

Zambezi Publishing Ltd

and

ESP (Exclusive-Self Publishing)

Author Guidelines & Style Sheets for Manuscripts

Overview

We decided to combine the guidelines for our Zambezi authors and ESP authors, because we felt it would be no bad thing for self-publishing authors to see what is involved as far as typical submission details are concerned. The main differences are mostly regarding the level of personal input into such things as cover design. As trade publishers, we have to follow trends and industry norms, and any books that we prepare for co-publishing in the USA have to comply with the USA co-publishers' requirements, so we also have little say in that respect.

Different publishers have slightly different house styles and we have ours as well. However, to a great extent, there are basics that oil the wheels of progress and it is always helpful for the author to understand some of the needs, whether for submissions to Zambezi or any other publisher; anything that helps the editor to do his job more easily is always a good idea.

If you have any doubts as an ESP author whether some point does or does not apply to you, please contact us, we will be happy to clarify matters.

Submitting work

In theory, we can take work as an email attachment, but modern email software often does strange things, and attachments are commonly used by hackers for viruses, etc. We do not open unsolicited email attachments. If you have constantly up-to-date virus software installed and you advise us accordingly in an email before sending one with an attachment, we will then consider an attachment. However, the best way to submit work to us (or any other publisher) is by sending us a floppy disc or CD, along with a paper printout.

When emailing us, make the subject of your email *very clear*, (e.g. include the book title & your surname), because we will usually not open a meaningless email in case it carries a virus. Like most other businesses, we are plagued daily with hundreds of email messages for each email address that gets onto a spam list; we spend much time trying to pick out genuine messages, but time is limited, so please make your email headings easy to identify. If your file(s) are not in MS Word, please let us know. We can access many word-processing formats, but it helps to know which program and version you use.

Word processors and formatting

Whatever you do on your word processor, it tends to look different when it arrives on ours, so keep all formatting and special effects to a minimum. By all means, have one version of your book that produces an attractive printout, but most of the pretty stuff has to go during the publishing process and has to be recreated - sometimes similarly, often differently. For one thing, unless we have exactly the same font that you have for your pretty headings, we will not be able to see/use/recreate it; and please don't send us your font files - they are rigorously copyrighted nowadays. In any event, we may well need to use Postscript fonts, whereas you probably have mainly TrueType fonts.

There are so many details involved that we can't explain them all, just take our word for it - send us a printout of the way you'd like the book to look, but send us very simple word-processing files.

Chapter headings are best in capitals, sub-headings in bold, and smaller sub-headings within a section, in italic.

Many of you have automatic styling in use on your computer. Please remove this and (in MS Word) use *Normal* as a default. If this is gobbledegook to you, leave things as they are, because we can make changes here; it is extra work to have to find out what auto styling is in use, where, and how to remove it.

Whatever style you decide to use, please be consistent throughout the script. If you use bold for your headings, then don't suddenly change to italics, underlining or some other style.

Lists and bullet points

You can use bullets, numbers or letters. Some will translate to the typesetting program, others will have to be changed, but it is useful for us to see on paper what you are trying to say. Whatever system you use should be consistent. If your bullet points consist of only a word or two, don't put full stops at the end of each line.

Indenting

Do not indent the first line in a paragraph and - most definitely - do not tab it in. We have to remove all such formatting, and its existence is usually invisible. Line your paragraphs up at the side of the page as per this style sheet.

Fonts and style

Times New Roman is the most common and best font for us, but any common font will do. Don't use anything fancy or stylish in either the headings or the body text. You may have a certain font on your computer, but it may not exist in our typesetting or the printer's software.

Files

Please use a different file for each chapter of your book. The following filing method works, others may scramble your files into a strange order. It helps us if you use a couple of letters from your title in the file names; for example, if your book title happened to be Exclusive-Self Publishing, the following file names would be best:

ESP 01 Introduction
ESP 02 The history of (astrology, Tarot, some event etc.)
ESP 03 About blue things
ESP 04 About red things
...
ESP 10 About green things

Text

Double spacing isn't necessary these days as we can convert single line spacing to double for editing in a trice. If you send in hard copy, single spacing will save on the cost of paper and postage.

Don't print on both sides of a page.

Don't justify the right hand margin.
Keep it simple. Use this document as an example.

Layout

Write your book using a normal A4 page size; don't try to produce a book layout in your word processor, it will only get discarded in the publishing process. If there is too much styling in a file, we often convert it to a TXT file to wipe out all formatting and carry on from there. It can be faster and easier to do that, even though all the italics, etc. have to be recreated.

Numbering Pages

Select the *page numbering* facility on your computer and number the pages in each file/chapter. It doesn't matter that the whole book does not have the pages numbered correctly at this stage, whereas it does help to have page numbers on your printout, in case everything falls on the floor...

Referring to other chapters

The writer sometimes needs to refer the reader to another chapter that deals with a particular topic in detail. Use wording such as: "(see chapter 7)" or "(see the astrology chapter)" rather than referring to a specific page. Specific page numbers will change so often that this small issue becomes a major task to keep up-to-date, and therefore makes editing slower and more expensive - it is best to eliminate specific page number references.

Grammar

Please, please, please do not mix singular and plural in one sentence, or even in one paragraph, if it is a small one. If you are describing people as a group or as a whole, use *they* and *them*, otherwise pretend you are talking about one person and use the correct tense. If your book is for a general readership, use the masculine singular, if it is for women, you can use the feminine singular, but be very consistent. It has to be corrected, and if we have to do it in our editing/proofreading processes, it simply and unnecessarily increases costs - time is money.

Some editors and publishers use hardly any commas, others use a lot. We put them in where it makes the meaning of the text clearer. The main thing is to get your book written and not worry too much about this. If you want to see how something reads, read it out loud or ask someone to do this for you.

There is a difference between *its* and *it's*. (**Its** fur is the only protection it has when **it's** cold.)

Double inverted commas are used in American-style books, and ours (Zambezi) are usually written in American/International style.

If a book is to have any chance whatsoever of selling in the States, it has to be Americanised (americanized), so most of our books are typeset that way. Sad, but a fact of life - the alternative would be to re-edit and re-typeset a UK oriented book completely, and that means, literally, double the expense! It's no problem if it's a J. K. Rowling book, but few books are.

If you really want UK-style production, we will do so with no problem, but that definitely eliminates any USA publisher or bookshop taking the title as is.

In Britain, we do not use apostrophes between the number and the final “s” in dates. Therefore, 1980’s is wrong and 1980s is correct. Ditto for contractions such as MPs. (It’s the opposite in the USA!)

When using numbers, write them in full up to twenty and then use numerals.

Don’t use commas before or after short phrases in brackets.

Where capitals are concerned, we bend the rules. If the book happens to be on the subject of the astrological Sun, Moon, Ascendant, Midheaven, etc. we use an initial capital, otherwise we do not. Universe, nature, earth and similar words are not capitalised.

The word *and* must always be written out in full, rather than the ampersand symbol (&).

If a sentence is long or if the meaning is clarified, a comma after a conjunction such as “and, or, but” is correct – despite the fact that your school’s English teacher once told you otherwise. Tips: Read the sentence as you would to an audience, with pauses representing commas. Alternatively, have someone else read the sentence - if they have to re-read it to get the correct meaning, a comma may be needed. If still in doubt, rewrite the sentence!

Be careful with colloquialisms or slang, because such expressions soon go out of use. They probably don’t fit with USA/International English, either.

If we see one more script with the words *sat* or *stood* being incorrectly used, you will hear our sobbing from here... Here are some examples:

The tall lady was *sat* by the window. (*Correct word: sitting*)

I was *stood* in the hall when all hell broke loose. (*Correct word: standing*)

I am *sat* there, reading my newspaper when... (*Correct word: sitting*)

Charlie is *stood* in the doorway waiting for... (*Correct word: standing*)

We recommend that you buy **AND READ** two highly entertaining and useful books, both of which will help you to avoid common pitfalls:

Eats, Shoots and Leaves by Lynne Truss ISBN 1-86197-612-7 £9.99.

Between You and I by James Cochrane ISBN 1-84046-483-6 £9.99.

Also, borrow books on grammar from the library or buy the **Chicago Manual of Style**. Another very useful book that thoroughly explains the self-publishing process is **The Self-Publishing Manual** by Dan Poynter. An American book, but much of its content is useful in the UK as well. Available at most big bookshops or from www.amazon.co.uk. Poynter’s website (www.parapublishing.com) is a mine of useful information as well.

Tables

Put things in tables so that we can see what you want, but always give us a hard copy, because these things become mangled when they move from one computer program to another.

Spaces after a full stop

If you are used to doing secretarial work, you will automatically put two spaces after the end of a sentence rather than one. Don’t worry too much about this because it is easy for us

to remove the spaces. Nevertheless, it would be no bad thing to do this yourself; it always helps to make your presentation as user-friendly as possible, whether you deal with us, any other publisher or any kind of presentation at all. Remember that publishers have to plough through piles of books, not just yours. Put yourself higher in the helpfulness stakes, it does make a difference...

As an aside, do you know how bookshop buyers buy in books from a publisher's salesperson? They look at a cover (front and back), mostly before the book is even printed, and they spend, at *most*, 30 seconds in making a decision. So, covers and the back cover "blurb" are very important. Secondly, a book really has to have an excellent, immediate impact for it to compete.

Remember that the *biggest* bookshop might have space for 20,000 or maybe even 30,000 titles, whereas there are over 130,000 new titles produced in the UK each year. Most bookshops are far smaller; there are many, many, well-established authors on any subject you can think of; the bookshop will have relationships with certain publishers and will stock their titles in preference to others. Clearly, the traditional (bookshop) route is extremely difficult and becomes more so each year.

Tip boxes

If you want something to be put into a little box, just type your tip and mark it so that we can see what you want. Here is an example:

zzz Tip box

It is always a good idea to wash a piece of fruit before eating it.

We use "zzz" consistently, so that a word processor's "find" request will find all such items that require attention.

Illustrations

If you supply illustrations, such as photographs, please pack them carefully to ensure that they don't get damaged on the way to us. Make photocopies and mark your notes on these copies. Mark your text to show what should go where, and pencil lightly on the back of each photograph its name. If there are more than one or two diagrams or illustrations in a book or in a chapter, give them figure numbers and mark these in the text. We may ask that you send us photocopies to start with or we may need the original right from the start. We will discuss this with you at the time. We do need the originals eventually, to obtain the high quality reproductions that are essential for book printing.

Mark where you want your illustration to appear like this:

zzz Fig 3.

If you use anybody else's illustrations or even if you have your own photo taken in a studio, please ensure that you have a copy of a release letter for our files. This must say that the originator is agreeable for the illustration or photo to be used within a book and for promotional purposes. We will let you have the correct wording if your project goes ahead with us.

Wherever possible, please let us have photographs or other illustrations on a disc; if you are technically minded, the best format for us is a TIFF file, with photographs at 300 dpi resolution and preferably in CMYK format, black & white drawings or illustrations at 1,200 dpi.

If you are submitting drawings, please take extreme care to draw them as precisely as possible. Even the smallest irregularities become prominent when laid out in a book. Many faults can be repaired in the computer using our professional software, but it is always preferable to start with the best quality source possible.

Talk to us first, if you haven't yet created the drawings or photographs.

Plagiarism and copyright

Authors must write from knowledge rather than rewriting other books. Some subjects need to be researched, but you must never simply copy what others have written. If you use a brief quote from another source, acknowledge the source within the text.

Structure

We have discovered that new authors or those who have only worked on smaller projects often find it daunting to structure a full-sized book. The following instructions are offered as a guide so there is no need to follow them slavishly. If you already have a system that works for you, that's fine.

Outline

Write an outline for yourself, listing the topics that you want to include in your book. You may drift away from this as you go along, but try not to diverge from it too far. If a publisher has accepted a synopsis, he may turn the book down if the end result is not what he expected.

Introduction

Leave this until you have written the bulk (or all) of your book, as it is only then that you will know what you want to say in it. Keep the intro short.

Option one - start in the middle

Start by writing the major topic (the heart of the book) or the very thing that drove you to write the book in the first place. Once you are reasonably happy with this, move on to the second most important topic and get that into shape, then the third and so on. You can always return to a previous section and alter or add as necessary. Later on, you may want to add introductions to each topic and to create linking chapters. You may also wish to change the order of the chapters later.

Option two - start somewhere else

Start at the beginning and go from there. It really doesn't matter, as you're writing the book - not reading it...

Modular Books

If you are doing something like astrology, which is in modular segments, treat each segment as a separate book. Ensure that each segment is about the same size, unless there is a specific reason for different sizing. If they are not roughly equal, you may have to rewrite them.

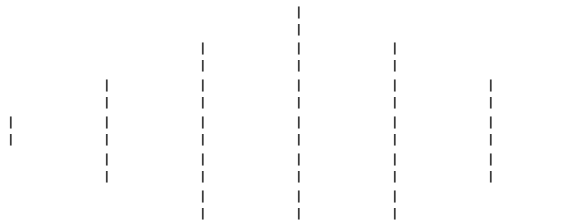
If there are common subheadings/sections in each segment or chapter, ensure that these always appear in the same order and that none of them are missing.

Tips on structure

You can put your book together any way that you like, but if you find this difficult, the following formula will help.

1. Introduction.
2. History, background, mythology or whatever applies here.
3. Method of going about the system or main intro and lead-in to the heart of the book.
4. The heart of the book.
5. Examples, case histories, the system in action, advice for users and so on.
6. Additional information, more advanced information etc.
7. Conclusion.
8. Index (if necessary. Don't create one unless we ask for one; it's often easier for us to create an index).

This system has an actual shape that looks like the following diagram. Once again, your book doesn't *have* to be like this, but the idea may help:



Research

Do your research in sections rather than trying to research the whole book in one go. Take one topic, research it and write your draft. Once you are reasonably happy with it, move on to the next topic, do that, and so on.

Special words

Ensure that special spelling is consistent throughout. For example, Qabalah, Kabala, Kabbala or Kabbalah. Another example is Runes, where there are various types of Futhark.

Closing stages

Once you are nearing the end of your book, go through everything again, ensure that it is all there and that it is all in good condition, then give your script to an educated friend to mark. Choose someone who doesn't know the subject well, as they will pick up on any points that are not clear. Don't use a friend who will simply glance at your book and tell you that they think it is good. Choose a real nitpicker.

We do our best to edit your work sensitively and to make a good job of the typesetting, illustrations, jacket and so on. We will liaise with you as much as we can, but we do have the last word on everything. If we subcontract to a co-publisher, *they* have the last word. If you go to any other specialist, they always have the last word. They know their subject better than you do, otherwise you wouldn't be using them, would you? Most books contain errors. Even after all our efforts, small errors are still almost inevitable, but large ones can be avoided if we all take care.

Book titles

In the commercial world, publishers rarely use the title that the author chooses. A new author thinks long and hard about what he wants to call his book- often before he has

committed even one word to paper - but his title is rarely the one that works. Where self-publishing is concerned, you can choose your title but try not to choose one that is already in existence or that sounds unpleasant. It's easy to check - visit www.amazon.co.uk and www.amazon.com and search for your title. This will show you whether there is anything similar in either the UK or the USA. Although it is not illegal to use an existing title, it makes things confusing for the customer, let alone the bookseller, and that doesn't endear you to them. Remember, there are always many other books available besides yours, so don't irritate the bookseller or potential customer unnecessarily.

Jackets

We will try to work with you on this as far as practicable. We do take into account current trends, both here and in the States. We can often produce something along the lines of what you would like to see, so do tell us if you have some ideas about a cover.

Cuttings

Keep cuttings, reviews, photographs or anything else that you may want to use for promotional material later.

These guidelines are subject to change without notice and should not be considered "set in stone". (So says my legal-minded husband, Jan).

Special offer

Apart from your own book, we currently offer our authors (ESP ones as well) the opportunity to buy any Zambezi Publishing book at a fifty per cent discount, plus p&p.