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voice actor

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Welcome!

If you're receiving this welcome pack, that means we're working together for the first time, and I'm so looking forward to getting started on your audiobook project! What follows is hopefully a helpful guide to how I approach the process of producing your audiobook, along with some other useful information.

If this isn't your first audiobook production, some of this may be familiar to you already, but I offer it anyway in case what I do differs from other narrators you've worked with.

Please read this document carefully. It should answer most of the questions you might have, but feel free to contact me anytime if you need more information or clarification.

Here's my email address: sarah.edwards.voice@gmail.com

Process Overview

As you may already know, every audiobook has a series of steps in its development.

Here's an overview, with more details for each to follow:

1. Receiving the narration ready manuscript
2. Errors
3. Revision Fees
4. Notes
5. Preparing the manuscript
6. Audiobook Omissions
7. Production sample (or 15min checkpoint)
8. Narrating the title
9. Editing & mastering
10. Delivery, Proofing & Approval
11. Payment

At the end of this document, I have some general guidelines on audiobook marketing I like to share, and at the very, very end, you can learn a bit about me!

Receiving the narration ready manuscript

I will need the full completed (and most importantly) narration ready manuscript of the book in either PDF or Word document format. This must be the final version of the book, not a draft or a work in progress.

Errors

As we all know, nothing is ever 100% error-free, and I may come across typos or other things that were missed - not because I'm a great proofreader, but because I'm reading the entire book aloud! If I do come across small errors of this nature, I will happily correct them in my narration and make you aware of them so that the original manuscript can be corrected to match.

What I can't do I'm afraid, is to agree to make multiple script revisions free of charge as we go along. If it's not in the manuscript I receive from you at the outset then I can't add it in or keep re-recording different versions you'd like to try. I would ask you then to please read through the **Revision Fees** section below to make sure you're aware of when they'll be charged and how much they are.

Revision Fees

Like most narrators in the industry, I make a small charge for changes made to the manuscript once we've hit the post-15min checkpoint stage. Any corrections to my narration (if I misspoke, mispronounced or made any other errors) will, of course, be on me to fix as part of the agreement and at no extra charge to you.

For any changes you wish to make to the manuscript once the 15min checkpoint has been approved, here are the fees I charge:

- Minor script changes – individual words / less than 20% of the original word count will be free of charge.
- Major script changes – 20%+ of the original word count will be charged at 50% of my ACX PFH rate of £250

The charges (if applicable) will be added to my final invoice when I deliver the finished and approved audiobook.

I want you to be happy with your audiobook and proud to market it. So I will always do my best to ensure I match your needs with my narration. But just as you've spent a great deal of time and concentration writing the book, narrating an audiobook takes the same concentration and long hours. We are often engaged on more than one project (those of us who are full time make our living this way,) and therefore we have to charge for our time accordingly.

The Per Finished Hour, Royalty Share or Royalty Share Plus contracts don't cover the hours we spend reading the manuscript and preparing our performance, rehearsing and researching, editing and mastering your audiobook – they only cover the duration of the finished audiobook. So this is simply a fair remuneration for any extra time you require of me.

Notes

Along with the manuscript, I need to receive any guidance and pronunciation preference notes from you. These are notes on content, such as character notes, that aren't included in the book but you think will be helpful for me as I narrate. Here are some examples.

Character notes - these can include:

- Age
- Location - Where the character is from: country, city, culture particulars
- Identity (contextual) - includes ethnicity, socioeconomic, educational, sexual background
- Accent
- Name Pronunciations - especially if unusual or not obvious
- Adjectives - descriptive of their attitude, voice traits, talking pace, and so on (sarcastic, gruff, kind, cocky, flighty, timid, etc.)

Series notes:

- Any characters that recur later
- Any minor characters in this book that have larger roles later
- Any story arcs or plots that are good to keep in mind for later.

Preparing the Manuscript

Once I have the narration ready manuscript I read through it, making notes to aid in narration: highlighting dialogue, researching any pronunciation, and making any performance notes for myself. This takes a little time but it's necessary to ensure I provide the best possible audio version of your title.

Audiobook Omissions

If you've listened to audiobooks, you know that certain parts of the book are left out, most often because they would detract from the listener's experience or add nothing to it. Here's a handy chart of examples.

Opening credits	Always
Author or book appraisals & reviews	Never
Table of Contents	Never
Glossary	Never
Dedication	Sometimes
Acknowledgements	Never
Author's Note	Rarely
Prologue	Always
Full, unabridged text	Always

Epilogue	Always
Author's Bio	Never
Preview of next book	Never
Closing Credits	Always

Production Sample - "The 15-minute checkpoint"

After prepping the book, I record an excerpt. On ACX, this is usually called "the 15-minute checkpoint"; other platforms call it a "performance sample". First 15 is sometimes a misnomer, especially in fiction, as I will often try to include a section that includes the most main characters. It won't always be 15mins long but it will give you a flavour of what you can expect from my performance, audio production and style based on both the notes you've provided and my own interpretation.

I then send this to you for your feedback. **This is a critical step.** It's where you give your approval for any performance choices I make in the excerpt. After this preview, the only notes I can accept from you will be for technical issues or reading errors. (More about those two things in a later section.)

Narrating the Audiobook

Now it's time for me to do the actual narration, to take your brilliant work and give it a voice! How long narration takes depends on the length of the book itself, how complex the text is to read, and other factors.

During this time, you may not hear a lot from me unless otherwise agreed. Rest assured, I'm hard at work. I record and upload chapters to ACX as I go, but I won't contact you for approval until I've completed the book. If you'd like to use completed chapters that I've uploaded to ACX for marketing purposes that's absolutely fine. I'll no doubt do the same, unless you'd prefer to keep it under wraps until it's released. Please see the '**Marketing**' section for my social media tags.

My aim is always to complete the book according to our agreed-upon schedule, barring any unforeseen circumstances. If something untoward happens, I will contact you immediately.

Editing & Mastering

I edit and master chapters as I go so that each one meets the technical standards specified by ACX or the final distributor.

Delivery, Proofing & Approval

Once initial recording is done and all the chapters are uploaded, I'll invite you to listen through and make a note of any errors. I'm only human and make mistakes too, so I will of course attend to anything that needs fixing such as technical glitches, the wrong text was read, or mispronunciations. I'll ask you for a list of these (called "pickups",) which I then use to go back through the recording and fix them, uploading the corrected chapters to replace the affected files.

On ACX, this will be on their website; in other cases, it will be different, and I'll advise as to how the files will be made available to you.

I'll need you to listen to the entire audiobook. I know that may be asking a lot, but it's critical to the process. This is your opportunity to find any additional errors that slipped through the cracks in my own proofing and editing processes.

At this point, it's helpful if you could note any instances of:

- **Technical errors:** Glitches, missed edits, background noise—essentially, anything that distracts from the performance
- **Narrator errors:** Mispronunciations, stumbles, etc. These all should be taken care of in the proofing & editing, but there's always a slim chance something gets missed.

“Do I get to give you notes on performance when you submit the audiobook for review?”

I'm afraid not. As ACX states in their help topics, any performance notes and suggestions can only be addressed upon receipt of the first 15min checkpoint. That's your opportunity as the author/rights holder to give guidance and request changes to character voices, tone and pacing *before* I record the rest of the audiobook. If you're happy that there are no further pickups, I'll hit 'submit' and you hit 'approve!'

Payment

For PFH and Royalty Share Plus contracts I request a 50% non-refundable deposit is paid after the 15min checkpoint has been approved. I will invoice you for this payment.

The second and final invoice will come after the finished audiobook has been approved by you. This will be for the balance of the PFH amount plus any applicable revision fees.

***Please note: the finished narration can sometimes exceed the estimated length.**

Please also ensure you've read and are aware of ACX's cancellation payment arrangements as stated in <https://help.acx.com/s/article/acx-audiobook-production-standard-terms> clause 8b 'Termination with Termination Fee.'

I accept payment via bank transfer (details will be on my invoice,) via PayPal at sarah.edwards.voice@gmail.com or via Wise Money Transfer – Sarah Edwards Voice member P68840142.

Conclusion

I recognise that this may seem like a lot of information all at once. I understand completely! So if there's anything that's unclear or confusing, please don't hesitate to say so. You can get in touch anytime, and I'll respond as quickly as possible.

By the way, I'm also open to suggestions for future versions of this Welcome pack, if you have any.

I'm so pleased that you chose to partner with me in this audiobook project. I know that you're placing a lot of trust in me, and I promise you that I will do my very best to live up to that trust.

Bonus - Audiobook Promotion

How to get the word out.

I'm sure you're familiar with promoting your book. The process is similar for audiobooks, but here are a few things that you may find useful.

During production, post on social media, just as you would for writing a book. Social media is a great way to reach both your existing audience and new people. Using tags, posting to relevant online groups, and so on are all great ways to raise awareness of the audiobook.

Should you want me to record a little "behind the scenes" snippet for you to share, I'd be pleased to do that. Once the title is completed, I can provide you with a promotional clip to use on social media or your website. And of course, whenever you plug the other versions of the book, remember to include the audio version in your promotions.

Podcasts are another great way to get the word out. If you have the opportunity to appear as a guest on a podcast, and you'd like me to appear as well, I'd be happy to do that. I can talk about the audiobook, the process, etc.

Promo Code Giveaways

Sites like ACX and Findaway will give you promo codes to pass on to your listeners. There's lots of places you can give away these codes:

- On social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)
- On your website
- In your newsletter
- At book signings or events

Promo Code in Exchange for a Review

In addition to giveaways, you can post your audiobook and the codes to the following sites in exchange for a review. (Keep in mind: reviews are not guaranteed because of Amazon/Audible rules regarding promotions.)

- Audiobook Blog Tours - <https://theaudiobookworm.com/>
Sign up to have your audiobook go on a virtual tour. Bloggers sign up to promote and or review the audiobook on their site.
- Audiobook Boom - <https://audiobookboom.com/authors>
Sign up to have your book promoted in a weekly newsletter. Readers request a code in exchange for a review. You can review their previous Audible, Amazon or Goodreads reviews, and you have control who you send codes to.

Promo Code Giveaway Sites

In addition to giveaways, you can post your audiobook and the codes to the

following sites to in exchange for a review. (Again, reviews are not guaranteed because of Amazon/Audible rules regarding promotions.)

- Free Audiobook Code - <https://freeaudiobookcodes.com/>
A division of Audiobook Boom, this service is for listing your audiobook and all the codes you have available for listeners to download. This is self-service for the listener, so you don't get to see or control who gets a code.
- Audiobooks Unleashed - <https://audiobooksunleashed.com/>
This is also a self-service code site, but they do offer the option to post your audiobook in a section reserved for their authorized reviewers only.

Social Media Groups

Social media platforms, like Facebook and Goodreads, have groups specifically aimed at audiobook promo code giveaways and are often specific to certain genres and sub-genres. These groups allow promotional and giveaway postings. Most groups have rules about promotions, so be sure to follow them, as you don't want to be given the bum's rush.

Many groups are very active and members recommend authors and narrators they like (especially in the romance genre!) in their discussions.

General

- Audiobook Lovers:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/audiobooklovers>
- Audiobook Addicts: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/audiobookaddicts>
- Audible Book Club | Audiobooks:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/219431745345392>
- The Audiobook Club
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/theaudiobookclubgroup>
- Everything Audiobook.....E.A.R.S.:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/EverythingAudiobooksE.A.R.S>
- Audiobooks Unleashed:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/audiobooksunleashed>

Romance

- Aural Fixation:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/auralfixationaudio>
- Audio Loves:
<https://www.facebook.com/romanceaudioloves>
- Audio Bookfly:
<https://www.facebook.com/AudioBookfly>
- Audiobook Obsession Review Group:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/AudiobookObsessionReviewGroup>
- Reverse Harem Audio Books: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/RHaudiobooks>

Mystery/Thriller

- Mystery Audiobook Lovers: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/mysteryaudio>
- Cozy Mystery Audiobook Lovers:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/293318778619666>

Sci-Fi / Fantasy

- Fant-Sci-Fi Audiobook Club:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/FantSciFiAudiobooks>
 - Sci-Fi Audiobooks:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/292258431569710>
 - Fantasy Audiobook Fans: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/fantasyaudio>
- LGBTQ
- Lesbian Audiobooks: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1498493863718913>
- Christian
- Christian Audiobook Narrators & Authors (CIA-CARS):
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/220404914802348>

Whispersync

Whispersync allows the listener to switch back and forth between the eReader and audio without losing their place in the book. Audiobooks that have a Whispersync option often sell well, because readers who have the eBook can purchase the audiobook version at a discount. Contact ACX (or other distribution platform) about Whispersync to make sure the audio and eBook are synced.

Follow me

I'm active on social media, and I often post about my audiobook work, so I can tag you in my posts. If you prefer to have a "media blackout" during production, just let me know and I'll exclude details about the audiobook from my posts, other than teasers.

I don't have nearly the influence you have in your social media channels, so don't expect a flood of new followers coming from my direction, but hey, every little bit of promotion helps.

My social media accounts are:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100089019503335>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/sarahedwardsvoice/>

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/sarah-edwards-489054255/>

Let me know what your social media handles are so I can tag you correctly.

Glossary

This is just a handy guide of terms and abbreviations you might run into in the audiobook world.

RH: Rights Holder - That's hopefully you! Usually the author, but sometimes companies can buy the audio rights for a book from the author. It is the person of entity that has the legal rights to produce the audio version of a work.

RS: Royalty Share - In exchange for no up-front charges for production, the narrator receives a share of the royalties from all sales of the audiobook for a particular term. The RH receives a share, as well as the distributor. The percentage and duration of royalty payments varies with the distributor.

RS+/Hybrid: Royalty Share Plus or Hybrid Production - The same as Royalty Share, with the addition of a stipend paid to the narrator to help cover costs of production. This stipend can be a lump sum or a small PFH rate.

PFH: Per Finished Hour. Usually in reference to a narrator's rate for producing an audiobook. If you want a rough estimate of this, you can divide the word count of your

book by 9300. For example, a 100,000-word book / 9300 = 10.75 hours. Of course, this is just an estimate, and the final PFH count will depend on the content, pacing, and other factors.

Pickup/CRX: CRX is an abbreviation occasionally used for corrections, retakes. Also know as “pickups” These include a number of items such as misreads or un-editable background noise and may come from the RH or the proofer.

About Your Narrator



I'm Sarah - a voice over artist with a rich and engaging British RP voice, and a wide repertoire of accents and voices. Born into a Welsh family, I grew up in the Southeast, living and working in London for several years before training as a professional actor. I now live in Lincoln where, for the past 3 years, I've been working from my home studio on corporate, commercial, podcast, cartoon, audio drama, and audiobook projects for numerous clients including Great Ormond Street Hospital, the MOD, CBI, Audible and Shooting Fish Theatre Company.

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