



# **Work in Progress - A Critical Assessment Scheme For Writers Guidelines**

**May 2006**

Work in Progress is a unique critical assessment project for professional and advanced writers, and a major part of our professional and creative development services for writers.

Originally available only to writers living in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, the success of the scheme has enabled the development of a new pilot project (limited places) of assessments for writers living throughout Scotland, writing poetry or for children as part of the nationwide 'Words @ Work' programme.

Writers living in the Highlands and Islands can still access all aspects of the scheme, and we hope that later in 2006 assessments of fiction and non-fiction work will likewise be available to writers outwith the region.

Essentially, the project is a 'peer' assessment project - designed and run by writers for writers - and our assessors are highly experienced and widely published writers of at least national prominence with wide experience of writing development, tutoring, reviewing and publishing in Scotland and beyond.

The assessment process is conducted within the context of writing and publishing in Scotland, and is a constructive and supportive process designed to enable and encourage the writer to develop their work to its maximum potential.

The scheme is not an exercise in marketing advice but a means of providing professional support to writers through in-depth analysis of their work in progress in terms of structure, language and the creative direction of the submitted text etc. Where appropriate, assessors will give basic opinions on the marketability of a text but this is at the discretion of the assessor.

Unlike other, more commercially orientated assessment services, in this project the assessor's role is to provide guidance on development of the submitted text and for the writer's work in general terms. This is not a text editing service.

Critical assessment is, of course, highly subjective. Our research has shown that for many writers the anonymity of the scheme is vital, as is the fact that it can be completed entirely via e-mail without the requirement for form filling or attendance at one-off or on-going workshops or meetings.

We recognise that not all writers need or respond to the same types of development activity, and we aim to encourage writers to participate in development activities at whichever level and in whatever way best suits their own preferences.

Applicants' work will be approached in a supportive, positive and encouraging manner while retaining critical independence and honesty. Hence, submitted work will be assessed on a mutually anonymous basis with neither the applicant nor the assessor being aware of each other's identity.

If you would like to know more about this scheme or other development opportunities for writers please contact Writing Development Coordinator Peter Urpeth on 01463 717093 or via e-mail: [peter@hi-arts.co.uk](mailto:peter@hi-arts.co.uk)

Although this scheme is intended as part of the services HI-Arts provides for professional development of writers, all writers are encouraged to apply but applicants should reflect on whether or not they are at a stage in their development at which in-depth analysis would be constructive and useful to them.

## **Submission Process**

### **Submissions Are Welcome From Writers:**

- \* For poetry and childrens work - living in Scotland.
- \* For fiction / non-fiction - currently living in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland.
- \* Writing in English, Scots and Gaelic.
- \* Of a professional or advanced level - this is not an entry-level scheme. We do not ask you to fill in forms or send CVs or examples of your work but the submitted work must be of a minimum length and in the format specified below.

- \* Not currently on a course of academic study of creative writing at degree or post-graduate level.

### **We Welcome Submissions that are:**

- \* Fiction for adults - in novel or short-story format, including collections.
- \* Poetry.
- \* General non-fiction - e.g. sport, culture, history, travel, biography and autobiography, crafts etc.
- \* For children.

### **Submission Process - All Submissions**

#### **E-mail:**

In order to minimise administration the preferred route for submission to the scheme is via e-mail. E-mail submissions are accepted in the following format:

- \* Submissions must contain a cover page with the title of the work and detail of the author and his/her contact details including full postal address.
- \* The submitted work must not contain any other form of identification mark such as page footers carrying the author's name.
- \* The work should be sent as an e-mail attachment in either Word(.doc) or text (.txt) formats.
- \* Lines should be double-spaced and words in a minimum common font size of 10pt. All pages in the work for assessment must be numbered.

**E-Mail Submissions To: [Peter@hi-arts.co.uk](mailto:Peter@hi-arts.co.uk)**

#### **Post:**

Applications by post can be accepted but for administration purposes are discouraged. However, in the event of an applicant not having access to electronic mail facilities, or in the case of non-fiction applications where pictures and other materials may form an integral part of the submission,

these should **follow the same rules as above**, plus:

- \* Pages must be typed / printed on one side only.
- \* Must contain a stamped addressed envelope for return of work, if required.

**Please Post Submissions To:**

Peter Urpeth  
Writing Development Coordinator  
HI~Arts  
4th Floor Ballantyne House  
84 Academy Street  
Inverness IV1 1LU

**Fiction / Non-Fiction Submissions:**

- \* Must be a minimum of 5'000 words and a maximum of 15'000 words.
- \* Must include a synopsis or plan (no more 1'000 words in length) of the complete work, and can include a note on any specific aspect of the work that the applicant would like to be addressed by the assessor. Please also indicate the genre of the work (where clearly possible), your ambitions for the work and the intended market for the work.

**Poetry:**

- \* Must be a minimum of 12 poems and a maximum of 20 - not totaling more than 400 lines.
- \* In addition to the general submissions requirements above, must include a note on the writer's gender and age.
- \* Must include a note on the writer's aims for the work - whether intended as a collection / individual poems etc.

**Writing for Children:**

- \* As per above general guidelines, and requires a synopsis and plan along with a note of the intended age of the readership.

- \* If intending to use illustrations please detail the nature and approximate number, and if you have an artist already working on the book.
- \* If sending illustrations by post - please do not send original artwork.
- \* We will accept whole books up to the same word limit as adult fiction, but with no minimum word count. Picture books for young children are also welcome.

**Note:**

HI~Arts aims to provide applicants with their written assessments within one month of submission but this may be extended during busy periods.

The scheme is limited to thirty submissions each year and is provided on a first come first served basis. A writer may only apply once a year to the scheme.

The assessment report will normally be of 1000 words or more and will be divided into subheadings addressing specific aspects of the work.

HI~Arts can accept no liability for loss or damage to any work submitted to this scheme. No responsibility can be accepted for lose or damage to material submitted to HI~Arts - don't send originals of photos or artwork, always make and keep a copy of your work.

Given that this is an assessment process and therefore is essentially subjective in nature, neither HI~Arts or the scheme assessors are able to enter into any form of follow-up process, unless initiated by the assessor.

HI~Arts reserves the right to reject submissions that do not meet the terms of the submission procedure outlined above.

