

A GUIDE TO THE SWP- PUBLISHING PROCESS

Welcome to SWP Publishing. We want every author's experience of publishing with us to be a positive and rewarding one. This guide walks you through the journey of your book – from the moment you sign your contract to the day your work reaches readers around the world – explaining what we need from you and what you can expect from us at each stage. If you have questions at any point, your commissioning editor is always your first point of contact.

1. From contract to delivery

Your contract sets out the agreed delivery date, expected word count, and format of your manuscript. These details matter: we schedule titles for production months in advance, so working to an accurate schedule keeps everything on track.

If you anticipate a delay, please tell us as early as possible so we can agree a revised date together. Any changes to the agreed length or specification should be approved by your commissioning editor before you deliver.

When you deliver your manuscript, make sure it is as complete and clean as possible: proofread, consistent in style, and accompanied by all illustrations, tables, and – importantly – written permissions for any third-party material you have reproduced. Obtaining permissions is the author's responsibility, and missing clearances are one of the most common causes of delay.

2. Review and acceptance

Your editor will review the delivered manuscript to confirm it is complete and ready to move forward. For many of our titles, this stage also involves peer or expert review appropriate to the subject area. We will share any feedback with you and discuss revisions where needed.

Once your manuscript is accepted as final, your editor hands it over to our production team, and the manuscript is "locked" for editing.

3. Copyediting

A copyeditor goes through your text to correct errors, ensure consistency, and bring everything in line with our house style. Copyediting is not rewriting – its purpose is to make your work clear, correct, and consistent while preserving your voice.

You will have the opportunity to review the copyedited manuscript and answer any queries the copyeditor raises. This is the right moment to resolve questions of fact, terminology, or wording. Once typesetting begins, only essential corrections can be made.

4. Typesetting and proofs

Your edited manuscript is then typeset into the designed pages of the finished book. You will receive proofs to check. At this stage we ask you to read carefully for errors introduced during setting and for any final typos – but not to rewrite or add new material, as substantial changes at proof stage are costly and disruptive to the schedule. If your book needs an index, this is also the point at which it is prepared, either by you or by a professional indexer.

5. Cover and promotion

Designers usually begin work on your cover well ahead of publication. Although the cover is created in-house, your editor will ask for your input. We will also agree promotional copy and finalise your title – so do choose a title you are happy with, as it becomes very difficult to change once your book is being advertised and listed.

6. Printing and publication

Once proofs are approved and the files are finalised, your book goes to print and into digital production. Bound copies are delivered to our warehouse, your contractual author copies are sent to you, and stock is distributed to booksellers and partners.

Publication typically follows several weeks after bound copies are received, depending on the printing arrangements and key market dates.

7. After publication

Publication is the beginning of your book's life, not the end. We continue to market and sell your title through our catalogues, our website, congresses and training events, and our international distribution channels. We welcome your involvement in promoting your work – through your own networks, conferences, and the professional communities you belong to.