

NZSA Assessment Programme 2010

The NZSA runs two professional development programmes, the Mentor Programme and the Manuscript Assessment Programme, as well as a Manuscript Appraisal Service.

The Mentor Programme is for writers at the beginning of their career who have mastered the basics of writing and can demonstrate the skills of authorship. The programme offers them the opportunity to have those skills polished by an experienced writer in a one-on-one situation.

The Assessment Programme is for writers who have progressed their work to a more complete stage (that is, have taken a completed manuscript through a number of drafts) and require the objective view of an experienced assessor to provide constructive critiquing of a specific piece of work. Primarily the programme is for new writers with little or no publication in book form. However, it is also open to more experienced writers who are exploring a new genre – for example, moving from poetry to fiction or from journalism to novel writing.

The Manuscript Appraisal Service is a subsidised service designed to assist writers at an early stage of development who have completed part or all of a manuscript by providing them with a professional overview of their work. It is not meant to be a substitute for a full manuscript assessment but rather a critical response to the work with comments on the technical ability of the writer and some advice on the next step.

Applications are now being called for the 2010 NZSA (PEN NZ Inc) Manuscript Assessment Programme. The successful applicants will have their manuscripts read and receive a detailed report on its strengths and weaknesses and suggestions for improvement. The assessor may also suggest suitable publishers who might consider the applicant's work.

An assessment can assist an author improve the quality of their work. While publishers may favourably consider manuscripts which have been revised after an assessment, there is no guarantee of publication. This ultimately depends on the publishers' list, what else is being published in your genre and a number of other factors which impact on the literary or commercial viability of a book.

Manuscripts should be completed work that the writer feels requires the objective view of an experienced assessor able to provide constructive critiquing and suggestions for improvement.

The selection panel will choose the successful applicants and match them with an assessor who specialises in the genre in which the applicant writes. The process of selection, which takes into account a balance of genres, is not necessarily an indication of the quality of the manuscript, however, it is expected that the applicant's manuscript will be of a standard that reflects the more advanced skill level of the writer.

The decision of the selection panel is final and no correspondence will be entered into. The selection panel is unable to provide feedback on unsuccessful applications.

Criteria:

- Open to financial members of the NZSA (PEN NZ Inc).
- Manuscripts for both children and adults (excluding picture books) will be considered.
- For a completed manuscript at 2nd or 3rd draft of poetry, fiction, short fiction and non-fiction.
- Maximum length 100,000 words – word count must appear on the ms.
- New writers, with little or no publication in book form, may have been published in literary journals and periodicals.
- There are 10 ordinary positions available for 2010, and 3 places specifically for mid-career writers.

For an application form please contact the NZSA national office by emailing programmes@nzauthor.org.nz