



Getting Published

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A pack to support tutors new to RE Initial Teacher Education

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1 Aims

The aim of this pack is to provide initial information about getting published principally in class resource level and professional level materials, with reference to and academic writing as well. It will concern itself with publications rather than securing research grants. It is aimed at newly appointed RE tutors of all phases and presumes the tutor has not previously published work. The publication of Academic materials is very much associated with research which is dealt with elsewhere in the series of packs. By the end of this pack you should have some insight into the process of moving from an idea to a published with some strategies along the way for moving the process forward and some possible first contacts for publishers.

2 Introduction

This pack intends to provide initial information about getting published in the RE world with some guidance and suggestions for a tutor new to teacher training in Religious education at any phase, primary, cross phase or secondary.

Writing is an important feature of ongoing professional development and higher education institutions frequently have expectations that staff will publish materials. This can be quite demanding in Education were in practice there is very little time to actually write. However, knowing something about eh RE publishing world and some strategies for getting through the stages should help new tutors get a first leg on the ladder.

There are a number of different sorts of writing in the RE HEI world, all of which are valuable both to the individual lecturer as a way of extending him or herself and also for the wider RE community. I will divide the work into class use, professional level and academic level though this separation is contentious as there is considerable overlap between academic and professional. This is a distinction that publishers make and helps provide some clarity although I acknowledge that it is limited and restrictive.

Textbook and classroom level resource writing is one area, and alongside that is equivalent work at the digital level in term of writing materials for conversion to Internet use. This is probably most materially rewarding in terms of royalties as there are growing markets with more pupils doing RE , certainly at secondary levels.

Then there are books written to support the professional development of teachers such as Andrew Wright and Ann Marie Brandon's edited book, (2002) "Learning to Teach Religious education in the Secondary School, a companion to school experience, " (Cornwall, RoutledgeFalmer), Geoff Teece's, (2001) " Religious Education, pocket guides to the primary curriculum," (Scholastic Ltd) and Rosemary Rivett and Lat Blaylock's edited book,(2002) "A Teacher's Handbook of religious education," (Worcester, CE publications). Even among these professional level texts there are quite different approaches in style, content and conventions, such as referencing with some verging towards the tips for teachers, others effectively providing a training course and some verging on academic level writing. . There is also a wide range of materials aimed at RE teachers in pack format. These publications are essentially aimed at providing professional support to the serving teacher or teacher learner and might focus on pedagogical support, practical advice, policy summaries etc (for example Hartland I & Hughes S, 1999, Running an RE Department Cambridge, Pearson Publishing).

Finally there is academic writing of the sort of level which appears in journals and Academic publication series, such as Robert Jackson and Eleanor Nesbitt's (1993) "Hindu Children in Britain," (London, Trentham Books), Andrew Wright's (2004) "Religion, Education and Postmodernity," (London, RoutledgeFalmer) and Clive and Jane Erricker's (2000) "Reconstructing religious, spiritual and moral education (London, RoutledgeFalmer). Then there are journal articles which appear in a number of general journals but also RE specific journals including: The British Journal of religions education, The international journal of children's spirituality and the Journal of beliefs and values. These writings are peer reviewed and must provide some contribution to research and knowledge in their fields.

Each of these different kinds of writing are of value, some financial while other academic. A text book for school is likely to make more money than an academic title but the academic title will help you gain standing in your HEI institution and may qualify for RAE accreditation. The professional level publications have especially important standing in the education community

3 Publishing

Resources for the classroom need not necessarily be textbooks. If you have experience teaching RE you will be aware of the multitude of photopacks, handout packs, and other sorts of teaching publications. Professional materials likewise include, for example books or packs for initial teacher education and guides to heads of department or RE coordinators. Academic texts and articles tend to be based on new research, be it based on quantitative or qualitative approaches or of a philosophical

nature.

This section provides some guidance for working from an idea to securing a contract with a publisher. The stages should not be treated as sequential stages as the publication idea is frequently developed between the author and the publisher and there may be much to-ing and fro-ing. On the whole publishers are very keen to find out about new authors and those who have both classroom experience, a maturity of professional experience and the overview that comes from being in initial teacher education, as well as being able to develop a good idea and the ability to write. They are always anxious to spot someone with potential and a good idea and RE tutors in ITE are in a good position to get published.

3.1 Developing an idea

You may have had the eureka moment of seeing there is something you can do which would fill a gap, but you need to put some detail into that idea. There are a number of things you can do. Look at a range of competing resources and look for the features which appeal to you and your idea, as well as obvious omissions which you can fill. For class publication you might even bring a number of existing publications with you to meet the publisher to show the features you think would work in your combination. Draw or sketch the sort of spread you think a unit of chapter might look like. This will help you to think about different practical aspects of the publication. For professional level texts setting out how your idea is different and distinctive from other existing texts is crucial because the market is small. Writing at the academic level is typically based on new research or the development of new ideas or new readings of previous ideas or research.

- ◆ Look at existing publications for ideas and omissions
- ◆ Think through an image of what your final work will look like
- ◆ Have a clear idea of the philosophy of your work and the thread through the work

3.2 Judging the market

Once you have your idea, you need to think critically about the market. A nice idea with no market will not sell and will probably not attract a publisher. Consider how you can manipulate your concept to open up the widest possible market; For class texts this might include thinking about whether it will fit with a variety of Agreed syllabi, whether it fits the new non-statutory framework, whether it can be used in a number of different ways and whether it would appeal to the buyers, the RE coordinators or Heads of department. Having said that, at Secondary level there has been a move towards exam board accredited books which specifically meet the individual needs of specific courses at GCSE

and AS/A2 Level.

There is some flexibility here depending on the sort of print quality you need, whether it will have colour photographs or black and white pages. Many publishers will approach teachers and ask them about the sort of thing they might look for in a new publication but there is nothing to stop you talking through your ideas with teachers and this might help you win over a publisher.

For professional level materials accessibility and layout remains important and the particular nature of the RE profession needs to be thought about. A majority of teachers of RE have little or no formal RE training, this being the primary teachers who have not done specialist RE courses and the teachers in secondary schools who have migrated into the subject, willingly or not. Specialist trained RE teachers are a minority at primary level and make up around half of secondary specialists. You need to decide whether you are writing (or selling your idea) for the whole market or for one particular group, the generalist group or the specialist group for example, or whether you are writing for a cross phase market or for a distinctively primary or secondary market.

Academic writing can be the most difficult to find a clear market for as it might be beyond the level that teachers will want and therefore might only sell to the libraries and the few researchers in the field. This can mean such books have a very high price set to protect the publishers investment. One way round this is to broaden the scope of the work to include spirituality or morality in education (and mention them in the title) as this widens the appeal to other interest areas. However, this is a compromise between your distinctive contribution and interest area, and the market which some will find contentious.

- ◆ Identify your potential readership
- ◆ Take soundings from colleagues or critical friends in teaching whose judgment you trust
- ◆ Try to balance a broad appeal in the book with your specific aims for your writing

3.3 Approaching a publisher

You should not be put off by rejections. Publishers know their market well and sometimes your proposal might not suit the market they are good at selling books in while another publisher may know a market that will really like what you are proposing. This is especially true in the RE publishing world where there are different sectors of the subject, such as the Church school sector and community school sector in text book terms, and some publishing houses are particularly interested in religious education while others are not, when it comes to professional and academic level.

It is well worth scouring through catalogues to see if publishers have a similar text to what you are offering in their 'stable' they may not be

interested in trying to sell an additional similar book though they will usually tell you if this is the case and sometimes suggest other publishers who might be interested. You can use this to spot gaps in the stable of a publisher which your publication might fill.

The publishing market as a whole has had some very poor years and RE has been deselected as a priority by some publishers. It is useful to know this in advance before drafting and sending off long proposals. This means it might be sensible to ring first so that you find the right person to speak to, usually the commissioning editor for RE, and then find out some general things about them, not least whether you think you can get on with them, and to gauge their interest in RE. Sometimes a visit is worth the investment of time and train fares. It's also a good opportunity to sell your enthusiasm for your idea, which might mean they give more consideration to your formal proposal and it shows you are a serious contender.

If your work is at an academic level then you might especially need to demonstrate academic credibility, perhaps through a track record in journal publications and conference papers, a higher degree or involvement on research projects which are related to the publication.

- ◆ Identify publishers with a gap in their stable which you think you can fill
- ◆ Don't be put off by rejections but try to understand why it was rejected
- ◆ Make personal contacts whenever possible

3.4 Writing a proposal

Once you have identified a number of publishers who might be interested you can draft a formal proposal. This will probably form the basis of a discussion with individual commissioning editors. Good editors know their market and will try to develop your idea to fit the sort of thing they think they will sell but this process can take some time, months or even years!

The proposal contains important information describing the book in some detail with sections on the target audience, how you think it would be used, what curriculum it matches, any competing texts and what your idea offers which is distinctive enough to make it worth buying over the others. You should outline chapters, perhaps giving an example section, and a proposed schedule for when it would be written. You should also sell yourself, perhaps including a CV with the application geared to show any experience that is relevant.

You may have already have something written down, a project you have working on for a while. This is a real advantage as you can use it to persuade your publisher you will be able to deliver and to show examples of your work in draft.

At this stage you might feel disenchanted. You may have conceived your book as making a valuable contribution of a child's spiritual development and now an editor is fiddling around with your idea and all the discussion is about market economics! There are two things to say here. On the one hand, it's your idea and if you don't like the way things are going you can always take your idea elsewhere, but on the other hand, you need a good publisher to be able to market your publication well as that could make an enormous difference to the success of your publication. The impact the marketing has is enormous. For example, traditionally people buy revision guides from bookshops and certain publishers have good deals with certain major bookshop chains. As a result, those books sell very well indeed. However, other publishers who don't get good positions in those bookshops, find it very hard to sell large numbers of revision guides, despite having successful publishing track records elsewhere simply because of the way the market works. Some publishers have strong market presence with primary purchasers and others with strong presence with secondary purchasers.

The relationship you build with your commissioning editor is important as writing is a personal activity and your publisher needs to be in tune with your thinking. If they think your idea is good they will come and meet you, and take you out for the odd lunch which is a great way of getting to know the person you might be working with.

Lastly you should be under no illusions that the RE textbook market can be very buoyant, even in these tougher publishing times. A few authors have written books which generate substantial second incomes and open up a whole area of professional development with requests to do conferences and other book projects.

- ◆ Identify your unique offering
- ◆ Identify your market in mind
- ◆ Try to make sure what you have written represents your idea
- ◆ Be clear about numbers of chapters, chapter contents, length of book
- ◆ Include a CV outlining how your relevant skills and experiences make you a great potential for the publisher

3.5 The Review Stage

If you are proposing a text that is professional level material or above you will almost certainly have your proposal sent out to two referees who will be specialist in the field. You may have someone you want to recommend, which some publishers are happy to take, or they may find the referees for you. Usually the comments are made anonymously. Referees are frequently asked to comment on the likely market, the idea behind the book, the notability or standing of the author, and the scope and detail of the proposal. The referees are also asked whether or not they would recommend the text to the publisher. It is important here to remember that they can only comment on the proposal you submit so

make sure your written proposal represents your idea as clearly as possible.

The reviews are meant to advise the publisher but also are useful for you as advice on how you might want to develop the idea. However, this does not mean that a publisher will accept all the comments as necessary and sometimes there is a fundamental disagreement of philosophy between the author and the reviewers which might mean the reviewers feedback is put aside. Critical comments can be always difficult to read but this is part of the process of all writing and should provide useful information.

- ◆ Use feedback to improve your idea where possible

3.6 From contract to publication

Once your publisher is satisfied with the proposal the contract will be drawn up and you will be asked to sign. You should read this carefully and ask questions before signing. Contracts will outline whether there are any advances (more likely at class resource level than above) and when they are paid (perhaps partly at the beginning and the rest on completion of the first draft). It will clarify who owns the rights to publication and the intellectual rights to the material. It will detail the way in which the work will be sent in, be it electronically, on disk or in traditional paper format, and when it will be sent in. The dates may be staggered for different portions of the piece and the contract may include turnaround time for an alterations made at the proof stages. Typing errors, omissions and mistakes will need fixing at this time. Clarification over the number of images and nature of images (photographs, line drawings etc) will be made, along with details of who will compose any index. Contracts usually have a schedule which details all the dates and payments information though you do need to read the whole contract and not just this section. Lastly there will be reference to international sales and perhaps also film and computer games rights, however unlikely these might be in the RE world.

Once you have agreed and signed the contract you need to write the work and this requires discipline and planning. Set your schedule to meet the agreed dates and work out a comfortable routine for when you best write. Your employment contract may allow an amount of time for scholarly activity and they may not require you to be on the premises for that time which raises the possibility of working at other libraries or at home to maximise your efficiency.

Once you have written your first draft this will be sent in for checking and a list of alternations, corrections and omissions will be produced. Publishers often contract out this work to another proof reader and editor which requires another relationship. It is important to remember they are trying to help finalize your work into the best possible finish and they will raise questions if the text is not clear. In RE this can cause problems as the person you are working with may not be an RE specialist so sometimes things which are apparent to you may not be to them. The work goes through first and second proofs for you to read and check yourself. In these proofs you can begin to see your masterpiece

take shape. Finally you will receive a number of free copies with a possible option to purchase some copies at a price less your own royalties, which the publisher may be happy for you to sell direct at certain events, such as conferences or seminars.

- ◆ Read the contract and be clear on specific dates, royalties and advances
- ◆ Prepare a schedule for writing and plan a routine which fits your work/life balance
- ◆ Read proofs carefully - its your last chance for changes

3.7 Money and other fruits

Royalties tend to be around 9%-10% (for single author works) and with textbooks you can expect an advance, some of which might be paid before any work is done and the remainder on production of the full first draft. If you feel this is too small you can always try to produce it yourself but remember, the marketing operation a publisher gives your book might well be the thing that ensures it takes off. They may have to sell several thousands before they get back their investment. there is also the point that the reviewing process and development process adds status to your work which you might not have if you published it directly.

Professional texts and academic texts will of course provide less of a return in monetary terms as at this level the RE field is small but the number of RE teachers are growing and the amount of RE being done at school is growing which is a good sign for the subject and the market. Both types of work provide essential development and growth in the subject, both in terms of the profession and in terms of the debates about the subject in Higher Education. These debates do influence policy and successful writers in RE at the higher levels can be frequently found advising Government education bodies on RE developments.

There is a real potential to make a difference to religious education as experienced by pupils throughout the country. There are very few people actually writing in the field and there are few people who have the position RE tutors have so you are well placed to be successful in the RE published world.

- ◆ Remember there are financial, professional and academic rewards to writing and be sure your are clear on which you value most and hope to achieve in or from the work.

3.8 Writing articles for journals

Writing articles for journals represents an important level of engagement in academic and professional discourse nationally and internationally in education. There are a number of journals which publish material related to Religious Education: The British Journal for Religious Education, The International Journal of Children's Spirituality, the Journal of Beliefs and Values and Moral Education. Details of each of these can be

found in the bibliography.

The best way to start thinking about writing for journals is to look at different articles in journals to get a flavour of the sorts of writing which can get published. From there you can look to your own work and identify aspects of work you are doing which may generate material suitable for publication. This might be work to do with the students you are tutoring and the schools you are working with, though you should be sure to follow ethics protocols for research - these your institution should be able to give guidance on. You might be involved in teaching on or studying for higher degrees which presents another possible source of material for publication. The nature of articles varies from philosophical oriented pieces to quantitative and qualitative research data from activities you have carried out.]

Journals provide guidance on how articles should be formatted and who they should be sent to, and this information is often also available on the web (see below for details of the journals mentioned). Articles sent in will be put out for anonymous review and you will receive feedback on your work which is useful peer critique and can help you shape your your to meet requirements for publication.

4. Final words

You should be self confident in all your activities in writing, both in presenting your idea to others and in pursuing it to fruition. Remember that you have a great deal of experience and there is no one apart from yourself to give you permission to try and get work published.

Also, it is very easy for other responsibilities, such as teaching related, to eat into your scholarly time, or time for writing but success in publications can be very rewarding and make a real difference to religious education beyond your immediate institution and your own students.

5 Bibliography

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Wright A and Brandon's A, (eds.) 2002 *Learning to Teach Religious education in the Secondary School, a companion to school experience*, Cornwall: RoutledgeFalmer

6 Appendix

6.1 Some Classroom publishers of RE

Nelson Thornes Ltd
Delta Place
27 Bath Road
Cheltenham
Glos
GL53 7TH
United Kingdom
Telephone: +44 (0) 1242 267100
<http://www.nelsonthornes.com/>

Pearson Publishing Group
Chesterton Mill, French's Road, Cambridge CB4 3NP, UK
Tel: +44 (0)1223 350555
Email: info@pearson.co.uk
<http://www.pearsonpublishing.co.uk/education/>

Heinemann -a division of Harcourt Education Limited.
Halley Court
Jordan Hill
Oxford
OX2 8EJ
For writing for Heinemann go to:
<http://www.heinemann.co.uk/secondary/author.asp?d=s>

Collins Education,
HarperCollinsPublishers
77-85 Fulham Palace Road
London W6 8JB
Phone: 0208 741 7070
E-mail: editorial@collinseducation.com
<http://www.collinseducation.com>

6.2 Some Academic Publishers of RE

RoutledgeFalmer
Taylor & Francis Group Ltd
2 Park Square
Milton Park
Abingdon
Oxford OX14 4RN
UK
Tel: +44 (0) 20 7017 6000
<http://www.routledge.com/>

The Continuum International
Publishing Group
The Tower Building
11 York Road
London SE1 7NX
Tel: 44(0) 207-922-0880
info@continuumbooks.com
<http://www.continuumbooks.com>

6.3 RE Journals

These journals are all part of the Taylor & Francis Group Ltd

British Journal of Religious Education
<http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles/01416200.asp>

Journal of Beliefs and Values
<http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles/13617672.asp>

International Journal of Children's Spirituality
<http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles/1364436X.asp>

Journal of Religious Education
<http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles/00344087.asp>

Journal of Moral Education
<http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles/03057240.asp>