Marking up text

There are a number of different ways to mark up text. The three main categories you will find are:

- paper (hard copy)
- Word file
- PDF

If you are an independent author who did not grow up using word processors or computers, the chances are you are likely to prefer working with hard copy. Even if you do use a computer, you might end up printing out an edited file to input corrections and suggestions into your original work on screen. Everyone has their own preferred method of working and part of my job is to find out what that is and supply you with the goods!

All three categories above can be subdivided further. For paper (hard copy) we can mark up as follows:

- BSI symbols (preferred by publishers)
- simpler margin comments, with some rudimentary symbols

For Word, we use:

- 'Track Changes' and 'Comments' (under the Review tab)
- comments inside the text (bold and blue, within square brackets)

Last, but not least, in PDF we can mark using:

- mark-up tools and the comments pane
- callout boxes

It's useful if you have Adobe Acrobat Reader DC at your disposal for PDFs – there is a free download available at https://acrobat.adobe.com/us/en/acrobat/pdf-reader.html – but this is not absolutely necessary if you are able to open PDFs with some other programme you might already possess. The mark-up tools and comments pane are used by clients such as publishers and businesses who will be familiar with that method, but callout boxes and emendations on the body of the PDF text will probably suit people who want websites, blogs or CVs etc. looking over.

Ivor McGregor 2020