of the IPEd standards:

- Question 3 – Part B: Management and liaison
- Question 4 – Part C: Substance and structure
- Question 5 – Part D: Language and illustrations
- Question 6 – Part E: Completeness and consistency

40% in this part equates to 75 minutes of working time. We suggest you spend 15 minutes on each of the 2 compulsory questions and each of the 2 questions you choose (total 1 hour), plus 15 minutes to review your work. You should decide for yourself how to allocate your time in the exam.



Mark allocation and how to approach K part

Each question is worth 20 raw marks, giving a total of 80 marks, which is divided by 2 to arrive at a mark out of 40.

You must achieve at least 65% in each of the compulsory questions, as well as 65% for the part, to pass the part – remembering that you are also aiming for at least 80% to pass the exam overall.

Use your time in this part wisely. Don't spend more time than is allotted doing a question and leave too little time to finish the others. Allow enough time to **do exactly 4 questions**.

If you don't do well enough to pass 1 of the elective questions in this part, it is still possible to pass the part if you score very highly in the other 3 questions.

However, you should at least attempt 4 questions. If you only attempt to answer 3 questions, the maximum mark you can achieve is 60/80 or 75% – this is below the 80% overall pass mark, which means that you will need to achieve well over 80% in either L part or M part, or both. It also means that your answers to the 3 questions must be near perfect so that you don't drop below the minimum 65%. While it is theoretically possible to pass the part, and the exam, by answering only 1 of the elective questions, you will be making it very hard on yourself and forgoing the opportunity to pick up extra marks.

Answering more than 4 questions will not gain you extra marks – the markers will not transfer your marks from one question to another – and will waste valuable time.

K part is a fillable PDF form (see "[Editing on-screen](#)" below), in which many of the questions require you to type into a text box. Other questions are multiple-choice or true–false. The size of a box provides a guide to the expected length of the answer. If you don't have room, you can type more in the extra boxes at the end of the document ("Answers continued" pages). But if you find you are filling in these extra boxes, you are probably spending too long on a particular question.

Sample exams

The [sample exams](#) will help you decide whether you are ready to sit the exam itself.

For additional practice, attempt the other KNOWLEDGE part questions (the ones you didn't do when you worked through the sample part under exam conditions), allowing 15–20 minutes for each.



Registration

Acknowledgement, receipt, photo ID, candidate number

Registration is only complete once we have received both payment of the registration fee and the registration form containing information about your choice of venue, computer system and other requirements.

On submission of your registration form, you will receive an automated acknowledgement by email. You will separately receive a receipt once you have paid the fee.

Once both processes are complete, you will receive a formal acknowledgement of registration from the exam administrator.

You will not need to produce proof of registration on the day of the exam, but we recommend including the formal acknowledgement in your bound notes. You will need to produce photo identification on exam day before you can be admitted to the exam room.

Once registrations close, about 4 weeks before the exam date, you will be issued with a confidential 5-digit candidate number, which you will use instead of your name on the exam documents.

Only you and the exam administrator will be able to match this number with your name. This is to ensure that the assessors marking the exam documents do not know the names of candidates. This number should be treated like a PIN and kept confidential at all times. Do not use it in any correspondence except with the exam administrator.

You will receive details about your venue or remote sitting arrangements by email around 3 weeks before the exam.

Adjustments and other requests

If you have any adjustments or other requests that need to be accommodated so that you are not disadvantaged when sitting the exam, you must make a formal request when you register for the exam.

If something arises after you have registered, you must contact the exam administrator (exam.administration@iped-editors.org) with details of your request as soon as you are aware that you need an adjustment or other arrangement.

Depending on the nature of your request, you might be asked to provide more information and proof of your circumstances, such as a medical certificate.

Timing of requests

Do not delay making a request or providing information or proof if required. You must allow sufficient time for your request to be assessed *and approved* before the registration closing date, to allow us sufficient time to implement the arrangements.



Examples of requests

Examples of adjustment requests include extra time, custom equipment (e.g. a custom keyboard, mouse, monitor, screen-reader or chair), an Auslan interpreter (e.g. to understand invigilator instructions), opportunity to take medication during the exam (especially if it needs to be administered outside the exam room), and dietary needs that require you to have food or drink at a particular time.

Please note, you do **not** need to make an adjustment request:

- to use non-connective ear plugs (e.g. foam plugs or Loops) or headphones (but earplugs or headphones that have wireless or Bluetooth connectivity are not permitted)
- to bring into the exam your own routine ergonomic equipment such as lumbar supports, monitor stands or small footstools, unless your equipment is large, needs special fitting or is likely to impact on others sitting around you.

Installing ergonomic and approved custom equipment on exam day

If you have received approval to use custom equipment, you must arrive at the exam room early (around 12.30 pm) so that the equipment can be checked and installed under supervision, before the invigilator briefing begins. That is, any workstation adjustments must be completed prior to 1.00 pm so that you do not distract other candidates once the briefing period has started.

Remote candidacy

Candidates who are unable to attend one of the exam venues for a valid reason may request a remote sitting. Valid reasons include:

- You reside in a location that requires you to cross the border of a country, state or region to attend your nearest venue, such that a sudden border closure may render you unable to attend the venue or to get home afterwards.
- Travel to the nearest venue is prohibitively long, complex or expensive.
- A physical or other difficulty prevents you from attending a venue.

You may be asked for more information about your reasons and to provide evidence of your circumstances.

If you are approved for remote candidacy, you will need to agree to:

- certain technology waivers because you will be required to provide your own equipment and internet connection
- privacy waivers because you must allow the remote invigilator to see you, the room where you sit the exam and your computer screen while you complete the exam, and for your exam to be recorded.

Candidates who do not have good internet connection that can sustain video feed, or who are not sufficiently computer-literate to manage their own technology, should not apply for a remote sitting. In this case a candidate who cannot attend one of the usual exam venues should request alternative venue arrangements.



You are advised to apply as early as possible for a remote sitting or alternative venue arrangement so that the Accreditation Board has sufficient time to find you an invigilator and to make any other arrangements.

If the Accreditation Board is unable to accommodate a remote sitting or alternative venue for a candidate for any reason – for example, insufficient remote invigilators or no alternative venue could be found – the candidate's registration will be cancelled and their registration fee refunded, less any applicable cancellation fee.

Editing on-screen

You will sit the exam on a Windows system unless you specifically request an Apple system when you register for the exam.

Hardware systems

Windows computers at Cliftons venues

The exam facilities provide Windows computers for candidates to use in the exam. The computers will be configured with:

- Windows 11 operating system
- 25-inch monitor
- numeric keyboard
- wired mouse.

Cliftons venues provide onsite technical support, and IPEd invigilators will be equipped with basic troubleshooting instructions.

Apple computers at Cliftons venues

Cliftons hires Apple computers (iMacs) at extra cost per hire to IPEd (in 2024 this cost is A\$302.50 including GST). *IPEd does not pass this cost on to exam candidates in the registration fee.* However, candidates who cancel their registration within 2 weeks before the exam (27 July to 12 August inclusive) – that is, once IPEd has committed to hiring an iMac on their behalf – will incur an additional cancellation fee of A\$50 (16.5% of the actual iMac hire cost), on top of the emergency cancellation fee of A\$260.

The iMacs will be configured with:

- OSX Sonoma
- 27-inch monitor
- Apple wireless keyboard
- Apple wireless mouse.

IPEd will request wired, numeric keyboards and wired mice for the iMacs but cannot guarantee their supply at all venues. Candidates who strongly prefer a non-standard keyboard or mouse should bring their own.



Cliftons venues do not provide technical support for iMacs, but IPEd invigilators will be equipped with basic troubleshooting instructions and a number to call for further assistance.

You will only be able to sit the exam on an iMac if you specifically requested one during registration and this was confirmed. An iMac cannot be supplied on the day if you haven't requested one before registrations close (about 4 weeks before the exam).

Remote candidates

Approved remote candidates will sit the exam on their own systems, which may be either Windows or Apple systems. IPEd cannot provide on-site technical support and takes no responsibility for systems failures for remote candidates. Remote candidates will be asked to sign a declaration that they take responsibility for their own hardware.

Software systems

Microsoft Word

The M-part exam documents must be completed in Microsoft Word.

In 2024 the version used at Cliftons venues will be **Word 2021**. The invigilators will check that the files have been configured properly for exam use.

Approved remote and alternative venue candidates may use any version of Word later than Word 2016. These candidates will receive instructions on how to do the exam configuration themselves – including disabling some features in the latest versions of Word.

Adobe Acrobat

You must complete the PDF exam documents (K, L and Instructions) in **Adobe Acrobat** (free version) and not an alternative PDF reader app.

Candidates on Apple systems must be particularly careful to check that Acrobat is the default PDF viewer, not Preview, before they begin completing their exam documents.

In Cliftons venues, Acrobat will already be installed as the default PDF app and will use the new interface. However, in the preparation time before the exam starts, you should check that the PDF exam documents open in Acrobat, and you can change to the older interface if you prefer.

Approved remote and alternative venue candidates will have to install Acrobat and set it as the default PDF app on the computer they will be using. Instructions on how to do this are provided during the approvals process.

Detailed guidance on setting up Acrobat, changing the interface and adjusting view settings is contained in the document *Guide to using the 2024 exam documents* issued to registered candidates after registrations close.



Web browser and internet

Internet access is permitted to only the following sites:

- *Macquarie dictionary online* (MDO)
- *Te Aka Māori dictionary*
- *Biotext content manual* (also called *Australian manual of style*)
- *Australian Government style manual*.

Candidates at Cliftons venues will have these sites open, and the MDO logged in for them, on the computer's web browser.

Invigilators will give you the MDO login credentials for the IPEd exam account at the start of the exam. You may also use your own login credentials if you have your own MDO subscription, as long as you have brought these with you to the exam.

At Cliftons, the web browser will be Chrome on both Apple and Windows systems.

Remote and alternative venue candidates may use any web browser on their system.

Skills in using Word and Acrobat PDFs

The exam requires basic computer literacy and some ability to use Microsoft Word and PDF files (keeping up with technology being a standard required of a competent editor). However, the exam does not test your skill or knowledge of advanced features of Word or Acrobat.

You'll find detailed information about the skills required on the [Exam resources](#) page (under "Editing on-screen") on the IPEd website and in the document *Guide to using the 2024 exam documents* issued to registered candidates after registrations close.

Mark-up symbols

The only mark-up you will do is using Track Changes and Comments in Word in the MANUSCRIPT part.

You will not be asked to mark up the exam files using paper mark-up symbols or PDF mark-up tools.

However, editorial mark-up *is* covered by standards A1.1, A7.1 and A7.7 in the *IPEd standards for editing practice* (3rd edition), so it's possible for a question *about* mark-up to be included in the KNOWLEDGE part of the exam. We recommend that you have a basic familiarity with either paper or digital mark-up symbols and processes – at least to be able to recognise what the main symbols mean – and that you know how to quickly look them up in your favourite resources if necessary.



Hard copy

There will be no hard copy of instructions or exam documents – everything is on-screen. The only hard-copy materials you will have are the references and bound notes that you bring in yourself.

Most venues will provide scribble paper, or you can bring your own paper for writing notes on. However, there is limited time for writing anything more than the most minimal notes during the exam.

Anything written down during the exam will be checked by invigilators. Venue candidates must leave anything written down in the exam room for the invigilators to collect and destroy. Remote candidates will be required to show their invigilator what they have written down and then destroy the materials while their invigilator watches. You should avoid writing on anything you don't wish to leave behind or destroy.

Exam day

COVID-safe requirements

Candidates will be required to follow whatever advice or rules are in place at the time of the exam, whether provided by IPEd, Cliftons or their local health authority. Noncompliance may see candidates refused entry to the exam venue.

However, be prepared to wear a face mask even if there is no mandate in place on exam day. IPEd has a duty to minimise the spread of infection – COVID, flu, other respiratory illnesses and other airborne diseases – especially for vulnerable candidates.

You are encouraged to wear a mask:

- in public spaces where physical distancing is not possible (e.g. public transport)
- when entering or leaving the exam room
- at any time you congregate with other candidates before or after the exam

but you may remove it if you wish when seated at your exam workstation.

If you have any COVID or flu symptoms on exam day, stay at home. See “[Non-attendance](#)” below for guidance on what to do if you cannot attend because of illness.

Invigilators

There will be at least 2 invigilators at each Cliftons venue, and 1 remote invigilator for each approved remote candidate. The number of invigilators at an alternative venue will depend on the number of candidates attending that venue.

During the exam, invigilators will be able to answer general questions about the exam format and procedure, but not about the content.



Critical times

The exam lasts for approximately **4 hours** as follows:

- 30 minutes for the invigilator briefing and preparation time for you to:
 - rename the working folder and exam documents with your candidate number
 - enter your candidate number and chosen style guide in the Instructions document and save it – this document will be emailed to you before the exam to ensure you have plenty of time to read it
 - enter your candidate number in each exam document, check that the PDF files open in Acrobat, adjust the PDF and Word document settings to your preferred configuration, and save each document
 - check that your browser is logged into the MDO and that the other online resources are open
 - report any technology issues to the invigilators
 - review the Instructions document or consult your exam resources
- 30 minutes of reading time for you to:
 - read through the exam documents
 - decide which part to start with (if you haven't already decided as part of your preparation)
 - decide which 2 of the 4 elective KNOWLEDGE questions to answer
- 3 hours of working time for you to complete the exam.

Venue candidates should arrive at least half an hour before the exam preparation time begins, which means it will be about 5 hours from the time you arrive at the exam venue to the time you leave.

Approved remote candidates will have extra set-up and post-exam procedures to complete, so you will also need to allow about 5 hours in total.

Exam timing

On the day, the timing will run as follows. All times are local, unless you are sitting remotely outside Australia or Aotearoa New Zealand (in which case you may be given a different schedule).

- 12.00–12.50 pm: Candidates will be processed by the invigilation team (notes and reference books checked, photo ID cross-checked against candidate list). Once processed, you'll be able to enter the exam room to find a desk and check the equipment (but you won't be allowed to open up any of the exam documents).
- 12.50–1.00 pm: The invigilators will usher everyone into the exam room.
- 1.00–1.05 pm: The invigilators will brief candidates on how the exam will be run and will explain what to do if you need to go to the toilet or if there is an emergency.
- 1.05–1.30 pm: Candidates will prepare their exam documents as described under "[Critical times](#)" above and use any remaining time to review the exam Instructions document on-screen or consult their resources. (An invigilator will lead you through this process.)
- 1.30–2.00 pm: Reading time (exam documents).
- 2.00–5.00 pm: Working time.



Time of arrival at the exam venue

Venue candidates should plan to arrive with enough time to allow for any entry procedures at the venue (and, once inside, for registering with the invigilators to have your resources and photo ID checked). It is better to be early than in a rush.

The total number of candidates at your venue will affect how quickly you will be able to enter the venue and the exam room. Once the exam administrator knows how many candidates are registered at each venue, they will advise whether you should arrive at least 15 minutes or 30 minutes before the exam room opens.

If you have arranged to install custom equipment at your workstation, you must arrive early enough to finish installation before the briefing begins at 1.00 pm.

Late arrival

If you are late and the briefing, preparation or reading periods have already started, you must enter the room very quietly so as not to interrupt the invigilators or disturb other candidates, and catch up with your preparation and reading as best you can. No extra time is allowed for late arrivals.

Anyone who arrives once the 3 hours of working time has begun (i.e. at 2.00 pm or later) will not be admitted to the exam room.

What to bring

You will need to bring to the exam:

- your photo ID
- your confidential candidate number
- your hard-copy resources and references (bound notes and books)
- scribble paper and pen or pencil (optional – remember, anything you write down must be left in the exam room or destroyed)
- a stand-alone calculator (optional – you cannot use your phone, but you can use the default calculator app on your computer as long as it is in basic mode)
- water and snacks (refreshments may be limited at the venue) – see “[Food and drinks](#)” below for guidance on approved refreshments
- hand sanitiser or wipes, if desired
- a face mask
- any items you need for your comfort during the exam (e.g. warm clothing, ear plugs, lumbar support – see guidance under “[Adjustments and other requests](#)” for items that require prior approval).

Entry into the exam room will not be guaranteed if you do not have your candidate number **and** ID. (Consider printing and binding your candidate number confirmation email into your bound notes to make sure you don't forget it.)



Style guides

There is no prescribed style guide for the exam, but you must use one that is **reasonably current**. You will need to indicate in the exam files which style guide you are using so that it can be used to mark your application of the style.

Note that the print 6th edition of the *Style manual for authors, editors and printers* (Snooks & Co, Wiley, 2002) will **not** be accepted as a style guide for the 2024 exam.

Publicly or commercially available style guides

In the exam you will have free online access to 2 style guides:

- *Australian Government style manual*: <https://www.stylemanual.gov.au/>
- *Biotext content manual* (also called the *Australian manual of style*): <https://stylemanual.com.au/>

For Aotearoa New Zealand candidates, the most commonly used style guide is *Fit to print: the writing and editing style guide for Aotearoa New Zealand* (Hughes & Wallace, Dunmore, 2010). If you want to use this style guide, you'll need to bring your own copy into the exam.

You may also choose to use another readily available hard-copy style guide, such as:

- *Chicago manual of style* (17th edition)
- *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th edition).

In-house style guides

You may choose to use an in-house style guide that is not publicly or commercially available. If you want to do this, you will have to bring a hard copy into the exam, separate from your bound notes.

You will need to write your candidate number on the style guide, but it must not have your name or anything else on it that could identify you to the markers. At the end of the exam you will have to give your copy to an invigilator, who will forward it to the marking team. This copy will not be returned to you after marking.

Online or digital versions of style guides

The only digital style guides you can use in the exam are the *Australian Government style manual* and the *Biotext content manual* (see above). You may not access any other digital style guide via the internet or on your own device even in an offline mode.

If you wish to use any kind of digital style guide other than the 2 for which access is provided in the exam, you should print or take detailed notes of the sections most relevant for you and include these in your bound notes.



Dictionary

In the exam you will have free online access to the *Macquarie dictionary* via the [MDO](#), including the resources that form part of the dictionary. You will also have free online access to the [Te Aka Māori dictionary](#).

You may also bring in a hard-copy edition of the *Macquarie* or any other dictionary.

Reference books

The exam is an open-book test, so you may bring along hard copies of your preferred style guide and other references. Note the requirement for hard copy – if you use digital editions of references, you should print or make detailed notes of the sections most relevant for you and include these in your bound notes.

Three references should be enough – for example, your preferred style guide (if you don't want to use either of the 2 online style guides provided), your chosen dictionary (if you don't want to use the MDO) and an editing handbook.

Before the exam, you may annotate your reference books and use post-it notes to mark sections. Note that if you annotate a reference during the exam, the invigilators will check what you write and you risk having to leave the page or the whole reference behind.

Although the exam is open book, you may not borrow references or anything else from other candidates during the exam.

IPEd standards

In 2024 the *IPEd standards for editing practice* (3rd edition) is included with the exam documents for use as an on-screen resource, in both PDF and Word formats (it is up to you which format you use). You may also bring your own printed copy as long as it is bound (see “Bound notes” below).

Bound notes

You may bring your own notes into the exam, but all materials must be printed and bound – loose pages are not permitted, nor are electronic references such as dictionaries or ebooks on phones, tablets or other internet-enabled devices.

Bound notes may include printed material, typed notes, photocopied handwritten notes and photocopies of reference book pages.

Neither loose sheets of paper nor handwritten notes are permitted (see “Checks for handwriting” below).

Your notes must not include extracts from the sample exams.



Permitted bindings

Permitted bindings include:

- comb binding
- wire binding
- thermal binding
- staples along the left-hand side.

Bindings that allow pages to be slipped in and out, such as a ring binder, do not count as bound.

Checks for handwriting

The exam questions must remain confidential and not be disclosed outside the exam. The binding requirements are to prevent candidates copying down the exam questions on their scribble paper and slipping them into their bound notes when they leave.

The invigilators will check there is nothing handwritten in your bound notes before you enter the exam room and again when you leave.

During the exam

Speaking with an invigilator

If you need to speak with an invigilator, please attract their attention silently, by raising your hand. Once they have seen you, please wait until the invigilator has arrived at your workstation before speaking to them. Then speak as quietly as possible so that you minimise any disruption to other candidates.

Phones, smartwatches, fitbits and other electronic devices

All electronic devices capable of transmission, including phones and watches, must be turned OFF (not silent) and placed under your chair.

If you are a carer who may need to be alerted to an emergency phone call during the exam, you should arrange with an invigilator to monitor your phone for you.

If your device is worn for a medical condition, you will need to make an adjustment request so that suitable arrangements can be put in place.

Analog watches and other timing devices

All venues will have a visible clock, and invigilators will announce the passage of time during the exam.

However, you may keep your own time using an ordinary (non-transmitting) wristwatch or other analog timing device, provided the watch or timer:

- is placed on your desk where invigilators can see it
- does not beep or make any other noise that could disturb other candidates.



Toilet breaks

If you need to go to the toilet during the exam, speak with an invigilator first. Before leaving your workstation, you must save your work and minimise any files you have open. An invigilator will note the time you leave the room and the time you return and will escort you to the toilet.

You will not receive extra time for toilet breaks (unless you received permission in advance due to a medical condition – see “[Adjustments and other requests](#)”).

Other breaks and stretching

You are encouraged to stand up and stretch at your workstation every so often, provided you do so quietly with minimal disturbance of other candidates.

However, you must not walk around the room or leave the room, except for a toilet break.

Interruptions

Should something unexpected happen (e.g. a power outage), please listen to and obey instructions from invigilators.

Illness

If you need to leave the room for a reason other than a toilet break, you must speak with an invigilator, who will follow a procedure similar to that for toilet breaks. If you leave the room because of illness, you may not return.

Food and drinks

You may bring snacks, but they must not be noisy to unwrap or eat, nor smelly. For example, sweets are usually fine, but potato chips (crisps), crackers, pungent cheeses and salami are not.

No fluids are to be placed on your workstation. All venues will allow you to bring water into the exam room; some venues may also allow hot beverages. All fluids must be kept in a bottle or container that has a secure lid; the lid must be kept closed and the bottle placed under your chair when not in use. This is to minimise the risk of spills on the equipment.

Early finish

To minimise disruption to those who are finishing the exam, no one may leave during the last 15 minutes of the exam.



At end of exam

Once you have finished the exam, before leaving the room you will be asked to:

- check you have inserted your candidate number on your exam documents
- save and close all files
- give any used scribble paper to the invigilator (and a copy of your in-house style guide, if you used one)
- show the invigilator that you have not written exam content into your bound notes or references
- collect all personal belongings.

If you need to return to the exam room for any reason, you must wait until invigilators have collected all scribble paper or until all other candidates have left. You must seek permission from an invigilator to re-enter the room, and entry is conditional on an invigilator being available to supervise your activity. You will not be allowed to access any computer for any reason.

Non-attendance

If you are unable to attend the exam on the day, you must:

- contact the lead invigilator at your venue to let them know you will not be coming
- at the earliest possible time after the exam, contact the exam administrator to explain the reason for your no-show.

Depending on the circumstances surrounding your non-attendance (such as a medical emergency, for which you may be asked to provide proof), you may be eligible for a refund of the registration fee, less the emergency cancellation fee.

When you contact the exam administrator about your reasons, they will advise you on applying for a refund and any closing date for the application.

Any registered candidate who does not turn up and does not provide a valid reason will forfeit their registration fee in full.

Request for special consideration

If something happens on the day of the exam that affects your performance during the exam – e.g. sudden illness, death in the family, or environmental factors – you may request special consideration in the marking. The exam administrator will provide all candidates who sit the exam with the procedure for making the request.

You must submit your request for special consideration within 7 days of the date of the exam, that is, by 5 pm AEST on Monday 19 August 2024. The Accreditation Board's decision on whether you qualify for special consideration will be final.



Marking

The pass mark is 80% of the total number of marks available in the exam, as well as a minimum of 65% in:

- the LANGUAGE part as a whole
- each of the 3 components in the MANUSCRIPT part
- each of the 2 compulsory questions in the KNOWLEDGE part and in the part as a whole.

The exam will be marked by IPEd assessors who are all Distinguished or Accredited Editors and who receive special training in the exam marking scheme. The assessors follow a detailed marking guide that recognises there may be more than 1 correct solution to an editorial problem and more than 1 way to mark up a manuscript.

The marking period also includes a moderation process to ensure all marking has been both fair and consistent, and to sort candidates into 3 categories:

- (a) those who clearly passed (achieved at least 80% overall and at least 65% in each part, including in the required components)
- (b) those who clearly failed (achieved less than 65% in all 3 parts)
- (c) those whose marks fall somewhere in between a clear pass and a clear fail.

The exam documents of the candidates in category (c) are looked at more closely (especially if special consideration needs to be taken into account), and sometimes re-marked by different assessors, to see if any marks need adjusting.

The initial marking and the moderation process combined takes 6–10 weeks, depending on the number of candidates in total and the number with category (c) results.

All marking, re-marking and moderation processes are double-blind. Candidates do not know who the assessors are, and assessors do not know who the candidates are, with exam documents identified only by candidate number. For this reason it is critical that you do not disclose your candidate number to anyone other than the exam administrator and the invigilators (assessors are precluded from performing these roles). You must also be careful to avoid including any information on your exam documents that could identify you, such as using your own name in an answer to a question.

Results

Your result is recorded only as either:

- “pass” if you achieved 80% or higher overall, as well as 65% or higher in each of the 3 parts, including in each M-part component and the 2 compulsory questions in K part; or
- “fail” if you achieved less than 80% overall or less than 65% in any part, any M-part component or either of the 2 compulsory questions in K part.

Most candidates who fail pass 2 out of the 3 parts, but gain insufficient marks to pass all 3 parts or to score 80% overall.



The Accreditation Board will notify you by email of your pass/fail result within 10–12 weeks of the exam date.

No exam documents will be returned to you, whether you pass or fail. That is, you will not see how your exam has been marked or your final score. This policy is to ensure confidentiality and security of exam documents, and also to ensure that there are no “grades” of accreditation from the exam. A candidate who achieves 80% overall is just as accredited as a candidate who achieves 99% overall. Similarly, a candidate who achieves 79% overall receives the same fail result as a candidate who only manages 42% overall.

If you pass, you will receive a certificate attesting to your accredited status and, if you consent, have your name published in the IPEd newsletter and on the IPEd website.

If you fail, you will receive a report on your performance that indicates:

- which parts you passed (if any)
- which part(s) you failed
- any particular areas that let you down, with suggestions on how to improve on these areas of weakness.

Candidates who fail only 1 part or only 1 required component are strongly encouraged to sit the next exam, providing they take steps to improve their skills and knowledge as suggested.

Failed candidates may resit the exam as many times as they like; however, the reduced fee for resitting only applies to 1 subsequent exam.

Appeals

Candidates who fail may appeal their result as long as the appeal is lodged:

- within 21 days of receiving their result and exam report
- in writing (complaints and requests made by telephone will not be accepted)
- with detailed reasons for seeking review.

More information about how to lodge an appeal will be provided after the exam.

Exam documents will not be provided to failed candidates for the purpose of the appeal.

The Accreditation Board will appoint an appeals subcommittee to review the appeal, which may include independent re-marking of the candidate’s exam documents. Candidates will be notified of the outcome within 3 weeks of the appeal being received.

Appeals must be accompanied by a fee of two-thirds of the standard exam fee to cover the cost of the appeal. This appeal fee will be refunded in full if the appeal is upheld.

The appeals subcommittee’s decision is final.



Tips from AEs who have passed the exam

- Decide what resources you are going to take in and get used to using them effectively.
- Make sure your notes are in an allowed form (bound, not handwritten) and tag the most frequently used pages or sections of your resources.

- Make the most of the reading time:

Don't spend much reading time (if any) on the LANGUAGE part as you have little choice in which questions to do and the part should be straightforward if you've done your preparation.

Choose your 2 elective KNOWLEDGE part questions, and any elective sub-questions within the questions, using, as far as possible, the summary list of questions. You should be able to tell if you can do a question simply by reading the summary; or at least you should be able to tell which ones you *can't* do. Don't waste time reading the questions you can't do – eliminate them straight away.

Remember that passing requires you to accrue enough marks, not to complete each question to perfection. Some KNOWLEDGE part questions might have options within them, so you should decide how many and which you can do. Avoid doing extra questions or options that don't count.

Use as much of the reading time as you can on the MANUSCRIPT part. During this time:

- try to get a good picture of the overall structure and content of the extract
 - look for the big-ticket items, such as heading structure, image and table placement, or missing information
 - don't focus on spelling errors or typos – leave that until you are working through the document as they'll jump out at you at that stage.
- Plan your exam process and go in with a clear plan of attack. Allocate the time you will spend on each question, how you are going to use your reading time, etc. Type this up as a plan with times rather than minute allocations (e.g. "2.00–2.30 pm: L part", rather than "L part: 30 mins") and bind it into your notes.
 - If you cannot finish a question in the time you've allowed, leave it and go on to the next question. If you have time left at the end, come back and try to finish the bits you didn't get to.
 - Do the sample exams, at least once under exam conditions, i.e. only have with you what you can bring to the exam. Use this time to test your resources for the exam – will they work on the day?
 - Swap and mark someone else's sample paper. You will discover they did things that got them marks that you didn't think to do. You will also notice where they lost easy marks. Get together and share all that knowledge with each other.



- Don't stress, and be systematic with your approach. Treat the exam as a job with a non-negotiable 5.00 pm deadline for a boss or client who needs you to get as much done as you can in the given time frame. Keep reminding yourself that you are not going to do a perfect job, and that's okay in this instance.
- Follow the brief you are given and answer the questions as they are asked. In the MANUSCRIPT part, read the brief very carefully and do exactly what is asked. This also applies to the KNOWLEDGE part: if you are asked to give 3 dot points or suggestions or words as an answer, then give 3, not 5 or 7 or 2.
- Type up a checklist of what to include in your style sheet for the MANUSCRIPT part and bind this into your notes. Remember that spelling errors are not style decisions and need not be included in the alphabetical list.
- In both the LANGUAGE and MANUSCRIPT parts you'll show that you can identify and fix errors in spelling, grammar and style, in single sentences and in a 1,200-word extract, respectively. In the KNOWLEDGE part you'll show your understanding and knowledge of other kinds of editing and publishing practices and conventions. You may also be expected to show you understand *why* some of these things are important. So spend some time before the exam thinking about the rationale behind the conventions you are familiar with – for example, why plain language is important, or how different types of presentation (lists, tables, diagrams, charts, photos, etc.) affect the way readers process information.



Version and change log

2024 *Guide for candidates*: version 2.0, July 2024.

Changes from version 1.3, February 2024:

- Update to specification of hardware and software systems
- Update to materials on using the exam documents
- Update to procedures for preparing exam documents
- Addition of *Te Aka Māori dictionary* as an exam reference
- Minor style revisions.

Changes from 2022 version:

- Update to IPEd standards version
- Update to M-part pass requirements
- Update to K-part structure and pass requirements
- Update to specification of hardware and software systems at the venues, including costs of Mac hire
- Update to AMOS login and title
- Update to COVID-safe requirements
- Update to policy on reading time, handwritten notes and scribble paper
- Addition of IPEd standards as an exam reference
- Addition of “Other breaks and stretching” section
- Update to tips to reflect changed exam content.

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