

# Editing for Fiction Professional Development Day for editors working in the field of fiction

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9 June 2016

De Vere Venues West One Conference Centre, 9–10 Portland Place, London W1B 1PR

9.45–10.00	15 mins	REGISTRATION AND COFFEE
10.00–10.15	15 mins	<b>Introduction and housekeeping</b> Chair
10.15–11.00	45 mins	<b>Should you take the job?</b> Gillian Stern The fiction editor may be offered a good manuscript that could be made very good, or a feeble manuscript that is really never going to be worthwhile. Should the editor sometimes just say no to taking on a job unless they are willing and competent to act as a writing coach? If an editor were short of work might he or she be tempted to say yes even to a manuscript devoid of all promise and just go through the motions of fixing the spelling and punctuation before sending in an invoice?
11.00–11.30	30 mins	COFFEE
11.30–12.15	45 mins	<b>The craft of writing</b> Emma Darwin 'An editor is the person who helps a writer write the book they thought they'd already written.' What are the things which most often prevent a book from working as well as it could? How do you spot them and what can you do about them, while respecting the writer's voice and vision? We will look at the decisions the writer makes about the structure and style of the overall story, and then close in to think about the page-by-page issues that make all the difference to how compelling the story is.
12.15–13.00	45 mins	<b>An author's view of editing and editors</b> Manda Scott Explore the experience of being an author, the thoughts and feelings they might experience when someone starts picking their carefully constructed text to pieces. Take a walk through how an experienced author works, and discover where ideas come from, and how they are developed. What happens when the words won't come? Come with your own list of questions for this rare opportunity to quiz a major author about how she works.
13.00–13.45	45 mins	LUNCH
13.45–14.30	45 mins	<b>Assessing a manuscript</b> Loulou Brown Before starting to edit a novel it is advisable for the editor to read through the text to search for major problems. There may be difficulties with regard to the plot and characters, and also problems relating to inconsistencies, anomalies and repetitions. Dialogue, pace and the importance of 'show, not tell' will be mentioned in this talk, and the vital importance of not only grammar and spelling but also punctuation, which so many authors ignore, will be stressed. A 'test' piece of writing for small group work will be included, to be read by attendees, with mistakes to be noted.
14.30–15.00	30 mins	TEA

15.00–15.45	45 mins	<b>Writing a readers' report</b> Aki Schilz, <i>Editorial Services Manager, The Literary Consultancy</i> Assessing and critiquing requires – in addition to 'sensitivity' and 'judgement' – a considerable feel for creative writing concepts and jargon, to put critical points across in a way that makes sense and is unambiguous without being offensive, not to mention a checklist of what it is important to cover in the report to give the client useful feedback and value for money.
15.45–16.00	15 mins	<b>Round-up, thank you and close</b> Chair