



Fair hourly pay rates for self-employed editors

IPEd’s Pay and Conditions Standing Committee has developed fair hourly pay rates to guide self-employed editors and clients. They are the rates a professional editor in Australia needs to charge to ensure a sustainable, long-term business.

More on the IPEd website:
www.iped-editors.org/about-editing/editors-pay-rates

Level of experience	Hourly pay rate (excluding GST)
Less than 2 years’ editing experience	\$70–\$90/h
Professional member, established editor	\$100–\$150/h
Editor with extensive or specialised experience	From \$150/h

Notes: These rates exclude goods and services tax (GST). Australian editors registered for GST are required to charge 10% GST. Rates updated July 2025.

Supporting material in Memnet: ipedmembers.memnet.com.au/My-Membership/Resources-for-editors/Pay-rates-self-employed-editors

Background on hourly pay rates

The hourly pay rates for self-employed editors are based on the following information and assumptions:

1. Working conditions for self-employed editors
2. Equivalent employee salary income
3. Business expenses
4. Billable and non-billable work time
5. Calculations for hourly pay rates.
6. Other resources on pay rates

The term self-employed is used to represent editors running a small business. Similar terms include freelancer, freelance editor, contractor or sole trader.

1. Working conditions for self-employed editors

The following working conditions are assumed for self-employed editors:

- Editors are independent professionals running a small professional services business as a sole trader structure.
- Editors have many clients over a year, and are not an employee or contractor with few clients.
- Editors work safe and healthy hours of work.
- Editors pay themselves superannuation or equivalent.
- Editors pay themselves annual leave, sick leave and other leave or equivalent.
- Editors work from a home-based office or equivalent.

2. Equivalent annual salary income

Indicative annual salaries for editing jobs are summarised in Table 1. View in **Memnet** [Excel].

3. Expenses for self-employed editors

Expenses in a self-employed editing business include:

- office expenses such as utilities, internet, computer, equipment and supplies, and replacements
- editing resources and software, including subscriptions
- professional development expenses such as attending seminars, workshops and conferences and undertaking training, accreditation or mentoring
- business development expenses such as membership of industry and business associations
- marketing expenses such as website expenses, membership of related professional associations and advertising
- insurance such as professional indemnity, public liability and income protection
- administration expenses such as banking, accounting and record keeping.

While amounts in different categories may vary depending on the type and stage of the business and income level, business expenses are estimated at an average of \$6000 pa, based on Table 2 (in **Memnet**).

4. Billable and non-billable time for self-employed editors

A business includes billable time, non-billable time and leave. For a sustainable, long-term working pattern to maintain good health for self-employed editors, about 1000 billable hours averaged over a year is assumed. Total leave equivalent to an average full-time employee’s leave of 8 weeks a year (280 hours), including a mix of annual leave, public holidays, sick leave and carers/personal leave, is assumed.

Assuming 1000 billable hours and leave of 280 hours in a work year of 1800 hours (35 hours x 52 weeks) allows for up to 520 hours of non-billable time a year.

Table 3 (in **Memnet**) lists types of non-billable activities that are not direct editing work but are work time. Editors are encouraged to record how much time they spend on these activities that cannot directly be billed to a specific client to better understand their business.

5. Calculation of hourly pay rates for self-employed editors

Table 4 shows the calculation of hourly rates based on equivalent annual employee salary plus superannuation, business expenses and 1000 billable hours a year.

(A Salary pa + B Superannuation + C Expenses pa = D Gross income required pa)
divided by E Billable work hours pa = H Hourly billable rate

Table 4. Calculation of fair hourly pay rates - July 2025

[A (Salary) + B (Super) + C (Expenses) = D (Gross income required pa)] divided by E (Billable hours pa) = H (Hourly rate)

A	B	C	D	E	H
Equivalent employee salary pa	Superannuation (12% of salary)	Business expenses pa	Gross income required pa	Billable work hours pa (eg 20 h/w x 50 weeks, or 24 h/w x 42 weeks)	Hourly billable rate
\$60,000	\$7,200	\$6,000	\$73,200	1000	\$73
\$70,000	\$8,400	\$6,000	\$84,400	1000	\$84
\$80,000	\$9,600	\$6,000	\$95,600	1000	\$96
\$90,000	\$10,800	\$6,000	\$106,800	1000	\$107
\$100,000	\$12,000	\$6,000	\$118,000	1000	\$118
\$110,000	\$13,200	\$6,000	\$129,200	1000	\$129
\$120,000	\$14,400	\$6,000	\$140,400	1000	\$140
\$130,000	\$15,600	\$6,000	\$151,600	1000	\$152
\$140,000	\$16,800	\$6,000	\$162,800	1000	\$163
\$150,000	\$18,000	\$6,000	\$174,000	1000	\$174

6. Other IPEd resources – more on Memnet

- Report on IPEd’s survey of editors’ work and income, 2021: www.iped-editors.org/november-2021/iped-member-survey-results/
- *Working with self-employed editors: A guide for clients:* www.iped-editors.org/find-an-editor/working-with-self-employed-editors-a-guide-for-clients/
- Indicative costs for academic editing: www.iped-editors.org/about-editing/academic-editing/



Institute of Professional Editors

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If you have ideas to improve the pay and conditions of editors, please contact us: kerry.davies@iped-editors.org

