

Help yourself to professional development

The NSW society is committed to training for editors – young and emerging and those who have been in publishing for many years. Shelley Kenigsberg considers some of the issues surrounding a scheme that could bring this training closer to each of us – mentoring. What issues surround such a scheme, how do we organise it, do we even want to? This article takes a preliminary look at some of the issues.

Location: Planning meeting, Society of Editors, (NSW) Inc, November 2002

Topic: Professional development
What does and can our society provide by way of professional development for 'young and emerging' talents and even for those who have been editors for many years?

We already provide (very well-attended) training courses, which have successful outcomes, on a range of topics drawn from suggestions from members and committees.

Members ask for more: courses as well as more intense, ongoing training. So, how do we achieve that?

Discussion at the planning meeting turned to mentoring and the possibility that our society be involved in setting up and administering a mentoring scheme for editors. This would provide the kind of apprenticeship-

style training that was once the only way editors learnt their craft.

Now, formal apprenticeships exist in very few publishing organisations and though there are many excellent professional training

courses, these do not replace the more intense, advanced training that one on one mentoring could provide.

Many organisations run such schemes. Creative writing mentorship programs are **continued on next page**

Next meeting: Tuesday, 13 May 2003 (note date)

Book Clubs — The Hows, the Whys, the Highs

Caroline Baum (editor of *Good Reading* magazine, presenter on Foxtel and previously ABC's 'Between the Lines') will be our guest speaker. She will try to uncover the reasons for the emergence and popularity of Book Clubs, worldwide. (She may reveal whether Oprah had anything to do with it.) Bring your love of books, your experiences with clubbing (books...) and questions about how to set up, maintain or grow your own.

Sydney Mechanics School of Arts, 280 Pitt Street, Sydney

(between Park & Bathurst Streets, near the Pilgrim Theatre and Pitt St Uniting Church; the closest train station is Town Hall). 6.30 p.m. for 7.00 p.m. Drinks and light refreshments provided. \$13 for members; \$16 for non-members and those who don't RSVP; \$7 for holders of a current Centrelink or DVA concession card. Please RSVP to 9294 4999 (voicemail) or brhed@pnc.com.au (email) by **Monday, 12 May.**

Coming meeting: Tuesday, 3 June — TBA

Mentoring

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run by all States' writers' centres, Australian Society of Authors (ASA); Varuna Writers Centre (Varuna). Some have funding provided by the Australia Council. Jill Jones, Senior Program Officer (Literature) with the Australia Council, in writing a report of a survey of mentorship schemes, undertaken from June to July 2002, describes the history of the scheme thus:

"There would have been over 30 mentorship programs run in the last 3-4 years, involving around 120 individual mentorships,

WA Literature Officer in 1997." (Jones 2002) Jones writes further:

"the basic program objectives are to produce a published or publishable work, develop the writer, and perhaps initiate the writer into the writing life. (Jones 2002). Is, however, publishing the only (or the best) outcome for mentorships?"

What might the objectives be for editors?

A scheme for editors will have some parallels to the creative writing mentorships in structure, protocols, duration and contact, mentor and mentee selection, funding,

A scheme for editors will have some parallels to creative writing mentorships...

which have run either under our Young and Emerging programs or our Skills and Arts Development categories. They have been run mainly through State writers centres although other key bodies such as the ASA, the Australian National Playwrights Centre, Varuna, Express Media and the Australian Writers Guild, have also run programs. There have also been a couple of editorial mentorships as well. [The programs] cover a number of genres. Certainly, a number of writers have gone on to publish the book they were working on (or have a script performed).

The first one was a pilot program run by the (then)

but the objectives would, necessarily, be different. One example of how an editors' scheme might run comes from SfEP (Society of Editors and Proofreaders), UK that currently has a mentoring scheme for proofreaders:

"The SfEP mentoring scheme ...provides supervised training to newer members of the society who are seeking to be proofreaders. Experienced proofreaders from within the membership act as mentors by providing copies of their existing or past work for mentees to proofread and then reviewing a mentee's work, providing feedback and advice and answering questions mentees may have.

Before applying to take part in the scheme as a mentee, an applicant is expected to have attended the SfEP training courses, 'Introduction to Proofreading' and 'Proofreading Problems'. Completion of the Publishing Training Centre's distance learning course Basic Proofreading is accepted in place of 'Introduction to Proofreading' but all applicants must attend 'Proofreading Problems'. The 'Proofreading Problems' course includes an informal assessment process to ensure that potential mentees have acquired sufficient knowledge and show some aptitude before applying for further training with a mentor.

Some preliminary work has been undertaken with a view to beginning a similar scheme for copy-editing."

Other State societies have also considered mentoring schemes. I'm grateful to Michael Kuter, formerly Training Officer of the Society of Editors (Qld) for permission to reproduce his very well thought out proposal on mentoring. (See *Training by mentoring*, p. 3)

Interested?

Does all this pique your interest? Would members be willing to be mentors? Michael Kuter suggests a first step to organising a mentoring scheme would be a skills audit to determine who might be mentors, how much time they might be willing to spend on such a scheme and, of course, broadcast the request for

mentees (a term coined by Kuter). Are there mentees among the members? How many? Would members consider a voluntary scheme? If not, how would mentors get paid for their input?

In discussion with Kuter for this article he stressed the

itive contribution to publishing of all types. We need to signal to the publishing community that we are dedicated professionals; having our own developed system of skills development can only aid that cause.

/text/, Editors: Nigel Krauth & Tess Brady

Kuter, Michael, 'Training by mentoring', A discussion paper prepared by the training team of the Society of Editors (Qld) Inc.

In Homer's *Iliad*, Mentor was a friend of Odysseus and the tutor of his son Telemachus. In its present-day use the word mentor means a teacher and tutor.

importance of the development of a peer tutoring system that greatly enhanced the mentorship experience for those Queensland editors who participated in the early years of the scheme. Peer tutoring allowed two mentees to confer once they had done a piece of editing and iron out similar problems. Then their approach to the mentor could be by way of a deepening of their learning, while lessening the burden and repetition of instruction for the mentor.

Despite the best will, the society does not have sufficient funds to sponsor mentors payments, so external funding is imperative (unless we decide a voluntary scheme is workable). These are concerns that can be sorted at a later date.

I would dearly like this scheme to get off the ground. It seems a potent next step in our progress towards greater professionalism and profile!

Editors need to be seen as making an essential and pos-

What to do first?

In the first instance, we need a 'taskforce' to research existing schemes, consider the possible applications for our society and report on the logistics to the committee and members. If you are interested in being part of a taskforce, please email me: skenigs@bigpond.com

An edited version of Michael Kuter's proposal to the Society of Editors (Qld), follows. The proposal was first put forward in November 1998, and published in November 2002 in *Offpress*, the society's newsletter. Michael's ideas are inspiring and could form the basis for much of our discussion on a mentorship program for our society.

References

Jones, Jill. (Literature Board of the Australia Council). 'Re: writing mentorships'. (23 July 2002) in *Text*, vol 6, No. 2, October 2002, <http://www.gu.edu.au/school/art>

Training by mentoring

The Society of Editors (Qld) Inc., in collaboration with the Council of Australian Societies of Editors (CASE), is looking to:

- set up and run programs to train proofreaders and editors
- establish standards for accreditation of proofreaders and editors
- offer professional development programs for its members
- offer fee-for-service training programs to the general public.

Only the first of these – training – is discussed in this paper, and mentoring is the only system of training considered. Trainees would be required to have a good grounding in spelling and grammar and would be expected to work with minimal supervision.

Based on present knowledge, mentoring seems a practicable and effective method of training editors and proofreaders, provided that trainees and mentors are supported by the resources of the society, and the society itself is working within the guidelines of the Council of the Australian Society of Editors. There are important policy matters and questions of practice and implementation still to be decided.

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About mentoring

In Homer's *Iliad*, Mentor was a friend of Odysseus and the tutor of his son Telemachus. In its present-day use, the word mentor means a teacher and tutor.

Mentorship is similar to apprenticeship in that the trainee—mentee or apprentice—learns 'on the job' through working with one or more qualified and experienced trainers. However, apprentices usually have no previous training in the trade they are entering, whereas applicants for menteeships would be required to have a good level of knowledge of spelling and grammar.

Mentoring offers trainees a way to bridge the gap between the knowledge and skills gained in their basic training and the experience, knowledge and skills needed to work effectively, efficiently and creditably in a paid position in the publishing industry.

In this paper, the person who receives training from a mentor is called a mentee.

computers for electronic prepress preparation of text and graphics and many traditional openings for training and employment no longer exist. There are now fewer paid positions in publishing; computers are displacing people. The work previously done by highly-trained and skilled tradespeople is now undertaken by less-skilled people using computer DTP programs to prepare text and graphics for publication.

Jobs that were once performed by separate individuals are now done by the one person—there has been a 'pooling' of skills such that a typist is now become a typesetter and writers do their own keying, editing and page makeup, frequently relying on a computer spelling-checker to do the proofreading.

A second major revolution—publishing on the World-Wide Web (WWW) or Internet is sweeping through the publishing industry. This revolution has created new job opportunities for editors (and for proofreaders to a

Queensland are 'outsourcing' as much work as possible, to reduce staffing levels and overheads.

Consequently there are now very few paid positions for trainee editors and proofreaders in this State. Further, many of the freelancers who are doing the 'outsourced' work are sole operators, so there may be very few and very limited opportunities for mentees to be trained.

To meet the shortfall in training opportunities, the Society of Editors (Queensland) Inc. (SocEdsQ) is examining ways and means of training people seeking or presently working in the publishing industry.

SocEdsQ, and equivalent bodies interstate and overseas, are probably the only organisations whose members have the knowledge, skills and experience that are essential for training editors and proofreaders.

These two occupations—editing and proofreading—are selected for special consideration. Training in graphic design, the third prepress skill that contributes to the quality of the published product, is already widely available.

This paper discusses mentoring as one means of training editors and proofreaders. Training by mentoring, however, asks busy professionals to commit significant amounts of their working (earning) time for little or no payment. It is assumed that there will be suitable accredited editors prepared to undertake mentoring; this assumption may prove invalid

Commercial and government publishing houses in Queensland are 'outsourcing' as much work as possible, to reduce staffing levels and overheads.

Background

Until the desktop publishing (DTP) revolution swept through the printing industry, newcomers learned the proofreader's craft and the editor's skills in commercial and government publishing houses. Publishers now use

lesser extent). The number of organisations publishing on the World-Wide Web (WWW) is rapidly increasing, creating the potential to employ people trained in 'Web' editing.

Commercial and government publishing houses in

when the mentoring program is to be implemented.

Please preface your reading of [these proposals] with 'it is suggested or proposed that ...' These are being distributed for discussion and are not the policy of SocEdsQ or the Council of Australian Societies of Editors (CASE). Any training program conducted by SocEdsQ would be structured to conform to the guidelines established by CASE. This paper is in five parts: The mentees, The mentors, The mentorship program, Assessment, and The role and responsibility of the Society.

The mentees

Entry qualifications

Skilled proofreaders and editors have better things to do (and more preferred ways to earn their living) than to teach basic grammar and spelling, so applicants for menteeships will be required to establish that they have already reached an 'appropriate' level of proficiency in spelling and grammar.

The guidelines for deciding what is 'appropriate' will be very practical and may be simply this: 'does this person have some or all of the motivation, education, experience and ability to make it likely that they will succeed in the mentorship program?'

To be fair to intending mentors and prospective mentees, menteeships will be granted to the applicants having either or both the highest standard of education and experience (or the prospect of employment) in

the editorial or textual side of publishing.

Range and nature of work

The intention of the mentoring program is to give the mentee the opportunity to work under supervision on a variety of material which is ultimately published.

Ideally, the mentoring

charged by training providers such as TAFE, colleges and universities.

Assessment and accreditation

Mentees sit written examination to test their competence in proofreading and editing? To be decided.

Mentees who complete the mentorship program and

**Does this person
have some or all of the motivation, education,
experience and ability to succeed?**

program will be able to offer the mentee the opportunity to work on a variety of text types in hard copy and on-screen, towards different outputs: print, CD-ROM and Internet. Mentees may also be able to move between mentors to broaden their experience and training. (That diversity may not be available initially.)

Mentor-mentee contact

Is it necessary to stipulate that the mentee will meet with the mentor at set intervals (once a week or once a fortnight, for example)? Is this a matter best left to the individuals involved, the demonstration of competence being the only basis of assessment, or should 'contact hours' be defined also?

Fees

Mentees would pay the society a fee for their training through mentoring; an amount of \$500 for the year is suggested, although that amount is very low in comparison with the fees

meet CASE's standards of professional proficiency would be accredited as a proofreader or editor. (There is only one grade of proofreader proposed, but the grading of editor positions has to be decided.)

The mentors Qualifications

Mentors will be editors accredited by the Council of Australian Societies of Editors (CASE). The standards for accreditation are still being decided by a working party of CASE. (*See Update on Accreditation, this issue, p. 11. Ed*)

The method by which applicants for menteeships will be allocated to available and willing mentors has yet to be decided. Where possible, the mentee will be allocated to a mentor working in the mentee's area of interest.

Payment

This discussion paper is drafted on the assumption

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that mentors will not be paid an hourly rate for the time they spend working with their mentee. That amount of time may be more than 100 hours in a year. If mentors have to pay the expenses arising from having a mentee, it would jeopardise the continuation of the training program.

SocEdsQ will need to establish some method of verifying and reimbursing mentor's out-of-pocket expenses if, as seems reasonable, the society accepts that mentoring should not be a significant cost to professionals who are volunteering their time and expertise without gain or reward.

It seems reasonable in foresight to plan on paying some of the mentee's fee (\$50 of the \$500 fee is suggested) to the mentor to cover such costs as telephone calls.

of the MSS, page proofs or computer-readable file that the mentor is to work on.

Mentor and mentee will work (usually separately) on the two copies of the same material, meeting regularly to compare their respective corrections and emendations. The comparison of the mentee/trainee's work against that of the mentor/trainer establishes what the trainee can and cannot do, and points to the topics to be taught. Mentees will do at least 200 hours of assessable work in the period of their menteeship; this figure is based on five hours per week for the almost forty weeks between the first Wednesday in February and the first Wednesday in November. (Readers not in the society will be less puzzled by this strange choice of datum when they are told that

training to be editors) work on a range of material? (Mentees work with different mentors in the course of the mentoring program?)

- Is it the society's responsibility to monitor the progress of the mentees to ensure that the mentees are trained in the necessary or defined skills?
- If there is a breakdown in the relationship between mentor and mentee (mentor's illness, lack of work, personality conflict) and no other mentor is available or ready to accept the displaced mentee, what then?

Topics

What are the topics of the training program? Is there to be a formal training program? Who will prepare it? What skills and knowledge will be expected of applicants for accreditation on completion of their menteeship year?

Material

To avoid the artificiality of 'classroom exercises' for trainees, SocEdsQ aims to get real-world material, which is to be published, for trainees to work on. Many charitable and non-profit organisations issue a wide variety of publications, and a large number of businesses publish what is, in total, a huge volume of printed material – annual reports, catalogues, pamphlets, brochures and newsletters.

Much of this material would be suitable for training editors and proofreaders, especially as the standard of

The APA, State and Federal Government training funds could be approached for money to run the mentorship program.

The Australian Publishers' Association, State and Federal Government training funds could be approached for money to run the mentorship program.

The mentorship program

The overall plan is to bring together trainees and trainer/mentors so that trainees can work on material which is to be published under the supervision and guidance of a mentor or mentors. The mentee will be given a copy

SocEdsQ holds its general meetings on the first Wednesday of each month from Feb to Nov.)

Assessable work means work which is submitted to the Training and Accreditation Panel in support of the mentee's application for accreditation.

Questions

Some questions about the mentorship program:

- How to arrange that mentees (especially those

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Australian editors are invited to register their interest in sitting for the second BELS exam to be held in Australia. The Board of Editors in the Life Sciences was founded in 1991 to evaluate the proficiency of manuscript editors in the life sciences and to award credentials similar to those obtainable in other professions.

Accreditation as an Editor in the Life Sciences (ELS):

- * provides qualified manuscript editors with a way to demonstrate their editorial proficiency.
- * provides employers and clients with a way to identify proficient editors.

Candidates sit a 3-hr multiple-choice test of scientific editing in English.

To be eligible, you must have a bachelor's degree or equivalent and at least 2 yrs' experience as a ms editor in the life sciences (or 4 yrs' experience in lieu of a degree).

Registration costs US\$25. To apply, submit a résumé, letters from employers or clients describing your employment, and copies of academic transcripts or degree certificates. If accepted, the registration for an exam is US\$100. Full details and application, are available: <http://www.bels.org/>

If there is enough interest, the exam will be held in Sydney late 2003 /early 2004. Write to Leslie Neistadt <neistadt@hughston.com> to register your interest, or just post your application to BELS. For more info contact Matthew Stevens (mls@zeta.org.au) or Rhana Pike (rhanap@ozemail.com.au)

Society of Editors (NSW) Inc.

PO Box 254, Broadway NSW 2007; Voicemail: (02) 9294 4999 www.users.bigpond.com/socednsw

Membership

Membership of the Society of Editors (NSW) Inc. is open to anyone working as an editor for publication (print or electronic documents), and anyone who supports the society's aims.

Membership runs for a calendar year. Fees for 2003 are \$50 (new members; \$30 if joining after 30 June) and \$45 renewals. For a membership application form, ph (02) 9294 4999, write to PO Box 254, Broadway NSW 2007 or download an application from the society's website at <http://www.users.bigpond.com/socednsw/>

Blue Pencil

Published: 11 issues a year, combined Jan/Feb issue. Your comments and contributions are welcome. Mail them to the Editor, Blue Pencil, Society of Editors (NSW) Inc., PO Box 254, Broadway NSW 2007. Deadline for June issue is Wednesday, 14 May. The views expressed in the articles and letters, or the material contained in any advertisement or insert, are not the responsibility of The Society of Editors (NSW) Inc. Printer: Complete Design, Marrickville.

Advertising rates

Full page, \$150; half page, \$80 (horizontal only); one-third page, \$50 (vertical or horizontal); quarter page \$40 (horizontal only); sixth page, \$30 (half of one column). Inserts: \$75 per hundred for DL-sized or A4 pre-folded to DL size. Circulation: approximately 375.

Listing in the Editorial Services Directory (ESD)

Listing costs \$40 and is available only to members of the society. The fee covers listing in both print and online versions. The online version is updated every three months. Submit new entries in RTF format, using a template available from Cathy Gray at cgray@mpx.com.au. For existing entries, updates can be made to contact details only. Deadline for the next update is 30 June 2003.

Committee meetings

All members are welcome to attend the society's committee meetings. Contact a committee member for details if you wish to attend the next meeting.

RESOURCE REVIEW

A very popular electronic dictionary

Collins Talking Dictionary on CD-ROM, London: Harper-Collins 2002, ASIN B00004WZTP

Dictionary owners have been quicker than most publishers to exploit the commercial possibilities of their databases. This software reference from Collins offers a dictionary containing 80,000 words. It comes with a set of tools for speedy and accurate look-up of any words or phrases on your computer.

The information about each dictionary item is fairly basic, but pronunciation using the voices of professional native speakers is used in the audio recordings. The dictionary can be used with any other computer application to get the definition and correct spelling of words and phrases - as well as for listening to the reading of each entry. 'Talking English' is part of a software series that uses the complete text of the well-known Collins printed dictionaries, augmented and adapted so that it can sit on a corner of your screen while you work on a document. It's designed for non-native English users, but the adaptation to computer has been so well thought out that native English speakers who want more than a spell checker will also find it useful.

One useful feature is that long entries have their own scroll button, so that you can read each entry without enlarging the dictionary screen or losing your place. If you encounter a word in a definition you don't understand, you simply right click on it and jump to its definition; then a single click takes you back to your original entry. Bookmarks can be used for more complex cross-referencing.

Definitions can be transferred to the main screen via the clipboard or drag and drop, and text can also be imported into the dictionary where each word will automatically be defined. You can hear all headwords in standard English pronunciation at a single click. Learners can then practice their pronunciation, comparing it with the original.

There's also a system of entertaining and dynamic exercises which enables you to not only memorise the words you need, but also type them correctly. You can also monitor your progress and displayed with helpful graphics.

It's available for Windows 95, Windows 98, Windows NT, Windows 2000, Windows Me, and Windows XP.

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Our thanks to Dr Roy Johnson of Mantex Information Design for

permission to reprint this review, which was featured in a recent Mantex's newsletter.

Anyone can subscribe to this free fortnightly newsletter. Go to <http://www.mantex.co.uk> and follow the prompts. You need only provide your name and email address and there is a written assurance that Mantex will not pass your details onto anyone else; it's also refreshingly easy to unsubscribe if the list doesn't meet expectations. Among other items, the newsletter provides summaries of, and links to, book and computer software reviews featured on the Mantex website.

The website itself is not the most user-friendly, but is definitely worth exploring as the book and software reviews are informative, down-to-earth and easy-to-read. The reviews often include sample pages and full contents listings as well as the usual publishing and technical details. Books and software can be purchased online either through the Mantex store or through its links to Amazon.

As well as reviews there are software demos and free downloads (subjects include: writing skills, apostrophes explained, spelling reform, fonts and online style guides), and articles on a range of topics including, Internet use, academic research, reference books, writing skills and graphic design.

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proofreading and editing in many of these might politely be described as 'winceable'.

It is unlikely that trainees would be paid by the charities whose work they are doing, but commercial business organisations would be expected to make a payment for work done by the society's trainees, possibly at (slightly) reduced rates.

As mentees become more proficient, the need for close supervision would decrease and mentees could be directed towards obtaining work independently of their mentor.

Assessment

Five accredited editors will sit as the Training and Accreditation Panel (TAP) to decide each mentee's application for accreditation. The panel will examine the applicant's portfolio of work done, and any other relevant evidence, and grant accreditation if the panel members by simple majority agree.

Training and accreditation panel (TAP)

The TAP will be made up of five accredited editors, none of whom has acted as mentor to the mentee whose application for accreditation is before the panel. At least one member of the panel must be an external examiner, that is, a member of a Society of Editors in another State, Territory or nation.

TAP sittings

In practice, the members of the TAP will probably meet formally at least three times in the period that the mentoring program runs. The

first sitting in the program-year would be held to consider and decide on applications for mentorships. The **second sitting** would be held in the middle of the program-year to consider portfolios submitted by mentees and other evidence of their work. The **final sitting** of the mentorship period would be convened to consider applications for accreditation made by mentees who had completed the program. Such applications would be supported by:

- portfolios of all work done (not restricted to work done in the year of the mentorship program)
- statements by mentors who have worked with the mentee

- statements by employers, if any.

In short, the statements would be written and presented to give the TAP members as much relevant information as possible about the proficiency of the applicant.

Portfolio

The mentee will keep a portfolio of work done in the course of the mentoring program. The portfolio will contain (photocopies of) MSS or printouts before and after proofreading or editing by the mentee, or statements by the relevant people (writers, supervisors, mentors) certifying to the nature and extent of the material worked on and the level of

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WORDPLAY YAJRROW

The *Washington Post's* Style invitational asking readers to take any word from the dictionary, alter it by changing one letter, and supply a new definition. Here are some winners:

Intaxication : Euphoria at getting a tax refund, which lasts until you realize it was your money to start with.

Reintarnation : Coming back to life as a hillbilly.

Cashtration : (n.) The act of buying a house, which renders the subject financially impotent for an indefinite period.

Giraffiti : Vandalism spray-painted very, very, high.

Sarchasm : The gulf between the author of sarcastic wit and the person who doesn't get it.

Hipatitis : Terminal coolness.

Osteopornosis : A degenerate disease. (This got extra credit).

Decaflon : (n.) The gruelling event of getting through the day consuming only things that are good for you.

Dopeler effect : The tendency of stupid ideas to seem smarter when they come at you rapidly.

Arachnoleptic fit : (n.) The frantic dance performed just after you've accidentally walked through a spider web.

Beelzebug : (n.) Satan in the form of a mosquito that gets into your bedroom at 3 am and cannot be cast out.

Caterpallor : (n.) The colour you turn after finding half a grub in the fruit you're eating.

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difficulty of its content. (Academic theses, or academic papers in press are examples of material which may not be available for the TAP members to study in final published form, in which cases statements may be proffered in the portfolio.)

The portfolio will be submitted to the mid-term sitting of the TAP for progressive assessment, and to the end-of-year sitting of the panel for final assessment. The standard of work will be examined and the trainee given progressive (mid-term) and final assessments.

The role and responsibility of the society

If the society goes ahead with the establishment of a training scheme, be it mentoring or group classes or some other system, the legal constraints and requirements, including possible liability, must be clearly established and made known.

Taking mentoring as the example: the society is an interested party, is accepting money and offering training but cannot guarantee paid

employment at the end of the mentoring period.

The people actually doing the mentoring are not paid employees of the society; they are free agents but are working at the behest of the society. What might the implications be of that arrangement?

Mentoring may meet legal obstacles where a mentee is not paid by an organisation but works in the business premises of that organisation. The employer is well advised to obtain some form of workers compensation insurance to protect the organisation in the event of a claim for injury suffered by the mentee while on the organisation's premises. The legal position of employers—and SocEdsQ as sponsoring or interested party—is a matter to be investigated.

What is the role of SocEdsQ with respect to mentors appointed or authorised by the society, and mentees who pay the society expecting to receive training? Is the society prepared to act as arbiter and mediator in disputes? What are the society's legal obligations to its mentees? Is the society

vulnerable to legal liability for damage suffered by (or done by) a trainee?

Acknowledgments

Many members of the Society of Editors in Queensland contributed to the content of this paper; to name them all is impossible, to name them in few is to risk offending those omitted. Nonetheless, it would be a discourtesy not to record the efforts of Paul Bennett, who has urged the cause for accreditation for so long; to acknowledge the late Mary-Jane Bosch, who enabled so much, and to thank Sharon Felschow and Robyn Heales for their contribution as part of the Training Team.

Further reading

Special feature on accreditation in *Offpress*, July 1998.

'The CASE for cooperation.' Mary-Jane Bosch. *Offpress*, August 1998.

'Training editors at Ryerson' by Rosemary Shipton, *Active voice* 18(3):1-2, June 1998, Editors' Assn of Canada, Edmonton, Canada. (Abridged edn. p. 1, *Offpress*, Nov 1998.) (Those wishing to contact Michael Kuter can reach him via: mrekuter@yahoo.com)

More... SOCIETY'S WORKSHOPS

Structural Editing: The essentials

Saturday, 15 November, Jacksons Landing, Pyrmont; Presenters: Shelley Kenigsberg & Pamela Hewitt
Cost: \$99 members, Soc Eds, \$120 others

Indexing (date to be advised) Presenters: Caroline Colton and Michael Wyatt

Wired Words: Writing and editing for the Web (date to be advised);

Presenter: Pamela Hewitt

Writing for the Web has challenges that are different from print-based writing. The workshop covers 'chunking', break-out text, pyramid writing and linking techniques.

For more information about workshops, email Pauline Waugh: paulinewaugh@ozemail.com.au.

ACCREDITATION UPDATE

Janet Mackenzie (Convenor)

The Accreditation Working Group met in Melbourne on the weekend of 12–13 April. For the first time we saw the faces of the colleagues we had been collaborating with for more than a year. The weekend was extremely productive. We now have a complete draft of a proposal for accreditation options which will soon be

ready for another round of consultation with members. The timetable from now on looks like this:

April–mid-July: The Working Group tests and fine-tunes the draft proposal.

mid-July–October: The draft proposal is presented at the Brisbane conference; circulated among edsocs, employer groups, educators for comment.

November–January 2004:

The Working Group refines the draft proposal in accordance with the feedback.

February: The Working Group presents the final proposal to CASE, who arrange a vote of the members.

If all goes well, our accreditation system could begin operation during the second half of 2004.

COMPUTER PROGRAM TO MODERATE COMPUTER USE

Having trouble with your back? Are you spending too long in front of the computer?

Members may be interested in a program that runs in the background on any Windows system, and pops up reminders of rest breaks.

The program was developed to help people avoid or moderate repetitive strain injury (RSI), or occupational over-use syndrome (OOS) in the new terminology.

My problem was a bad back, which meant I didn't want to stay still at the computer for long periods. I did some research at www.tucows.com and found a program called **Break Reminder** from Chequers Software (<http://cheqsoft.com>). It's free to individuals, but companies need to get a shareware license. The download file is less than 900 KB.



Break Reminder's basic mode is to impose a series of 'micropauses' after fixed work intervals, then a longer break period. A reminder pops up on the screen for each. Everything is configurable: the lengths of the work periods and the pauses, and whether you're allowed to ignore the reminders.

You can also force a rest period whenever you want to, or stop the program entirely. As a bonus, the help subsystem has some sensible exercises.

I've been using it for a while, and I find it does help when I have to work for long periods. I've set it for 5-minute work periods and 20-second micropauses, with a break for 10 minutes after 8 work periods.

I found that my back recovered faster than usual when I took the breaks and did some exercises. But the most fascinating thing is how long, or how short, a five-minute period can be, depending on what you're doing. All the old jokes about the theory of relativity are right!

Bruce Howarth

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SOCIETY'S WORKSHOPS

Freelance Editing: Running a business

Saturday, 17 May, Jacksons Landing, Pyrmont (map provided); *Cost:* \$99 members, Soc Eds, \$120 others
Presented by **Kate Robinson, Ruth Green, Pamela Hewitt, Cathy Gray** — This workshop will discuss setting up a business, finding work, quoting for work and managing projects.

Copyright

Wed, 25 June, NSW State Library, 2– 4 pm

This course, run by the Copyright Council, is tailored for editors and publishers.

Cost: The Copyright Council is offering society members a discounted rate of \$80. Bookings via Copyright Council only, fax: 02 9698 3536, mail: PO Box 1986 Strawberry Hills 2012 Australia, email: sales@copyright.org.au.

Literary Editing

Saturday, 12 July, NSW Writers' Centre

Cost: \$99 members, Soc Eds, \$120 others

Pamela Hewitt will present the finer points of fiction and creative nonfiction, which will include voice, point of view, characterisation, narrative techniques and writing style.

Technical Editing

Saturday, 16 August, City Tattersalls Club

Cost: \$145 for members, Soc Eds and others

Presented by **Greg Heard** (Tables in scientific publications); **Bruce Howarth** (Technical editing with Word: setting up tables (as opposed to editing content), equation editor, plus general Word "power user" stuff.); **Matthew Stevens** (Substantive editing of scientific work); **Rhana Pike** (Figures in scientific publications).

Grammar for Writers and Editors

September and October

Robert Veel will present a 2-day workshop. First session (1 day) will be in September, second in October. (Running the course over 2 days will enable the subject to be covered more comprehensively.)

To book for any workshop (except for Copyright Council's workshop on 25 June), please send a cheque or money order to The Society of Editors, PO Box 254, Broadway.