Yes, You Can! Eight misconceptions about EAC Certification debunked

Misconception #1: The tests are too hard. No one passes them.

Fact: The tests measure excellence, and are the gold standard in editing and proofreading. They're meant to be challenging. However, many people successfully pass the tests.

If you prepare well, and have at least five years of experience, EAC Certification was designed with you in mind. Certification is a great opportunity for you to become familiar with editing resources, study professional skills, and build your confidence.

Misconception #2: The exams don't reflect the way I edit in the real world.

Fact: Of course, no exam will *exactly* reflect the way things are done in the real world. Our tests test your knowledge of professional editorial standards and how and where to apply them. We trust you also apply them in your work, but that is what we're specifically looking at in the tests.

And while in real-life, you may use your computer and work without time limits, sometimes you will have to edit within a time frame or work on paper instead.

Different industries use different methods to achieve similar results. While the exam will not be a true-to-life representation of how *you* currently edit, it will allow you to flex your editorial acumen and display your skills in an environment that focuses on the editorial process.

Misconception #3: You need to pass all four tests before it means anything.

Fact: While many editors work toward obtaining the full Certified Professional Editor (CPE) designation, it's just as beneficial to an editor's career to achieve a stand-alone credential. And, depending on the type of work you do, one or two certifications may be all you need. Do you specialize in proofreading? Is structural editing your niche? Become a Certified Proofreader or Certified Structural Editor, and let your clients and employers know they're hiring the best of the best.

Misconception #4: You have to pass all four tests within a certain time, or you can't become a CPE.

Fact: The 10-year window to pass all the tests is a thing of the past. Now, the test-taking period is open-ended, which allows you to choose the tests and times that best meet your needs. Take as many years as you like, and test for as many certifications as you wish. You know the best trajectory for your career, and EAC gives you the freedom to meet your goals at your own pace.

Misconception #5: If I fail a test, other EAC members will know, and my reputation will suffer.

Fact: Confidentiality will always be critical to the certification process. We understand that privacy and sensitivity are paramount to our test-takers. That's why we use a secret number to identify you throughout the program. Rest assured that EAC will never identify you by name.

At the end of the certification process, only select members of EAC's national office staff will have access to pass/fail results for the purpose of preparing the results letters. Building your reputation is our goal, and we will do everything possible to protect it.

Misconception #6: The tests are too subjective. You can't objectively measure an editor's ability, because there are many ways to edit a passage. Who's to say what's "wrong"?

Fact: The marking process is as objective as we can make it. It begins with the way the questions are designed and the answer keys are prepared, and extends to how the markers are trained. Markers consider a range of answers, and each test is marked by two people. If their assessments for a particular candidate differ significantly, the test is sent to a third marker. A marking analyst also assesses all of the results.

Misconception #7: Certification won't make any difference to my career.

Fact: Certification can make a big difference to your career. It allows you to objectively demonstrate your skills as an editor or proofreader, and gives you the

confidence of knowing your skills are first-rate. There are other benefits, too:

- You can charge higher fees for your work.

- You're more marketable. Some organizations now ask for certification, while others invite editors to provide proof of certification in lieu of work samples.

- You're becoming a better editor. Going through the process of studying and practising is a great way to update your knowledge and improve your skills.

Misconception #8: Credential maintenance is too complicated. It scares me.

Fact: Credential maintenance is a very simple process to manage, and is actually an enjoyable way to track your own progress. As you complete each professional development activity, all you need to do is enter the details on EAC's website, which tallies and securely stores this confidential information.