

osborne books


author pack

Interested in writing for Osborne Books?

It is often said that most people 'have a book in them'.

This material is intended to give you an idea of what is involved in dealing with a publisher such as Osborne Books.

If you prefer in the first instance to telephone and talk over your idea, please give me a call (01905 748071) and I will be happy to chat about it on an informal basis.



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some osborne books publishing facts

- Osborne Books is a small specialist educational publishing company producing paper-based and computer-based resources in the business studies and financial educational sectors.
- Most of the people working for Osborne Books come from the educational field and so understand the pressures and problems of teachers and lecturers.
- At Osborne Books we undertake the whole publishing process through commissioning, editing, typesetting, marketing and distribution from our warehouse and offices in Worcester. The only process we do not undertake is the actual printing.
- It takes us on average nine months to process a book from first draft to finished product.
- Our printer takes all books from us on disk or online.
- It takes approximately four weeks for the printer to print a book.
- Most educational books should ideally be published in May/June.
- Before accepting a book for publication we ask the prospective author to provide us with sample material and CV material (see the attached guidelines).
- Once a book is accepted to mutual agreement we draw up a formal contract setting out the expected completion date of the draft, our publication date and the royalty rate.
- Our royalties are generally higher than average because we like to foster the continuing publisher/author relationship which is very important to us.

what osborne books provides for its authors

- Royalties are normally up to 15% p.a. of net sales receipts, ie 15% of the amount received from wholesalers/bookshops/schools/colleges. For example, for a book selling at £15, the author is likely to receive approximately £1.50 (bookshop sale after discount) or £1.88 (college direct sale – after educational discount). This is higher than average and reflects the long-term author/publisher relationship fostered and valued by Osborne Books. Royalties are paid on 30 June annually.
- Free copies of the finished book are provided for the author.
- Osborne Books takes responsibility for seeking permissions for using published material (eg newspaper cuttings, articles from journals) and will pay the necessary fees (within reasonable limits).

what osborne books expects from its authors

- Before accepting a book for publication we ask the prospective author to provide us with sample material and CV material (see the attached guidelines). Sample material normally includes a detailed plan (eg a list of chapters) of the book and a draft chapter.
- Once the concept of a book is accepted we draw up a formal contract setting out the expected completion date of the draft, our publication date and the royalty rate.
- After a book has been published, the author will be expected to regularly update and revise the text to ensure its continuing success in the marketplace.
- Where appropriate, for example in accounting books, answers to student activities will be required.
- We like authors to provide text in Mac or PC text format, on disk or via email. Word files are commonly used. Illustrations can be provided in hard copy or (preferably) digital format. Osborne Books can also design diagrams based on freehand drawings.
- When we have accepted a proposition we expect the material submitted to be in an advanced state of completion – ie with illustrations, case studies, text, already decided upon and placed in each chapter. We ask for a hard (printed) copy of material as well as the computer file. We do, of course, allow a substantial amount of our editorial time to sort things out. In the early stages we allow time for discussion of format, text layout and like to meet with authors to look at early drafts – the learning curve is not too drastic.
- The author will be expected to provide data for the index – this is normally nothing more onerous than going through the final draft with a highlighter pen and indicating the items to be indexed.
- The author will be expected to proof read drafts as and when they become available.

material needed for assessment of a proposition

The object of this material is to give us an idea of the feasibility of a project. Do not worry if you cannot get hold of all the details – we can help with this. This material is intended as a useful starting point to the ‘thinking through’ process which will involve both prospective author and publisher.

stage 1

- **Brief CV material** is asked for. This does not mean a full CV – ideally just one side of A4 presenting relevant details such as:
 - name, address, contact details (eg phone numbers, Email etc)
 - HE qualifications (dates and titles)
 - areas of teaching (subjects, levels, institutions)
 - previous writing experience, if any
- **Any examples of previous writing** – books, articles, reports, classroom material.
- **Rationale** of the proposition setting out:
 - the subject matter
 - the form you see it taking (book or other resource)
 - the market you see for it – include exam/awarding bodies, levels, subjects, and, most importantly, the numbers of students involved (if you know the details)
 - the competition – other books/resources on the market (include the prices) – why your book is better and is needed in the marketplace

stage 2 – after we have assessed and discussed stage 1

- **A book plan** setting out the titles of the proposed chapters (eg in the form of a Contents list) and making a rough estimate of the length of the book
- **A draft chapter** containing
 - introduction and objectives
 - main text (with headings and subheadings)
 - draft diagrams and details of illustrations
 - concluding matter – eg key terms, activities, conclusion, or whatever is appropriate.
- An estimate of the **writing schedule** – when will it be written? Approximately.

Sample material to help with this process is available when you get to this point.

If all is well at this stage we can proceed to contract and the book is under way.