
Editors Canada Professional Certification Program

Stylistic Editing

Test Preparation Guide

INCLUDES

Test Overview



Study Tips



Practice Test in a Word File



Answer Key and Marking Guidelines



Sample Passing and Failing Tests

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BASED ON

*PROFESSIONAL EDITORIAL
STANDARDS (2016)*



**EDITORS
CANADA**

Contents

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***Stylistic Editing Test Preparation
Guide: Editors Canada Professional
Certification Program (PDF)***
ISBN 978-1-987998-08-5

**Test Preparation Guides—
Complete Set of 4 (PDF)**
ISBN 978-0-9866115-2-0

Preparation and Publishing:

Editors' Association of Canada/
Association canadienne des
réviseurs
#505 - 27 Carlton Street
Toronto, ON M5B 1L2
Canada
416-975-1379
info@editors.ca
www.editors.ca

**Cover Design, Book Design, and
Layout:** Merv Walker

The publisher will gladly accept
information that will permit us to
rectify any errors or omissions in
future editions.

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Editors Canada Professional Certification Program

Members of the Editors' Association of Canada (Editors Canada) voted in 1997 to institute a certification program in English-language editing. The purpose was fourfold:

- To promote and maintain high professional standards in editing
- To help editors develop professionally
- To enhance the status of editing as a profession
- To set objective standards for recognizing high levels of knowledge and skills.

The Association subsequently developed its Professional Certification Program on the basis of its *Professional Editorial Standards (PES)*, a publication that outlines the essential skills and knowledge an editor needs in order to produce professional results with little or no supervision. (See Appendix 1—*PES-2016*.) The Association also developed a set of policies to guide the program's operation. (See Appendix 2—Editors Canada's Certification Policy.)

Editors Canada's Professional Certification Program has since become highly respected around the world. Other international editing organizations have used it as a model when developing their own credentialing programs.

While other organizations offer credentials for demonstrating *competence* in editing, the Editors Canada Professional Certification Program awards credentials that recognize *excellence*. Those who hold Editors Canada Professional Certifications have demonstrated that they are masters of their craft, able to work at a high level without supervision.

Colleges and universities across the country—indeed, around the world—now offer certificates and diplomas in editing. So why should you earn an Editors Canada Professional Certification? Because ours is the only program that administers invigilated tests of excellence on the basis of national occupational standards, as specified by the Alliance of Sector Councils and the Institute for Credentialing Excellence.

Book publishers, as well as human resource personnel in government, academia, business, non-governmental organizations, education, and the non-profit sector, are increasingly aware of Editors Canada's program, and are asking for it as proof of editorial excellence. Recognition is likely to increase as more editors meet the high standards required by the program.

WHAT ARE THE CREDENTIALS?

The Editors Canada Professional Certification Program consists of five credentials based on four tests: structural editing, stylistic editing, copy editing, and proofreading.

Each test allows you to demonstrate your understanding of the fundamentals of editing and your ability to apply the standards of the core editing area measured by the test, as described in *PES-2016*.

As Table 1.1 shows, when you pass a test, you earn one of the following designations:

- ***Certified Structural Editor***
- ***Certified Stylistic Editor***
- ***Certified Copy Editor***
- ***Certified Proofreader***

When you pass all four tests, you earn the designation of ***Certified Professional Editor***. This entitles you to put ***CPE*** after your name. The CPE is the only one of the five credentials that allows you to place letters after your name.

Passing a test and earning a designation also allows you to put an ***Editors Canada Professional Certification badge*** on your website. The badge contains a hyperlink to the Roster of Certified Editors on the Editors Canada website. This helps you market your expertise and directs potential clients to proof that you hold an Editors Canada Professional Certification credential.

Your credential year is the one after the administration of your successful test. If you successfully write a test in 2017, for example, you are awarded the credential in 2018.

Each of the four main credentials is valuable on its own. There's no obligation to earn them all—although many editors do. If you're strictly a copy editor and proofreader, for example, you may find that the copy editing and proofreading credentials are enough for you. Or, if you're primarily a developmental editor, you might find that the structural editing credential is your best fit, either on its own or paired with the stylistic editing credential.

Time Allowed: 3 hours

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|--|----------|
| Part A—Short Answers (56 marks) | 2 |
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During the test:

- Rename the test file on your computer desktop with a unique file name in the following format: SY2017-CANDIDATENUMBER-eTest.docx.
- Please ensure that you do not identify yourself by using your name or initials anywhere on the test, including in any comments or queries.
- In Part A, highlight the correct answer, enter your answers in the space provided, or use the Track Changes tool to indicate your edits, as instructed. Be sure to answer each question fully.
- In Part B, follow the instructions in the scenario. Use the Track Changes tool to indicate your edits, just as you would in a real-world electronic edit. Use the Comments tool to explain changes or add queries. **NOTE: If you choose to temporarily turn off Track Changes, remember to turn it back on again.** Markers will look at your tracked changes and comments to see the edits you have made. They may not notice changes you have not tracked.

At the end of the test:

- When instructed to do so, save and close the file.
- Make sure you have saved the test file with your candidate number in the file name. An invigilator will collect your test file and rough notes.

By opening this test, you agree to abide by the following requirements:

- The examination administration and your conduct are governed by Editors Canada Operational Policy 7: Certification. The certification tests and test materials are confidential. You may not disclose any information about documents, computer files, notes, or communications provided to you or produced by you in connection with the test. You may not disclose—other than to individuals specified by Editors Canada—the names of other people taking the test or any information you obtain about the people taking the test.
- You must complete this certification test on your own, without assistance from any other person or organization. If you are found using unauthorized materials or copying from or helping another person cheat during a test, or cheating in any other way, you will be automatically disqualified and become permanently ineligible for certification. If you are a member of Editors Canada, you may also be subject to sanctions under the association's Bylaw No. 1 (2014).



EDITORS
CANADA

PART A—SHORT ANSWERS

(56 marks)

For questions 1, 3, and 4, highlight the one option that best answers the question.

1. You are editing a guide to contemporary philosophy written by a professor for a general audience. In a chapter entitled “Science Meets Philosophy,” you find the following passage: (1 mark)

The purpose of science is simply to stick to what we can observe and measure. Knowledge of anything beyond that, positivist epistemology would hold, is impossible.

“Positivist epistemology” is not defined here or elsewhere in the section. You should:

- a. add a definition of the term in parentheses
 - b. delete “positivist epistemology would hold”
 - c. query, asking the author to clarify the term
 - d. replace the term with more familiar words
2. Your job is to edit government documents for the general public. You must convey the message of these documents accurately and at the same time ensure comprehensibility. In the following pairs of words, highlight the one that would usually be preferable: (2 marks)
- a. attempt / endeavour
 - b. delineate / describe

3. The following excerpt is from “Sex and the Elderly,” which will become a pamphlet intended for students in a practical nursing program who will be working in retirement homes. You have been asked to do a stylistic edit. (1 mark)

Together and apart, aging men and women in the last decades of life face many common or gendered stereotypes concerning their expected sexual lifestyles. These kinds of stereotypes have led to misinterpretations of how the older generations view how they should take part or even if they should be involved in sexual activity. Men and women also face the traditional “definitions of physical and sexual attractiveness in our society, which are closely tied to youthful appearance” (Griffit, 1981, p. 312). This can cause either men or women to become unresponsive to their male or female partner. They may have a personal sense of unattractiveness and not feel their own appeal to themselves or the opposite (or same) sex.

What is the main stylistic problem with this excerpt?

- a. inadequate documentation
 - b. inconsistent tone
 - c. poor organization
 - d. redundancy
4. The stylistic editor’s work includes all of the following *except*: (1 mark)
- a. ensuring smooth transitions between paragraphs
 - b. reordering sentences within a paragraph
 - c. improving sentence construction
 - d. securing appropriate visual elements

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PART B—TEXT PASSAGE

(98 marks)

Note: Do not use your real name, initials, or any other identifying information in your answers.

Scenario

Halifax Sunday is a weekly newspaper supplement about community events. The senior editor, Jasmine Smythe, sends you the following message:

Dear Candi Date,

I've received the attached article, "Opera in a Matchbox," from Mel Hempel, along with this photo, which he thinks we may want to run with the article. As you know, Mel is a seasoned former stage actor who now writes for *HS*. Many readers are loyal Hempelites and love his style, but I'm afraid he may have outdone himself a little this time. I'm delighted that you can do a very quick stylistic edit for me.

As always, there's no need to copy edit Mel's writing, and I'm content with the order and structure. However, stylistic infelicities abound. As you know, Mel is over-sensitive about his writing; this job definitely needs your touch in that respect as well.

When you're finished, please write an email message for Mel that I can forward to him, along with your edits, to explain the main types of changes you made. Don't bother itemizing every stylistic problem. Just gently sum up the broad categories of errors and improvements and give him a key example of each.

Thank you very much for your help.

Sincerely,
Jasmine

Page 11 of 17

Opera in a Matchbox

Opera per la Crescita. The name says it all. Translated, it means “Opera for Growth.” And that, as it were, is indeed what Opera per la Crescita is. For it is opera for those still to blossom, still to reach their most glorious heights. A trellis for those tender seedlings reaching toward the sun.



A small, local Halifax opera company (small companies commonly being termed ‘matchbox’), Opera per la Crescita provides local singers with opportunities to perform mainstream operas in fully staged productions. Its first production, Verdi’s *Rigoletto*, played to delighted audiences and to great acclaim. Could “matchbox” opera companies be the wave of the future?