

EMWA

Professional Development Programme

Workshop Leaders

Handbook

2017 (revised September 2019)



EUROPEAN
MEDICAL
WRITERS
ASSOCIATION

This Handbook was prepared by the EMWA Professional Development Committee (EPDC).

Thank you for your interest in developing and running an EMWA workshop! Whether you are a new or an experienced workshop leader, we hope that this handbook is a useful reference guide. If you have further questions, or would just like to discuss anything about your workshop, feel free to contact the Education Officer or another EPDC member. For matters of conference administration, the EMWA Head Office team will be happy to help you.

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Version history

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List of Templates and Checklists

Workshop content and materials

The following templates and checklists are available on the training page of the [EMWA website](#).

- Template – Workshop proposal form**
- Developing a Workshop Timeline**
- Checklist – Material to submit for a new workshop**
- Template – Abstract**
- Template – Workshop leader biography**
- Template – Workshop outline**
- Template – Pre-workshop assignment**
- Template – Post-workshop assignment**

Conference checklists

- Checklist – What you need to do before the conference**
- Checklist – What to do during and after the conference**

1. Introduction

The **EMWA Professional Development Programme** (EPDP) provides training for medical writers through workshops and homework assignments. It is important to ensure that the medical writing community, employers and clients regard EMWA certificates and professional development credits as evidence of high-quality training. This handbook is a practical guide for new and existing workshop leaders. It defines the format, standards and quality management process for EPDP workshops and describes the procedures for developing and running them. It does not apply to non-EPDP workshops and seminars.

You should read this handbook with the timelines for developing a new workshop. You will find this, and other useful information, for workshop leaders on the **[Training section of the EMWA website](#)**.

All EPDP workshops are assessed and approved by the EPDC, chaired by the Education Officer (who is also a member of the EMWA Executive Committee).

Details about the EPDP can be found in the EPDP brochure on the Training section of the website, which includes a full list of available workshops, an explanation of workshop levels, subject areas, gaining credit and receiving certificates.

2. Developing and Running Workshops

The EPDC welcomes proposals from EMWA members for potential new workshops. A workshop leader must have experience of and actually work in the field of the topic for their workshop. Generally, a new workshop leader should have attended at least 1 EMWA workshop themselves before they develop a workshop of their own.

Please use the [Workshop Proposal Form](#) when you submit new proposals. EMWA workshops are the intellectual property of the person who develops them; please note that you are *not* asked to assign them to EMWA.

For those who are already workshop leaders, we hope that you will find this handbook and associated checklists useful for developing and running your workshop, as well as a reminder to ensure that your workshop remains up-to-date.

Workshops should not be promotional: EMWA allows workshop leaders to have a company name and logo on the first workshop slide, but does not allow other promotional-type content in handouts (e.g. company URLs) or visually (e.g. brochures, pens).

At every conference, there is a freelancers' table where promotional material can be displayed throughout the conference. Contact Head Office for details of opportunities to distribute company literature (e.g. delegate bag inserts).

The [EMWA reimbursement policy](#) gives full details of the procedure for claiming expenses as a workshop leader and the type of expenses that can be claimed.

Workshop format

Workshops take many forms; some are principally presentations of information, while others may include extensive group exercises. At advanced level, some subjects may be suited to the *master class* format, where a small group of participants receive

intensive guidance from the instructors while undertaking practical assignments. Large topics may need to be divided into two stand-alone workshops (either at the same level or as one foundation and one advanced) or as a double (all-day) workshop.

Whatever form the workshop takes, it is a feature of the EPDP that workshops are interactive training sessions and not simply lectures.

EMWA workshops have the following three elements:

- Pre-workshop assignment
- Workshop presentation
- Post-workshop assignment

Developing a new workshop

The EPDC will review your workshop proposal, and if it is accepted you will be assigned a mentor (a member of the EPDC or an experienced workshop leader) who will help you develop the workshop according to EMWA format and standards, and coordinate its review and approval. They will guide you through the process of submitting materials and information to Head Office and meeting deadlines. The role of your mentor as well as EPDC observation and approval of new workshops are described further in [Quality Assurance Procedures](#).

Leaders should decide in conjunction with the EPDC whether a new workshop is more suited to advanced or foundation level. The lower number of participants in advanced level workshops enables the session to be more intense and interactive. A lower limit may also be appropriate for some other workshops, at the discretion of the EPDC.

You will work with your mentor to produce the following materials:

- Abstract
- Workshop leader biography
- Workshop outline

- Workshop slides
- Any other material to be used during the workshop
- Pre-workshop assignment
- Post-workshop assignment

Figure 1 is a guide to allocating time during the workshop.

Content		Time	
Getting started		10 minutes	
Content I	I	} 70 minutes	
	A		
Content II	I		
	A		
Summary and preview			
BREAK			20 minutes
Content III	I		} 70 minutes
	A		
Content IV	I		
	A		
Conclusion and post-workshop assignment			
Evaluations		10 minutes	

3 hours }

Figure 1: Time allocation guide for 3-hour workshops. The content is divided schematically into four parts (Content I-IV), each consisting of information (I) and application (A), the latter being group activities such as question-and-answer sessions, discussion, and group exercises.

Experience shows that workshop leaders often overestimate what can be covered in the available time. Think about how many slides are appropriate for the time allocated for each topic. A rough guide is one slide per 2 minutes of total presentation time (one slide per minute is sometimes quoted but is almost always too ambitious).

Exercises and group activities are strongly recommended. Having two group exercises, one in each half, works well. Be sure to allocate enough time for getting started and for discussion of the exercises, including feedback from the groups on their answers and your own comments. Some participants may have valuable knowledge, and should be encouraged to share it as appropriate. Questions and discussion should be actively encouraged, and time should be allocated for some unplanned issues. So, the workshop leader's role may be to facilitate knowledge

exchange between the participants, as well as to teach. However, you need to make sure that participants do not take you too far off the topic or that one or more participants do not dominate a discussion.

If you are presenting an advanced workshop, you should keep the focus at an advanced level. Although there are no formal prerequisites to participate in an advanced workshop, leaders should not spend time responding to the needs of inexperienced participants. If an inexperienced participant asks basic questions, it is appropriate to say that you will address their questions afterwards or to tell them where they can look up the information.

Make sure to integrate the **pre-workshop assignment** with the workshop. For reading assignments, this can simply be by referring to the documents read and briefly summarising the key points. If the assignment was an exercise, you should discuss the exercise, at least briefly. For some workshops, discussion of the pre-workshop assignment is a major part of the content. However you structure it, the objective is to ensure that participants benefit from having done the assignment, rather than feeling that the effort has gone unnoticed. Some time must be reserved during the workshop to explain the **post-workshop assignment** to participants. This should include the assessment criteria and the deadline for returning the assignment

If you need guidance on slide presentations, search online for information or ask your workshop mentor for advice. Remember that you may be presenting to a large group in a large room and the slides must be legible on screen and when printed out as black- and- white handouts, usually two slides per page. Therefore, it is essential to:

- avoid including items in small fonts.
- limit the number of colours used.
- use a white background (coloured backgrounds will come out black when printed in black and white).
- not use faint colours.

Note that most conference venues are now set up for 16:9 rather than 4:3 aspect ratio.

Consider marking the opening slide and the first page of any handouts with your name and © (copyright symbol), stating that the whole presentation is copyright. Note that a copyright usually applies to the individual workshop leader(s) and it does not signify copyright of the workshop leader's company.

Preparing for the workshop

Before each conference, all workshop leaders will be asked in advance about their availability to present one or more of their current workshops. Using the workshop leader responses, the EPDC will put together a conference workshop programme.

If one or more of your workshops forms part of the draft conference programme, EMWA will email you asking you to confirm that you can run the workshop in the slot(s) assigned. You will later receive an email from Head Office providing timelines for submission of information and materials in preparation for the conference.

It is important that you respond to this email from Head Office and send your materials by the deadlines provided to ensure the smooth running of your workshop and the conference overall. You can use the checklist [What you need to do before the conference](#) to keep a track of your progress and timelines before arriving at the conference. Don't forget to book your travel as far in advance as possible and also to complete the accommodation form if you wish to stay at the conference hotel.

Running the workshop

For first-time workshop leaders, your mentor or another member of the EPDC will be happy to support you on the day with setting up the room, etc. Please feel free to ask! See the checklist [What to do during and after the conference](#) for what to remember while you set up and run your workshop and the information to hand in at the EMWA desk shortly afterwards.

By taking a roll call rather than just letting people sign in, you ensure not only that those attending the workshop are recorded but also that no additional unregistered

attendees are present. Note any no-shows and very late arrivals on the attendance list that is returned to the EMWA desk with the evaluation forms at the end of the workshop. Someone who misses more than 30 minutes of the workshop (e.g. arriving late) should not receive credit for the workshop (see [Workshop attendance](#)). Please don't refuse people entry if they arrive late but do not spend time recapping. If they arrive during an exercise, briefly explain the exercise to them individually and place them in a group, rather than making them sit out the exercise.

It is important at the beginning of the workshop to be clear on what the learning objectives are and outline them to your participants. You should respect the timings allocated for your workshop and also ensure that you allow enough time for the refreshment break(s) (15-20 minutes). Timings of the refreshment breaks are provided in the brochure for each conference and always allow a wide enough window for you to plan the refreshment break around the flow of your workshop.

At the end of the workshop, don't forget to hand in to the EMWA desk your completed participant list and evaluation forms.

3. Workshop Assignments, Attendance and Credit

It is not EMWA's aim to act as an *examination board*, but rather to support and guide members through their professional development. However, it would devalue the EMWA certificate and be unfair to successful candidates if credit were to be awarded in all cases regardless of individual performance.

To gain credit, participants must:

- Complete the pre-workshop assignment *before* the workshop.
- Attend the workshop *in full* (see [Workshop attendance](#) below).
- Successfully complete the post-workshop assignment within the allotted time.

Leaders are not expected to send out reminders about assignments, but please do acknowledge receipt so that there is no confusion later about assignments going astray. It is participants' responsibility to ensure that their assignments reach the workshop leader. Participants are instructed to contact workshop leaders if they do not receive acknowledgement of receipt.

Pre-workshop assignment

Participants are asked to do a pre-workshop assignment that is appropriate for the workshop. There is no set format – it will depend on the objectives and content of your workshop. A pre-workshop assignment could be reading, writing some text, or answering questions on the topic. It could also be used to help you find out about the experience of the participants and what questions they would like addressed in the workshop. Some workshop leaders use the pre-workshop assignment responses to provide examples for discussion in the workshop or to compare with the post-workshop assignment to assess learning. Your mentor will be able to help you develop an appropriate pre-workshop assignment.

Participants will download the pre-workshop assignment from the conference programme on the website. If your assignment requires a response from participants

before the workshop, set a deadline for sending the assignment that allows you enough time to use the responses to finalise the workshop. However, because we allow late registration for the conference, we ask workshop leaders to accept all assignments for credit, provided they are submitted *before* the workshop. This does not mean that you are expected to include information from late assignments in your workshop materials. Submitting the pre-workshop assignment *after* the workshop is not allowable for obtaining credit.

Workshop attendance

Participants must attend the workshop to be eligible to gain a credit. Participants who miss more than 30 minutes of instructional time (by arriving late, leaving early or leaving the room for a long period) are not eligible to receive credit.

Post-workshop assignment and feedback

Towards the end of your workshop you should hand out the post-workshop assignment or discuss its content and tell participants that you will send the assignment by email shortly after the conference. You should also provide the deadline for receiving post-workshop assignments and the criteria used for assessment and award of credit.

Workshop leaders should provide feedback to participants on the content of their post-workshop assignment and inform them whether they will be awarded credit. Head Office also inform participants by email when their credit information has been updated online. Post-workshop assignment feedback may be in the form of model answers or a summary distributed to everyone, or brief individual comments on the participant's work. This may depend on your personal preference as well as the number of workshop participants.

If a participant does not meet the assessment criteria for the assignment first time around, please give them the chance to resubmit it if they wish to gain credit.

However, if the assignment is still not satisfactory you should inform them that you cannot award credit.

If in doubt about what to do in a particular case, please discuss it with the Education Officer.

4. Quality Assurance Procedures

Workshops are evaluated in several ways: by mentors and assessors during its development, by participants at the end of each workshop, and by the EPDC on an ongoing basis.

EPDC review of new workshop proposals

The EPDC reviews all proposals for new workshops, considers how they fit with the current EPDP and whether there are any potential overlaps with other workshops in the programme. They will also advise (provisionally) on the category and level of a new workshop.

If your proposal is accepted by the EDPC you will be assigned a mentor who will help you develop the workshop (for further details see [Developing a new workshop](#) and [Mentors](#)).

Mentors

Mentors are members of the EPDC or an experienced workshop leader. They are assigned to each leader of a new workshop, even those who are already experienced workshop leaders or EDPC members.

Your assigned mentor will work closely with you as you develop your workshop. They will contact you when the EPDP has accepted your proposal to explain the process for the development, review and finalisation of your new workshop. They will also decide with you on the upcoming conference at which you will be expected to run your new workshop for the first time.

You will be required to keep your mentor informed of your progress and submit materials for them to review. Everyone benefits from an objective review, including experienced workshop leaders and EDPC members. While the input from your mentor

is generally in the form of advice rather than correction, you are expected to take on board their input in a constructive manner. Although still an important part of the process, it is likely that new workshops being developed by experienced workshop leaders will need less input from the mentor.

You and your mentor will decide on deadlines for submitting material for review and approval, based on the timing of the first conference for your new workshop. See the following section, [EPDC review of new workshop material](#), for details of material required.

EPDC review of new workshop material

Before a workshop is run for the first time, the workshop leader (one contact person if more than one leader) must submit the final draft materials for review by the EPDC. The materials required are detailed in the checklist [material to submit for a new workshop](#). Your mentor will generally advise when the materials are appropriate for submitting to the EPDC.

Observance and continuing assessment

The first time a new workshop is presented, it is assessed by two observers, even if the leader already runs other EMWA workshops, including those run by EPDC members. One observer will generally be the mentor assigned to the workshop. The other may be an EPDC member or another experienced workshop leader. The observers will take notes during the workshop and will arrange a time to meet you afterwards to give feedback. Don't feel pressurised by this: the workshop observation process is supportive and constructive, and observers are there to provide positive feedback as well as to help you think of ways that the workshop could be improved (the first running of any course is always a learning curve, even for experienced trainers). The observers will report back to the EPDC when it meets at the end of the conference.

The EPDC may also delegate observers to attend approved workshops on an ad hoc basis. If this is the case we will tell you beforehand.

Approval of new workshops

The EPDC reviews observer comments and participant evaluations (see below) from the workshop. The workshop may be approved with no or only minor changes, or approved with more major changes, or (rarely) not approved. If the EPDC has asked for major changes, your mentor will support you in making the revisions and usually an observer will sit in again the next time the workshop is run.

Evaluation by participants

Workshop evaluation by participants (scores and comments) is an essential part of the EPDP. Evaluation forms will be placed in the room before you start your workshop and should be distributed to participants before the end of the workshop. Encourage participants to complete the forms. *Please collect the forms at the end of the workshop, put them in the envelope provided, and hand them in to the EMWA desk as soon as you can after the workshop.* Remember to also put the attendance list in the envelope.

The evaluation forms from each workshop are checked by members of the EPDC during the conference for the purpose of quality control. It is not possible to please everyone all the time, so don't be alarmed by one or two negative comments as long as most evaluations are positive. If the EPDC have any concerns, they will contact you to discuss how best to address them. Head Office will send you a scanned copy of your evaluation forms after the conference; these provide valuable feedback so please do take time to review and learn from them.

Requirement to keep workshops up-to-date

Workshop leaders must keep their materials up-to-date. If you make major changes to a workshop, please notify the EPDC by submitting a new **workshop outline** and a new **abstract** for the conference brochure. (Use the forms on the [training page](#).) The Education Officer or another member of the EPDC will be happy to discuss changes that you are thinking of making and whether a new outline is necessary.

Thank you for taking the time to read the information in this handbook and for your valued contribution to the EMWA Professional Development Programme.



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