MODERN
LANGUAGE
ASSOCIATION

Guiding Questions for Vetters of Scholarly Editions

MLA Committee on Scholarly Editions

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Last Revised April 2022

Title vetted: _____

Edited by: _____

Date vetted: _____

Vetter: _____

For each question listed below, the vetter should enter *Yes*, *No*, or *Not applicable* as appropriate. Vetter should also indicate whether additional comment on this point is made in the attached report.

		Y	N	N/A	See Report
I. Basic Materials, Procedures, and Conditions					
Materials					
1.0	Has the editor missed any essential primary or secondary materials?				
Stemma					
2.0	Has the editor accounted for the interrelations of all relevant texts?				
2.1	Have you tested the validity of the geneaology, stemma, or other account of the relevant texts against the collation data and included your findings in the report?				
Transcription					
3.0	Have all transcriptions been fully compared by the editor with the original documents, as distinct from a photocopy of those documents?				
3.1	If any transcriptions have not been fully compared with the originals, is there a statement in the edition alerting the user to that fact?				
3.2	Has someone other than the original transcriber carried out a thorough and complete check of each transcription, whether against the original or a photocopy of the original?				
3.3	Have you sampled the transcriptions for accuracy and included the results of that sampling in your report?				
Collation					
4.0	Have all potentially significant texts been collated?				
4.1	How many times have the collations been repeated by different people?				

		Y	N	N/A	See Report
4.2	Have you sampled the collations for accuracy and included the results of your sampling in your report?				

II. Textual Essay

Principles and Methods

5.0	If the edition under review is one in a series, have you examined textual essays and vetters' reports (if any) from earlier volumes?				
5.1	Does the textual essay provide a clear, convincing, and thorough statement of the editorial principles and practical methods used to produce this volume?				
5.2	Does it adequately survey all pertinent forms of the text, including an account of their provenance?				

Publication History and Physical Description

6.0	Does it give an adequate history of composition and revision?				
6.1	Does it give an adequate history of publication?				
6.2	Does it give a physical description of the manuscripts or other pertinent materials (including electronic source materials, if any)?				
6.3	Are ways in which photographic or digital reproductions manipulate the text (sometimes leading to greater legibility) plainly described?				
6.4	Does it give a physical description of the specific copies used for collation?				

Copy-text

7.0	Does the textual essay provide a convincing rationale for the choice of copy-text or base text or for the decision not to rely on either?				
7.1	Does it adequately acknowledge and describe alternative but rejected choices for the copy-text or base text?				
7.2	If there are forms of the text that precede the copy-text or base text, can they be recovered from the edited text and its apparatus?				
7.3	If not, is it practical, desirable, or necessary to make them recoverable?				

		Y	N	N/A	See Report
Changes to the Text					
8.0	Does the editor give an adequate account of changes to the text made by authors, scribes, compositors, et cetera?				
8.1	Are such changes to the text reported in detail as part of the textual apparatus?				
8.2	If such changes are recorded but the record will not be published, has the decision not to publish it been justified in the textual essay?				
Emendation					
9.0	Is the rationale for emendation of the copy-text or base text clear and convincing?				
9.1	Are all emendations of the copy-text or base text reported in detail or described by category when not reported in detail?				
9.2	Are the emendations of the copy-text or base text consistent with the stated rationale for emendation?				
9.3	Do the data from collation support the editor's assertion of authority for emendations drawn from the collated texts?				
9.4	If the author's customary usage (spelling, punctuation) is used as the basis for certain emendations, has an actual record of that usage been compiled from this text and collateral texts written by the author?				
9.5	Have you sampled the edited text and record of emendations for accuracy, and have you included the results in your report?				
9.6	Are emendations recorded clearly, avoiding idiosyncratic or ill-defined symbols?				
Illustrations and Typography					
10.0	Does the essay somewhere include an adequate rationale for reproducing, or not, the significant visual or graphic aspects of the copy-text or base text?				
10.1	Are all illustrations in the manuscript or the printed copy-text or base text reproduced in the edited text?				
10.2	If not, are they adequately described or represented by examples in the textual essay?				
10.3	Are the visual aspects of typography or handwriting either represented in the edited text or adequately described in the textual essay?				

		Y	N	N/A	See Report
10.4	If objects (such as bindings) or graphic elements (such as illustrations) are reproduced in the edition, are the standards for reproduction—sizing, color, and resolution—explicitly set forth in the textual essay?				

III. Apparatus and Extratextual Materials

Nature of Collation

		Y	N	N/A	See Report
11.0	Has a full historical collation been compiled, whether or not that collation is to be published?				
11.1	Is the rationale clear and convincing for publishing a selective historical collation (e.g., one that excludes variant accidentals)?				
11.2	Does the selective collation omit any category of variants you think should be included or include any you think should be excluded?				
11.3	Is the historical collation to be published accurate and consistent?				

Textual Notes

		Y	N	N/A	See Report
12.0	Are the textual notes clear, adequate, and confined to textual matters?				

Ambiguous Textual Forms

		Y	N	N/A	See Report
13.0	Have ambiguous hyphenated compounds (e.g., "water-wheel") in the copy-text or base text been emended to follow the author's known habits or some other declared standard?				
13.1	Have ambiguous stanza or section breaks in the copy-text or base text been consistently resolved by emendation?				
13.2	Are both kinds of emendation recorded in the textual apparatus to be published?				
13.3	For words divided at the end of a line in the edited text and stanzas or section breaks that fall at the end of a page in the edited text, can the reader tell how these ambiguous forms should be rendered when the text is quoted?				

Textual Apparatus

		Y	N	N/A	See Report
14.0	Does the apparatus omit significant information?				
14.1	Can the history of composition and/or revision and/or the history of printing be studied by relying on the textual apparatus?				

		Y	N	N/A	See Report
14.2	Is the purpose of the different parts (or lists) in the apparatus clearly explained or made manifest?				
14.3	Is cross-referencing between the parts (or lists) clear?				
14.4	Is information anywhere needlessly repeated?				
14.5	Is the format of the apparatus adapted to the audience?				
14.6	Are the materials well organized?				
Accuracy of Extratextual Components					
15.0	Does the historical introduction dovetail smoothly with the textual essay?				
15.1	Has the editor quoted accurately from the edited text in the introduction and the textual essay?				
15.2	Has the editor verified references and quotations in the introduction and the textual essay?				
15.3	Has the editor checked the author's quotations and resolved the textual problems they present?				
15.4	Have you spot-checked to test the accuracy of quotation and reference in the introduction, textual essay, and text, and have you included the results of that spot-check in your report?				
Explanatory Notes					
16.0	Are the explanatory notes appropriate for this kind of edition—for example, in purpose, level of detail, and number?				
16.1	Is there a sound rationale for the explanatory notes, whether or not the rationale is to be made explicit anywhere in the published work?				
IV. Matters of Production					
State of Completion					
17.0	Did you see a final or near-final version of the edition or a substantial sample of it?				
17.1	If you did not see final or near-final copy, were you satisfied with the state of completion of the materials you did see?				

	Y	N	N/A	See Report
Permissions				
18.0 Has the editor obtained all necessary permissions— for example, to republish any materials protected by copyright?				
Publication Status				
19.0 If there is a publisher involved in producing the edition, has the publisher approved the content and format of the edition?				
19.1 Has the publisher approved the amount of time needed for proofreading?				
19.2 Has the publisher approved the requirements of the edition's design?				
19.3 Has the publisher approved cuing the back matter (textual apparatus and notes) to the text of the edition by page and line number (if this is a print edition) or by other unambiguous means (if this is an electronic edition)?				
19.4 Has the publisher approved the printer's or other production facility's copy requirements?				
Proofreading				
20.0 Has ultimate responsibility for maintaining accuracy throughout the production process been clearly assigned to one person?				
20.1 Are the proofreading methods sufficient to ensure a high level of accuracy in the published edition?				
20.2 If the editor supplies so-called camera-ready copy to the publisher, will it be proofread?				
20.3 How many proofreadings are scheduled?				
20.4 How many stages of proof are there?				
20.5 When a new stage of proof is read to verify changes or corrections, is adequate provision made for ensuring that all other parts of the text have not been corrupted?				
20.6 Is there a provision in place for collation or comparison of the first correct stage of proof against the production facility's final prepublication output (e.g., bluelines from a printer or text as rendered for final delivery in an electronic edition)?				

	Y	N	N/A	See Report
Editorial Rationale				
21.0 Does the project provide a sufficient justification of its technological choices, clarify the implications of these choices, and explain why these choices align with the editorial approach of the project?				
Preservation				
22.0 Does the edition have a preservation plan? For example, has an institution pledged long-term stewardship for the edition as part of its data preservation strategy? Has a copy of the edition and its multimedia elements, software, style sheets, and documentation been deposited with a long-term digital object repository using file formats appropriate for preservation purposes?				
22.1 Has the edition included adequate documentation for reusing any data designated at shareable?				
22.2 Has a correction file or versioning system been set up and will it be maintained for tracking alterations to the edition after its initial publication?				
User Interface and Accessibility				
23.0 Does the edition provide a rationale for its accessibility standards? For example, does the edition follow the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines? Is it usable on multiple devices and by those in low bandwidth environments?				
23.1 Does the edition carry a clear statement of the appropriate reuse of its constituent elements, especially those protected by copyright, used by permission, or restricted by community protocols?				
23.2 Does the edition use a consistent framework? For example, if the text of the edition is encoded in an ISO standard grammar, such as XML, does it conform to relevant community guidelines? If the answer to the previous question is no, does the essay on technical methods provide a rationale for departing from community practice?				
23.3 Does the edition make available underlying data, distinct from presentation rendering? For example, if using markup, are the encoded files available to the reader for examination? If the underlying data are not available, is a rationale provided for restricting access to it?				
23.4 If the edition includes electronic files, are those files encoded in an open, nonproprietary format (e.g., TEI XML rather than *Microsoft Word* or *WordPerfect*)?				

		Y	N	N/A	See Report
23.5	Does the edition include help documentation that identifies the features of the user interface and explains how to use them?				
Documentation and Metadata					
24.0	Does the project document its digitization processes and standards (if applicable)?				
24.1	Does the edition employ relevant standards for its technical, descriptive, and administrative metadata?				
24.2	If the edition employs metadata that does not rely on an external standard or combines elements from multiple standards, is the data model documented?				
24.3	If any software has been uniquely developed for this edition, is source code for that software available and documented? If not, has a rationale for restricting access or a timeline for publishing the source code been provided?				