



Melanie Gee
Accredited Indexer

society of
indexers
fellow

Terms and Conditions

Preliminary matters

1. It is usual for me to request a sample couple of chapters for me to assess whether I am comfortable with the subject matter and readership level: an introductory chapter and then something more 'meaty' from the middle of the book is usually the most useful. We both want your book to be within my comfort zone so that I can produce a high-quality index.
2. Provided I am happy, and we have agreed a fee, we will agree a schedule, i.e. when I should expect to receive the full manuscript for indexing (either the PDF page proofs for a standard index, or a Word/InDesign file for an embedded index), and when I will get the index back to you.

Fees and payment

3. We will agree a fee for the job before I commence work. For most texts, I calculate this based on the word count for the indexable content (which usually excludes bibliographies and reference lists). As a starting point, my fee for a standard index, working from PDF page proofs and providing the index to you as a Word document, is based on the Society of Indexers' recommended minimum rate which is currently (2024 rates) £9.55 per 1000 words. For particularly complex texts or detailed/multiple indexes I would charge more than this. I also charge more (typically 20% extra) for embedded indexes in Word or InDesign, and I also charge a little extra for self-published works. This is because these projects take longer to do.
4. My fee includes **up to one hour of index edits** should they be needed after you have reviewed my completed index. This is usually sufficient for a reasonable number of added, deleted or reworded terms, or if you need to make stylistic changes to the index (e.g. layout, capitalization, punctuation, alphabetization and page-range elision) – the latter can be done very easily using my specialized indexing software. Additional edit time, if required, will be billed as an added charge at the Society of Indexers' hourly rate, which is currently (2024 rates) £31.60 per hour. (Please note that to date, I have only had to charge for edits on a couple of occasions, both of which were due to chapters and paragraphs being shuffled around after indexing so that I needed to repaginate the index.)

5. I will invoice you by email at the same time as I send you the completed index. For my own tax records, I need to have your physical address to include on my invoice.
6. If my invoice is being paid by your academic institution and I haven't worked with you before, it will help smooth payment if I complete any additional paperwork at your end in plenty of time: there are usually various forms to be filled in. It can be helpful to contact your accounts department about this as soon as I receive the work for indexing, for example.
7. My usual payment terms (unless we agree otherwise) are for full payment to be received within 30 days of my invoice. I prefer to be paid by bank transfer. Sometimes authors prefer to make a test payment of a couple of pounds so that I can confirm they are sending it to the right place. However now that banks have introduced more checks, you may be happy not to do this. I will of course confirm when payment has been received.
8. Late payment will be subject to the statutory debt recovery fee of £40 plus the statutory interest rate of 8% over the Bank of England base rate.

How I work

9. Once I have received the full manuscript, I will check it through and seek your confirmation about:
 - a. Index presentation, e.g. capitalization (or not) of index headings; set-out (indented) or run-on (paragraph style) subheadings; how many levels of subheadings; punctuation within headings; alphabetization method; page-range elision; single or multiple index sequences
 - b. Whether/how footnotes, endnotes, glossaries, appendices etc. are to be indexed
 - c. Whether/how material in Figures, Tables, photographs etc. are to be indexed
 - d. Any other issues that arise in your text, e.g. the approach to indexing cited authors, creative works, numeric entries or special symbols. (For more about cited authors, see under 'Reviewing the index', below)
 - e. The total space available for the index.

(Please note: if you are working with a publisher, most of this will be covered by their in-house style document or guidelines for authors: if you have received one of these, please pass it on to me.)
10. Additionally, if there are any topics or themes that you particularly want to be drawn out by the index, and that you think might not be obvious to me, before I start work is the time to let me know. (I don't need - or want - a list of words to be indexed though!)
11. Once all this has been sorted out, I will get on and produce your index. It is usual for you to not hear from me until the index is completed, although occasionally additional things crop up as I go along.

12. For embedded indexes, I will send you additional information explaining how you the tags I have inserted into your manuscript file 'work' to create the embedded index.
13. For e-books, I can provide you with additional information explaining how indexes may be 'activated' and hyperlinked. (However, typesetting and e-book production is outside my area of expertise – best leave it to the experts!)

Reviewing the index

14. Of course you will wish to review the index carefully. You might find the *Commissioning an index* produced by the Society of Indexers helpful. It is available on their website, www.indexers.org.uk, under Resources: Information Leaflets. Two areas to draw to your particular attention are passing mentions, and cited authors:
15. Passing mentions: Indexes are compiled according to ISO 999:1996 *Information and documentation – Guidelines for the content, organization and presentation of indexes*. This directs the indexer to 'discriminate between information on a subject and passing mention of a subject'; and to 'exclude passing mention of subjects that offer nothing significant to the potential user'. Passing mentions are therefore not normally indexed. The judgment is, of course, subjective, but do keep this rule in mind when you discover that not every mention of a certain topic is listed in the index.
16. Cited authors: How I handle cited authors will have been agreed before I started work; if you want every reference indexed, this will typically raise the fee as it can be very time-consuming! Modern authors are generally indexed only if they are discussed non-parenthetically in the text or substantively in a footnote/endnote: simple bibliographic references are not indexed.