INTRODUCTION

These guidelines are intended to help scholarly editors, publishers, and consultants and reviewers (inspectors or vettors) for the Committee on Scholarly Editions (CSE) carry out their respective functions. The brochure “Aims and Services of the Committee on Scholarly Editions”\(^1\) gives the following summary of the CSE’s basic position on editorial standards for scholarly editions:

*Standards for the “Approved Edition” and “Approved Text” Emblems*

The editorial standards that form the criteria for the award of the CSE “Approved Edition” emblem can be stated here in only the most general terms, since the range of editorial work that comes within the committee’s purview makes it impossible to set forth a detailed, step-by-step editorial procedure. Rather, the CSE emphasizes that editors who are thoroughly acquainted with the scholarship on editorial approaches applicable to their materials, who are fully knowledgeable about the relevant documentary texts, and who are sensitive to the circumstances attending the composition and production of all forms of the text can judge what editorial procedures are appropriate to their materials, carry out those procedures accurately and consistently, and explain exactly what they have done and why.

Whatever specific editorial theory and procedures are used, the editor’s basic task is to establish a reliable text. Many, indeed most, scholarly editions include a general introduction—either historical or interpretive—as well as explanatory annotations to various words, passages, events, and historical figures. Although neither is essential to the editor’s primary responsibility of establishing a text, both can add to the value, that is, the usefulness, of the edition. Whatever additional materials are included, however, the CSE considers the following essential for a scholarly edition:

\(^1\) Copies of this brochure may be ordered by writing to David G. Nicholls, Ph.D., Director of Book Publications, MLA, 26 Broadway, 3rd Floor, New York, NY 10004-1789. Ph. 646-576-5040 Fax 646-458-0030.
1. A *textual essay*, which sets forth the history of the text and its physical forms, describes or reports the authoritative or significant texts, explains how the text of the edition has been constructed or represented, gives the rationale for all decisions affecting its construction or representation, and discusses the verbal composition of the text as well as its punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.

2. An appropriate *textual apparatus* or notes or both, which (1) records alterations and emendations in the basic text(s), (2) discusses problematical readings (if not treated in the textual essay), (3) reports variant substantive readings from all versions of the text that might carry authority, and (4) indicates how the new edition treats ambiguously divided compounds (if any) in the basic text as well as which end-of-line hyphens in the new edition should be retained in quoting from the text. These four kinds of information need not be presented in any specific arrangement, and not all obtain in every situation, but the CSE requires that, when applicable, they should be either in each volume bearing the “Approved Edition” emblem or otherwise available at the time of publication.

3. A *proofreading plan* that provides for meticulous proofreading at every stage of production so that the accuracy of the text, textual essay, and textual apparatus is not compromised.

**Guidelines**

The guidelines below suggest some considerations that the CSE regards as fundamental to the preparation and publication of useful, reliable scholarly editions. They cover the kinds of inquiries that an editor, reviewer, publisher, or informed critic needs to make in order to form a judgment about the accuracy and completeness of a scholarly edition, and they can therefore serve as a working checklist of matters that may demand attention in producing scholarly editions.

Just as no list of general guidelines can anticipate all of the special problems in a particular edition, so also many of the points mentioned below will not be applicable to every edition—e.g., “Collations” (II.C) would not be relevant to a diplomatic edition of a single text. The guidelines are intended only to provide a broad framework for identifying issues and for dealing with them reasonably.

I. **Conception and Plan of Volume/Edition.** The content of a volume or edition should be appropriate, complete, and coherently conceived; it should:

   A. Include logically selected, manageable textual content—e.g., an edition of a single work, a group of works generically or chronologically grouped;
B. Include, when appropriate, authorial documents in addition to basic text(s), such as adaptations, working notes, contracts, tables of contents, prefaces, abstracts;

C. Present appropriate second-party textual materials—e.g., letters from respondents may be desirable in an edition of letters;


E. Be logically arranged and easy to use.

II. Editorial Methods and Procedures

A. Materials

1. A thorough census of all relevant materials should be conducted.
2. Although editors may use reproductions (e.g., photocopies or microfilms) for preliminary editing, they should at some point verify the accuracy of their work against the original artifacts.

B. Transcriptions

1. Transcriptions should be made according to an established rationale and policy, covering, e.g., such matters as expansion of abbreviations, use of special characters, and indication of medium.
2. Transcriptions should be double-checked and perfected by persons other than the transcriber.

C. Collations

1. All significant or potentially significant forms of the text(s) should be collated.
2. Accuracy of the collations should be verified by comparison of results obtained by different people.
3. Editorial policy for defining and recording variants should be clearly stated. All items defined as variants should be recorded whether or not they are to be included in the completed edition.

D. Quotations

1. Sources of references and quotations in author’s text(s) should be identified, and any textual problems raised should be addressed.
2. Care should be taken that the text is accurately quoted in the textual essay, textual notes, historical essay, and explanatory notes.

E. Proofing at every stage to safeguard accuracy is of the highest importance.

III. Parts of the Edition

A. Text(s)
1. The decision to use a single or multiple base- or copy-text, parallel texts, sequential versions, or a combination of these, should be appropriate to the goal of the edition.

2. The form of presentation of the texts—whether in clear text, diplomatic transcription, facsimile, or in some other format—should be consistent with announced principles.

3. Inclusive text should use a clear and efficient system to symbolize cancellations, interlineations, omissions, insertions, writeovers, etc.
B. Textual Essay

1. The essay should provide a clear, convincing, and thorough statement of the edition’s theoretical principles and practical methodology, covering such matters as:
   a. theory of copy-text adopted;
   b. description of alternative candidates, if any, for basic text (whether single, parallel, or sequential texts are presented) and justification of selection;
   c. justification of form of presentation, whether clear text, diplomatic transcription, or other form;
   d. clear explanation of emendation policy, covering all changes made in the basic text(s) or documents, whether or not such changes appear in the emendations list;
   e. rationale for including and excluding various classes of textual variants in the apparatus;
   f. explanation of treatment of ambiguously broken line-end compounds or possible compounds in source text(s);
   g. clear instructions for using the textual apparatus.

2. The discussion of materials the edition is based on should include the following, where appropriate:
   a. a survey of all forms of the text(s) relevant to the edition, including an account of the provenance of such forms and/or artifacts;
   b. a record of locations of relevant manuscripts and unique printed texts;
   c. identification of the specific copies used for collations, preparation of printer’s copy, etc.;
   d. bibliographical or codicological description of the relevant artifacts (printed copies, manuscripts, typescripts, tearsheets, etc.)

3. The account of the evolution of the text(s) should include:
   a. the history of composition and revision, whether by the author, scribes, editors, compositors, etc.;
   b. the history of publication of printed texts;
   c. for scribal texts, a profile of the copying habits, orthography, and dialect of manuscript scribes.

4. The essay should somewhere contain an explicit rationale for reproducing or not reproducing visual or graphic aspects of the copy-text, including (but not confined to) the following:
   a. engraved or photographic illustrations, whether in an original manuscript or in a published text;
   b. decorated initials, drop capitals, and other visual aspects of typography in printed texts or handwriting in manuscript texts;
   c. the explicit standards used for reproducing color in illustrations and/or bindings, as well as sizing (reduction or enlargement) of visual elements reproduced in facsimile.
C. Critical/Textual Apparatus

1. Design and Purpose of Apparatus
   a. The apparatus, used in conjunction with the textual essay, should enable thorough study of the composition and transmission of the text within the limits envisaged by the edition.
   b. The apparatus should distinguish, where possible, between what the author has done to the text, and what was done by scribes, printers, compositors, advisors, and editors (including the present one).
   c. The record of textual variants should be logical, complete, and uncluttered; it should:
      (1) conform to the principles announced in the textual essay;
      (2) include variants from all authoritative or significant texts;
      (3) make possible, when used in conjunction with the edited text(s), the recovery of all significant forms of the text, if such is consistent with the goals of the edition.
   d. Each part of the apparatus should be self-contained; cross-referencing of information between lists should be clear and easy to follow.

2. Parts of the Apparatus
   a. Record of emendations: editorial emendations—words, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization—of the basic text(s) should be reported or adequately described in a manner consistent with the stated policy of emendation; if emendations are not individually reported, the policy must be justified and the classes of unreported emendations adequately described.
   b. Record of alterations: the author’s alterations of the text should be recorded; if the record is not to appear in the published volume, the decision to exclude the record should be justified in the textual essay.
   c. Records of variants should follow the edition’s stated principles of inclusion and exclusion and should make clear the history and/or permutations of the text.
   d. Textual notes should identify the textual problems and adequately explain how the editors have dealt with them.
   e. Records of Word, Stanza, and Section Breaks
      (1) All ambiguous line-end hyphenation of compound, or possibly compound, words in manuscript or printed texts used as basic-texts or copy-texts should be recorded; a second list should indicate the

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2 The term “apparatus” is used here in its broadest sense. The CSE does not require a standard format for the apparatus.
way such compounds ambiguously broken in the new edition should be quoted.

(2) Stanza, section, and verse paragraphs ambiguously broken at the ends of printed pages should be recorded.

D. Extra-Textual Materials

1. Historical or critical essays and analyses, explanatory notes, glosses, etc., should, if present:
   a. be clearly separated from the textual essay and complement rather than duplicate information in the textual essay;
   b. dovetail smoothly with the textual essay;
   c. conform to a reasoned policy for length, placement, and content;
   d. be complete.

2. Glossaries and proper-name tables
   a. The rationale for determining entries should be clear and appropriate both to the text and to the audience envisaged.
   b. The format should be clear and uncluttered.
   c. Cross-references should be provided for entries having alternate spellings.

IV. Preparation for Publication

A. All necessary permissions to publish the material must be obtained from the owners and copyright holders.

B. The editor and the press should agree on the form printer’s copy will take, and the press should at an early stage see a sample.

C. If the volume is to be set in type from printed copy, the copy should be clean and clear enough to allow typesetting with minimum difficulty. If copy is submitted on disk, see below, Section F, “Use of Electronic Files.”

D. The editor and the publisher should understand one another’s special requirements for publishing scholarly editions, including:
   1. the difference between this copy and the copy the press ordinarily receives—that this text may contain, for instance, misspellings, eccentric punctuation, and inconsistencies that are to be followed exactly;
   2. the particular design requirements of the volume and, if applicable, the format of the series as a whole;
   3. special aspects of the production schedule, including the following:
      a. if the volume will contain an apparatus keyed to page and line of the edited text, it should be understood that portions of the edition cannot be ready for typesetting until weeks or months after the text is in page proof;
      b. the amount of time to be allowed for multiple proofreadings and for necessary final collations.
E. Proofreading
   1. Final responsibility for maintaining the accuracy of the text during production must be clearly assigned.
   2. Adequate resources should be allotted, and a comprehensive plan for proofreading should be developed, taking into account:
      a. how proof will be read—by whom, how many times, and against what;
      b. which stages of proof will be read by the editor(s).
   3. Final collations or checks should be carried out to ensure that the printer has made no unauthorized changes in proofs.

F. Use of Electronic Files
   1. If the editor’s electronic files will be used for all or part of the typesetting, the editor and publisher should agree about:
      a. the choice of software and output device, bearing in mind problems such as the linking of notes with text, nonstandard characters, etc.;
      b. whether the electronic files are to be used only for the production of galleys, or are to be formatted by the editor for page makeup, including running heads, folios, and placement of footnotes;
      c. who is responsible for inserting final changes or corrections in the file—the editor, the publisher, or the publisher’s typesetter.
   2. If electronic files are to be translated to a system that will drive the typesetter, the resulting proofs should be checked as they normally would.
3. Even if the edition will be set from disk, the editor should provide hard copy to the publisher.
4. Arrangements should be made for retaining and properly archiving the electronic files.
5. Consideration should be given to publication of the edition on floppy disks, CD-ROM, or other electronic text formats.

G. Indexing: if an index or indexes are to be included, the use of computer programs to generate an index should be considered, and time should be allotted in the production schedule for preparing the index.

H. Reprinting: to facilitate reprinting, especially of texts only, editors and publishers should consider:
   1. making archived electronic files available for reprinting;
   2. if possible, designing volumes with photoreproduction in mind;
   3. arranging the apparatus and editorial commentary—whether set directly in type or preserved in electronic form—in such a way that they can easily be omitted, if desired, from reprints.

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