



EDITORS  
CANADA

# **Editing Certified: Preparing for the Editors Canada Certification Exams**

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Certification Steering Committee, Editors Canada

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## Session Description

Learn everything you ever wanted to know about the Editors Canada certification tests from members of the Editors Canada Certification Steering Committee, who will provide valuable tips on how to prepare for the tests. You'll also have the chance to test your mettle with sample questions and discuss your answers with other editors.

## About the Presenters

Anne Brennan started editing almost as soon as she started reading. She figured out how to get paid for it in 1983. Today she's a certified professional editor with a BA in psychology and anthropology. After 25 years in house, mostly as a managing editor for magazines, websites, and post-secondary distance education materials, she switched to freelancing in 2008. She edits educational, technical, and corporate materials and develops and builds simple websites (except for her own, which she never seems to get to). Anne has been a member of the Editors Canada certification steering committee since 2009, and served as co-chair from 2011 to 2017. You can contact her at [brennan@allegrocommunications.ca](mailto:brennan@allegrocommunications.ca) and follow her on Twitter at @Anne\_Brennan.

Wendy Carroll is a medical editor living and working in Ottawa, Ontario. She is an in-house editor at Joule Inc., a Canadian Medical Association company, and is the managing editor of the *Canadian Journal of Surgery* and the *Journal of Psychiatry and Neuroscience*. She also does some freelance editing of healthcare-related publications. Wendy wrote the Editors Canada certification tests between 2008 and 2010, and earned the full certified professional editor (CPE) designation in 2010. She co-chairs the Certification Steering Committee with Jeanne McKane, and has also marked Editors Canada certification tests. In her spare time, Wendy is a voracious reader of fiction. You can reach Wendy at [wlc.carroll@gmail.com](mailto:wlc.carroll@gmail.com).

Jeanne McKane is a Toronto-based freelance editor with a focus on health care and medical editing. She works with government agencies, scholarly journals, researchers and nonprofits to improve the clarity of scientific communication. She earned certified professional editor (CPE) status in 2011 and joined the Certification Steering Committee in 2013, becoming co-chair in 2015. Jeanne also holds diplomate certification from the U.S.-based Board of Editors in the Life Sciences, so she knows a lot about certifying editors! Visit Jeanne at [jeannemckane.com](http://jeannemckane.com) or via Twitter @jeannemckane.

## My Experience

Take a few minutes to write down a few things that make you qualified to be a certified editor:

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### Exercise 1

Identify the standard(s) being tested in the two sample test questions that follow.

1. Give two specific examples of when proofreading with a partner would be an advantage over solo style.

Standard(s) being tested: \_\_\_\_\_

2. You are the in-house editor of a series of informational booklets for the general public on a variety of legal topics. Recently, you worked on a revision to one of your bestsellers, a booklet on how to immigrate to Canada. You edit the material, noting carefully the placement of the new text and art, and pass on the booklet to design. You oversee the proofreading and further stages of production. When the booklet arrives from the printer (all 10,000 copies), you discover that although you had indicated changes to a table, the printer has used the original version, not the revision.

(a) What would you do to solve the immediate problem, assuming that reprinting is not possible because of budget and time restraints?

(b) Suggest two possible reasons why this error may have occurred.

(c) What steps would you take to ensure this kind of error doesn't happen again?

Standard(s) being tested: \_\_\_\_\_

## My Study Plan

Take a few minutes to write down some things you will want to review/practise as you prepare for the test:

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## Exercise 2

How many of the following questions can you answer in 15 minutes? How much time did you spend searching the index/table of contents in your chosen reference guide to find the answers? Use document flags to mark key sections in your chosen reference guide. Does that help you find the answers more quickly?

1) For which of the following is permission for use definitely NOT required?

- a) A half-page excerpt from a paper in an online journal, quoted in an academic essay
- b) A three-line poem, quoted in its entirety by a character in a novel
- c) Ten lines from a 20-line poem, quoted by the writer of a book review
- d) Two verses of a popular song recorded in the last two years, quoted in a teachers' resource guide

2) What is a half-title?

- a) The main title of a manuscript without the subtitle
- b) The title listing that appears in CIP data
- c) The verso opposite the title page
- d) The first recto of the preliminary pages, presenting the main title of the book

3) When setting a schedule for a publication, you must remember that (circle the right answer)

- a) Copy editing occurs before proofreading.
- b) Copy editing is less important than proofreading.
- c) Copy editing occurs after proofreading.
- d) Copy editing and proofreading take the same amount of time.

4) Match each term in the left-hand column with its correct definition in the right-hand column.

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|--------------|--|
| ___bleed     | a) A physical mock-up of a publication   |
| ___gutter    | b) A type of file used to encode graphics so they can be embedded within compatible applications |
| ___trim size | c) Two inner margins of facing pages   |
| ___pica      | d) A printer's unit of measurement equal to 12 points, or about one-sixth of an inch             |
| ___sewn      | e) Cyan, magenta, yellow and black   |
| ___dummy     | f) A binding process for hardcover books   |
|              | g) The dimensions of a full page, including the margins  |
|              | h) A design element, often graphic, that extends to the edge of a page                           |
|              | i) Copy that has been previously approved for use and can be dropped into a project              |

5) Are the following true or false?

\_\_\_\_\_ Running heads should be half a line length or less.

\_\_\_\_\_ In Canada, copyright must be registered.

\_\_\_\_\_ A quotation, or excerpt, of 50 words or more from a third party always requires permission from the copyright holder to include it in a publication.

\_\_\_\_\_ An imposition is the arrangement of pages in a form so that they will be in proper order when the press sheet is folded after printing.

\_\_\_\_\_ Data borrowed from another source always needs permission for use in a publication.

\_\_\_\_\_ The invention of movable type permitted the typesetter to work with individual characters to compose a page.

6) What are the steps you need to follow to project the page count of a book or document?

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## Appendix 1: Sample Work-Back Schedule

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
October 2017						
1	2	3	4	5 Review PES	6 Decide what standards need work	7 Reading
8 Study group	9 Reading →	10	11	12	13	14 →
15 Study group	16 Practical exercises →	17	18	19	20	21 →
22 Study group	23 Practical exercises →	24	25	26	27	28 →
29 Study group Write & mark practice test	30 Review PES that need improvement →	31				
November 2017						
			1 Review PES that need improvement	2 Focused practical exercises →	3	4 →
5 Study group	6 Focused practical exercises →	7 →	8 Style guide review and tagging →	9	10	11 →
12 Study group	13 Review exercises →	14	15	16 →	17 Prepare test "kit" Sleep well	18 EXAM

## Appendix 2: Create A Style Sheet

### Exercise 3

Read the article on the next page. What style decisions have been applied? Use this page to create a style sheet that reflects the style of the article.

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## The sick leave policy conundrum

Is paid sick leave a safety net or an earned entitlement? Seems like a simple question, yet it will be a much-debated one in Canada next year.

The federal government recently confirmed its plan to overhaul sick leave policy for the public sector in 2014 to reduce what it claims is an alarming rate of absenteeism and lost productivity. The story has played out in newspapers as a forthcoming battle between cost-cutting politicians and benefit-preserving federal unions. But what does research tell us about the effects of sick leave policies on employee behaviour?

“Research shows, very clearly, that one of the biggest predictors of volume of absence is company policy. Any organization that has a more generous provision for absenteeism will get it,” says Gary Johns, a professor in the Department of Management at the John Molson School of Business, Concordia University, in Montréal, Quebec. “On the other side of the coin, there is research showing that what you might call draconian attendance management policies have been associated with presenteeism, or going to work ill.”

Though absenteeism tends to receive the most attention from employers, presenteeism is a legitimate problem and worthy of more investigation, Johns noted in a paper (*J Occup Health Psychol* 2011;16:483:500). Of particular interest, suggests Johns, is how going to work sick affects productivity. There are also other consequences to showing up at the office with an acute illness such as influenza, including possibly infecting coworkers and delayed recovery from illness.

“Going to work while ill, commonly called presenteeism, has important implications for employee well-being, employing organizations and theory in the domain of attendance at work,” wrote Johns.

The perfect sick leave policy would discourage abuse — the proverbial sick day on the golf course — while encouraging employees with legitimate illnesses to stay home and recover, with special provisions for long-term disability. Unfortunately, no policy can



Employees without paid sick days are more likely to be in the office when ill, possibly infecting coworkers.

guarantee the desired outcomes for all employees.

“The balance is difficult to achieve, because employees tend to utilize the benefits they have been granted,” says Johns.

Many countries have grappled with this sick leave conundrum. Rates of absenteeism vary widely across the world, from highs of 26–29 days a year in Slovakia and Sweden to lows of 4–5 days a year in the United States and Greece (*J Public Econ* 2010;94:1108–22). Are citizens of Spain (18.6 days) really getting sick three times as often as people in the United Kingdom (7.2 days)?

Not likely, scholars in this area suggest, so there are other factors at play. A major one is how much people stand to lose financially when they call in sick. The reason absenteeism rates are so low in the US, for example, is that staying home to nurse a flu or cold is simply too costly for many people.

“In the US, in the private sector, we have very little in the way of generous

sick leave policies,” says Eileen Appelbaum, a senior economist with the Center for Economic and Policy Research in Washington, DC. “Forty percent of our population does not have even one paid sick day.”

In Canada, the government’s main concern seems to be that public servants, who receive 15 paid sick days a year, can accumulate unused days indefinitely, and this banked time is often regarded with a use-it-or-lose-it mentality. As a result, absenteeism rates are 2.5 times higher than in the private sector, according to Treasury Board President Tony Clement.

Federal unions, however, have challenged that notion and claim that work environments differ in the private and public sectors, so direct comparisons aren’t valid.

Large attempts to reform sick leave policies have been attempted before. In 1996, Germany reduced sick pay from 100% of wages to 80% for the first six weeks of illness. The change resulted in a two-day reduction in annual work absences and no perceptible changes to citizens’ health outcomes (*J Health Econ* 2010;29:285–302).

“It also led to a reduction of almost half a day in the length of hospital stays,” says Patrick Puhani, the paper’s lead author and a professor of labour economics at Leibniz Universität Hannover in Germany. “What we found was that, in essence, doctors had incentives to keep people in hospitals, and patients didn’t mind as much when they didn’t lose money.”

The law did not sit well with German trade unions, though, and many launched lawsuits. In 1999, following the election of a new government, the sick leave reform was repealed. — Roger Collier, *CMAJ*

*CMAJ* 2014. DOI:10.1503/cmaj.109-4660