What is a Manuscript Assessment?

A manuscript assessment provides comprehensive, structural feedback on your manuscript, identifying its strengths and areas for improvement, to help you bring your work into the best shape possible.

An assessment looks at things like plot, character, point of view, pace, writing style, narrative, dialogue, presentation, length, use of research, readership, marketing or publishing possibilities.

Writers SA offers writers access to industry professionals with many years of experience in reading, assessing, reviewing and publishing manuscripts. They assess novels, short stories, memoir, poetry, children’s picture books, romance, non-fiction, and more.

There are various types of assessments that provide different levels of editing. This service is not a copy editing/proofreading service. Nor is it about connecting you with an agent or publisher. This service is about getting independent professional advice on your writing and the development of your writing, and about getting the best possible manuscript prior to submission.

A manuscript assessment will give you professional advice on the big picture. It may will tell you that your work needs some editing or proofreading, but it won’t provide this service for you.

If you require assistance with line editing, grammar, formatting etc., we recommend getting in touch with Editors SA, the South Australian branch of the Institute of Professional Editors (IPEd).

A manuscript assessment helps you make your work be the best it can be, whether you want to share your story with your family, self-publish your own book, or submit it to a commercial publisher.

# What to expect

The cost of getting a Manuscript Assessment starts from just $276 (see below for our full price list).

Once you have booked and paid for your assessment, we will ask you to send us your manuscript.

You can either ask for a general assessment or for one that looks at a few areas in particular.

We prefer that our assessments and appraisals are anonymous. You can, however, find a list of some of the Manuscript Assessors we work with on our website. You are welcome to request an assessment from one of them (pending availability) – in this case, we will forego anonymity.

You are welcome to submit a complete or a partial manuscript, but please keep in mind that an assessment of an incomplete manuscript will be limited in the feedback it can give regarding ending and overall structure.

Once your manuscript has been assigned to an assessor, your assessment will be completed within approximately four to six weeks and emailed to you.

The report will include: an overall assessment of your manuscript; an overview of its strengths and weaknesses; feedback on any particular focus areas you asked the assessor to look at; and any suggestions for improvement.

A manuscript assessment gives objective, professional feedback from an industry expert who is unconnected with your work. Because of this, we recommend that your assessor not be the first person to read your manuscript. An assessment is most beneficial when it comes at the later stages of your drafting, after you’ve first received feedback from your peers (e.g. a writing group).

## Terms and conditions

The industry standard for published manuscripts is 80,000 words. If you wish to submit a manuscript of over 120,000 words for assessment, please contact us first to see if this will be possible.

* Writers SA prefers that manuscripts are submitted in Word format via email.
* Once your manuscript has been assigned to an assessor, your assessment will be completed within approximately four to six weeks.
* Manuscript Assessment reports are between 2,000-2,500 words long. (Assessments of children’s picture books are 1,000-2,000 words long.)
* Whether or not a Manuscript Assessor wishes to be identified is entirely at their discretion. If you do not want an anonymous assessor, you are welcome to request an assessment from one of them (pending availability).
* The author’s copyright over their manuscript will be respected.
* Copyright of assessors’ reports remains with the assessors, and they cannot be published or otherwise used without approval.
* Any further contact or mentoring between author and assessor must be arranged through Writers SA.
* Writers SA reserves the right to decline manuscripts and payments at its sole discretion without further correspondence.
* Receiving a Manuscript Assessment does not guarantee publication of your writing. An assessment may help you polish your work for submission to a commercial publisher, but it will not directly impact your chances of publication. Neither assessors nor Writers SA are able to approach publishers on your behalf.

**Please note that, to book an assessment, all you need to do is submit this filled-out form to info@writerssa.org.au. You do not need to submit your manuscript at this stage. Once we have received your completed booking form we will issue you an invoice. Once this has been paid, we will contact you with information about how to submit your manuscript for assessment.**

Please note payments must be received within 14 days of issue.

**Cancellation Policy**

If you choose to cancel your manuscript assessment before the assessor begins evaluating your work, we'll reimburse your payment, minus a $60 administration fee. If the assessor has already started working on your manuscript, the refund will be adjusted for costs incurred.

☐ I agree to the above Terms and Conditions. (Please tick, or we will be unable to process your booking.)

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| --- | --- |
| Name:  |  |
| Postal address:  |  |
| Suburb:  | State:  | Postcode:  |
| Phone:  | Email:  |  |
| Title of manuscript:  |  |
| Genre:  | Word count:  |
| Specific areas of focus for the assessment (if relevant):  |  |
| Aspirations (family record / self-publishing / commercial publishing / etc.):  |  |
| Potential audiences and markets (if known):  |  |
| Please provide a 2-3 sentence description of what your manuscript is about:         |  |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Type and length of manuscript to be assessed  |  | WSA member  | Non-member  |
| Suite of poetry  | Up to 1,000 lines  |  | ☐  | $468  | ☐  |  $585  |
|   | Between 1,000 and 2,000 lines  |  | ☐  | $748  | ☐  | $935  |
| Children’s picture book MS  | Up to 250 words  |  | ☐  | $240  | ☐  | $300  |
| Prose Manuscript (fiction or nonfiction)  | Up to 10,000 words   |  | ☐  | $276  | ☐  |  $345  |
|   | Between 10,000 and 20,000 words  |  | ☐  | $380  | ☐  | $475  |
|   | Between 20,000 and 30,000 words  |  | ☐  | $480  | ☐  |  $600  |
|   | Between 30,000 and 40,000 words  |  | ☐  | $580  | ☐  | $725  |
|   | Between 40,000 and 50,000 words  |  | ☐  | $680  | ☐  | $850  |
|   | Between 50,000 and 60,000 words  |  | ☐  | $784  | ☐  | $980  |
|   | Between 60,000 and 70,000 words  |  | ☐  | $880  | ☐  | $1,100  |
|   | Between 70,000 and 80,000 words  |  | ☐  | $976  | ☐  | $1,220  |
|   | Between 80,000 and 90,000 words  |  | ☐  | $1,080  | ☐  | $1,350  |
|   | Between 90,000 and 100,000 words  |  | ☐  | $1,200  | ☐  | $1,500  |
|   | Between 100,000 and 120,000 words  |  | ☐  | $1,400  | ☐  | $1,750  |
|  | TOTAL  |   |   |   |   |

 Preferred assessor(s): Please list 3 below in the order of preference.

<https://writerssa.org.au/services/manuscript-assessment/>

1.

2.

3.

While we always strive to match your manuscript with your chosen assessors, we cannot guarantee their availability. However, it is our priority to ensure your work is assessed by someone we believe is best suited to evaluate your work. If we are unable to allocate your manuscript to an assessor of your choice, we will carefully assign one for you based on our experience in matching manuscripts with the right professionals. All our assessors are highly qualified experts in the craft of writing, and we will make sure that your assessor has the relevant experience and knowledge to evaluate your manuscript.

☐ Please notify me if my manuscript cannot be assigned to one of my preferred assessors

# Content Warnings

Before completing this booking form, please consider the content of your manuscript and if any elements may potentially be triggering to readers. This may include a combination of themes or scenes of which your assessor may not be aware before they start reading your manuscript assessment.

Content disclosures will not be used as a reason to reject or discriminate in any way against the work of the author of the manuscript.

Content, topics and details that require warnings can include, but are not limited to, the examples below. Please mark any that you think may be relevant to your work.

**Violence**

* General violence
* Racialised violence
* Religious violence
* Domestic Abuse
* Violence against women
* Violence against children
* Animal cruelty
* LGBTQIA+ violence
* Other

**Marginalised Communities**

* First Nations
* People of Colour
* Disability
* Mental Health
* LGBTQIA+
* Low socio-economic backgrounds
* Other

**Sex**

* Explicit/graphic sexual content
* Sexual violence
* Consensual sexual violence
* Non-consensual sexual violence
* Kink communities
* Paedophilia
* Other

**Trauma**

* War
* Prison
* Detention
* Illness
* Police brutality
* Racial discrimination
* Instiutuional abuse
* Torture
* Suicide
* Refugee or asylum
* Miscarriage/infant loss
* Other