

Screen Credits Manual
Effective for Notices of Tentative Writing Credits
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Preface

A writer's position in the motion picture or television industry is determined largely by his/her credits. His/her professional status depends on the quality and number of the screenplays, teleplays, or stories which bear his/her name. Writing credit is given for the act of creation in writing for the screen. This includes the creation of plot, characters, dialogue, scenes and all the other elements which comprise a screenplay.

The administration of an accurate and equitable system of determining credits is therefore one of the most important services the Guild performs for writers, and it is to a better understanding of this important responsibility that this Manual is dedicated.

The Guild is asked more than one hundred and fifty times a year to assist in the resolution of controversies between writers over their credits. Arduous and unpleasant as this chore sometimes is, the Guild undertakes it willingly, not only to protect writers from embarrassing personal conflicts but also to ensure the validity of credit records on which the professional status of writers depends.

The guiding principle of this system of credit determination is that the writing credits should be a true and accurate statement of authorship as determined by the rules of this Manual. Fortunately, the written material provides a definite basis for credit determination, and the willingness of experienced writers to read this material carefully and weigh the contributions of the participants ensures a fair and impartial decision arrived at by qualified persons.

The importance of credits demands that writers give the process for determining credits the closest scrutiny. The rules and procedures set down here are based on:

1. the Guild's contractual obligations under the Minimum Basic Agreements; and
2. the Guild's own rules and regulations adopted by the membership, which are put into practice by writers.

I. Working Procedures

A. WRITER'S RESPONSIBILITIES WHEN ASSIGNED

1. Notify other writers on the same assignment.

The Company is obligated, under the Minimum Basic Agreement, to notify a writer of all writers currently or previously employed by the Company on the same material. At the request of any participating writer, the Company will notify the writer in writing of the name(s) of any writer(s) employed subsequent to such writer.

The writer's responsibility begins at the moment the writer starts an assignment. A Guild Working Rule requires that the writer ascertain from the proper authorities in the production company the names of any other writers currently assigned to the same material. The writer also must notify any such writers of the fact that the writer has been assigned to the material.

2. File contract at Guild office.

Each member must promptly file with the Guild office a copy of his/her contract of employment, in no case later than one week after receipt of the contract.

3. Keep a copy of all work done.

For fair credit determination it is vital that the writer keep copies of all work done. To be considered in a credit arbitration, literary material must have been submitted by the writer to the Company upon completion of the work or upon purchase. All material should be properly dated and labeled. Copies of story or script suggestions constituting literary material should be kept and must also have been submitted to the Company in writing if the writer wants to claim credit for these contributions. A dated memorandum to the Company can place these suggestions on the record. Literary material submitted to the Company includes submission to individuals authorized by the Company to accept such materials.

B. COLLABORATION: A TEAM OF WRITERS

A "team" of writers is defined as follows: Two writers who have been assigned at about the same time to the same material and who work together for approximately the same length of time on the material.

The Guild does and must presume that when two writers comply with the definition of a team and their names appear jointly on the work that is produced, the whole will be judged as a joint contribution unless a specific objection to this assumption is made at the time of the writing. Such objections should be made in writing to the Screen Credits Administrator and concurrently to the other writer. It is the Guild's position that a writer who chooses to question the validity of a collaboration should do so openly and frankly at the time the work is done and not several months later in the course of a dispute as to credits.

If a writer is employed to work as part of a team in collaboration with a writer also employed in an additional capacity, a collaboration agreement is required in order for the writer also employed in an additional capacity to claim co-authorship of the team's material. (See "Section III.C., Production Executives.")

When credit is accorded to a team of writers, an ampersand (&) shall be used between the writers' names in the credit to denote a writing team. Use of the word "and" between writers' names in a credit indicates that the writers did their work separately, one usually rewriting the other. This distinction is well established in the industry through custom and practice.

C. WRITING INDEPENDENTLY OF PRIOR SCRIPTS

It has been the practice and the policy of arbiters in credit arbitrations to assume that a writer has access to prior literary material, an assumption based on the custom of the industry.

Although a writer may claim in all honesty not to have seen any prior literary material, and/or that the producer had asked the writer not to read any prior literary material; and/or that all copies of prior literary material had been made unavailable for any reason whatsoever, nevertheless, the arbiters must act on the basis that there is presumptive evidence that a writer did, in fact, have access, in spite of a writer's claim of "writing independently of prior scripts," if a significant similarity exists between a prior piece of literary material and a writer's later literary material. The arbiters must proceed on the basis that the similarities in themselves constitute presumptive evidence that there must have been some sort of access even if the literary material of the prior writer was only orally transmitted, as, for example, from a production executive to a later writer. It is also presumptive evidence that a production executive would relate in some manner or form, directly or inadvertently, formally or informally, significant contents of a prior piece of literary material which may or may not be incorporated in later literary material.

Therefore, it is the policy of the Guild that the written material will prevail, making the lack of or the existence of a significant similarity between the prior or later literary material the deciding factor. Because this presumption is irrebuttable, the claim of writing independently of prior literary material may not be considered by a Policy Review Board.

This section relates only to the presumption that subsequent writers have access to prior writers' literary material. Please see "Section III. Guild Policy on Credits" for contribution necessary to receive credit.

II. Credit Determination Procedure

A. NOTICE OF TENTATIVE WRITING CREDIT

Schedule A of our Minimum Basic Agreement provides that the Company will send to each participant, or to the current agent of a participating writer if that participant so elects, and to the Guild concurrently a Notice of Tentative Writing Credits ("Notice"). The Company also is required to provide each participating writer (or designated agent) a copy of the final shooting script (or if such script is not available, the latest revised script).

A participant is defined as a writer who has participated in the writing of the screenplay, or a writer who has been employed by the Company on the story and/or screenplay, or a "professional writer" ¹ who has sold or licensed literary material subject to the Minimum Basic Agreement. In addition, in the case of a remake, any writer who received writing credit under any WGA Basic Agreement in connection with a prior produced version shall also be a participant. If a participating writer is deceased or unavailable to participate in the credit determination process, such writer may participate through an appropriate representative. As a participant, the writer shall be entitled to participate in the procedure for determination of writing credits.

Although it is the Company's responsibility to send the Notice properly in accordance with the MBA provisions, it is in the best interest of each participating writer to make sure the Guild and the Company always have current address information to ensure proper and timely delivery. If a writer contractually designates an agent or other representative to receive Notices then the writer should periodically remind such representative to forward all Notices in a timely manner so important deadlines are not missed.

If a participating writer intends to be away from his/her residence, or for any other reason will not be able to receive materials at his/her customary mailing address, the writer should give prompt written notice to the Company to send the Notice of Tentative Writing Credits and the Final Shooting Script to a specified representative.

B. WHAT TO DO UPON RECEIPT OF NOTICE

1. If the writer agrees with the tentative writing credits proposed by the Company, the writer does nothing, signifying acquiescence by failure to protest.
2. If after reading the final script, the writer wishes to discuss the credits with the other participating writers involved before deciding whether or not to protest the tentative writing credits, the writer may call the Guild and the Guild will make reasonable efforts to arrange for such discussion.
3. If after reading the final script the writer wishes to protest the tentative writing credits as proposed by the Company, the writer sends the following written protest both to the Company and to the Guild:

"HAVE READ FINAL SCRIPT AND HEREBY PROTEST TENTATIVE WRITING CREDITS ON (NAME OF PRODUCTION) AND CONSIDER CREDIT SHOULD BE _____."

Such written protest must be received by the Company and the Guild within the time specified at the bottom of the Notice of Tentative Writing Credits, but in no event shall this time be less than that specified in the Minimum Basic Agreement which states, "The Company will keep the final determination of screen credits open until a time specified in the notice by the Company, but such time will not be earlier than 6:00 p.m. of the tenth business day following the next day after the dispatch of the notice above specified (12 business days); provided, however, that if in the good faith judgment of the Company there is an emergency requiring earlier determination and the Company so states in its notice, such time may be no earlier than 6:00 p.m. of the fifth business day following the next day after the dispatch of the notice above specified (7 business days)."

No writer should request credit or ask for an arbitration without first having read the final script.

4. In the case of an automatic arbitration, the Guild will be deemed to have made a written request for arbitration of credits at the time the Company submits the Notice of Tentative Writing Credits.

C. AGREEMENT AMONG WRITERS

The Minimum Basic Agreement provides that, when more than one writer has participated in the writing of a motion picture, then all participants have the right to agree unanimously among themselves as to which of them shall receive writing credits on the screen and in what form, provided that the form agreed upon is in accordance with the terms of Theatrical Schedule A of the Minimum Basic Agreement, and provided the agreement is reached in advance of arbitration. The Minimum Basic Agreement also provides that the form of such credit shall not be suggested or directed by the Company.

Any participant may initiate a meeting or other discussion among all the writers who have contributed to try to reach such an agreement.

After a protest is received by the Guild, if there is an indication that agreement on the credits might be reached by the participants, the Screen Credits Administrator will make reasonable efforts to arrange a meeting or other discussion among the writers for this purpose. If no agreement is reached, credits shall be finally determined by arbitration.

D. ARBITRATION

NOTE: The words "arbitration" and "arbiters" and their variants are used in this Manual in their broadest general, as opposed to technical, sense as implying an expeditious, fair and impartial means of resolving differences among writers as to their credits. There is no intended or implied connection with the more formalized arbitrations conducted in other forums, such as court-ordered arbitrations or union-management arbitrations. Use of the terms "arbitration" and its variants in this Manual does not contemplate that the credit determination procedures hereinafter set forth are to be construed as a form of statutory arbitration or as a grievance/arbitration mechanism such as the one contained in Articles 10 and 11 of the Minimum Basic Agreement.

No individual who serves as an arbiter, consultant, member of a Special Committee or Policy Review Board shall have an interest in the outcome of the credit determination.

1. Selection of Arbiters

Any controversy as to credits shall be determined by an Arbitration Committee consisting of three members of the Guild who shall be drawn from the Screen Arbiters List. The Screen Arbiters List includes writers who have been current members for at least five years or who have received three screen credits. At least two of the three arbiters on any Arbitration Committee shall have served on no less than two previous Arbitration Committees.

In setting up a Committee to serve in a particular arbitration, the Screen Credits Administrator shall submit to the participating writers a copy of the Screen Arbiters List. Each participating writer shall have the right to challenge peremptorily a reasonable number of the names on the Screen Arbiters List. The Screen Credits Administrator will select the Arbitration Committee from the names remaining on the list after all participating writers have had the opportunity to file a list of peremptory challenges. Wherever possible, arbiters will be selected who are experienced in the type of writing involved in the particular arbitration.

The members of the Committee so selected shall not be informed as to the name or identity of the other members of the Committee.

2. Screen Credits Consultants

One member of the Guild's Screen Credits Committee shall be designated by the Screen Credits Administrator to act as Consultant for each Arbitration Committee, and he/she shall be available to the members of that Arbitration Committee for information on policy, rules, precedent, and procedure during the arbitration period. It is his/her duty to aid the Committee toward a majority decision.

3. Anonymity of Arbiters and Consultants

As has always been Guild practice, the names of the arbiters and consultants selected remain anonymous and confidential. The Guild does not reveal the arbiters' or consultants' identities or any identifying information about them to the Company, the participating writers or anyone else outside the credit determination process. Arbiters and consultants volunteer their services in reliance upon the Guild's promise of anonymity.

4. Rights and Responsibilities of Participants

All participating writers are obligated to cooperate with the Guild, including the Screen Credits Administrator, Consultant, Arbitration Committee and Policy Review Board panel, in every way required to render a fair and timely decision.

a. Verification of Materials

The Minimum Basic Agreement requires the Company to submit three copies of all available material written by the participating writers as well as the available source material. Inasmuch as the final determination of credits is based on an analysis of this written material, the writer owes it to himself/herself to examine all literary material and source material submitted to the Guild by the Company and to make certain that all material written by him/her has been submitted and such material is accurately attributed and dated. This may necessitate a trip to the Guild office to examine material.

Under provisions of the Minimum Basic Agreement, the Guild has the right to ask for a cutting continuity which will be provided by the Company if it is available at the time of the arbitration. For this reason, if a writer believes that the "final shooting script" does not accurately reflect what was shot during principal photography, he/she should request the Screen Credits Administrator to ask the Company to submit a cutting continuity. If the cutting continuity is submitted to the Arbitration Committee, it is not credited to any participating writer.

b. Statement to the Arbitration Committee

While the Arbitration Committee bases its decision on literary material, including scripts, stories, treatments, etc., and source material, each participating writer is strongly urged to submit a written statement of his/her position to the Screen Credits Administrator to forward to the arbiters. It is suggested that the statement address the requirements to receive credit as set forth in this Manual, "Section III. Guild Policy on Credits." The statement may include breakdowns and illustrative comparisons between the final shooting script and earlier work or any other information which would help the Arbitration Committee to evaluate the writer's contribution to the final shooting script. It is the Guild's policy to preclude references to a writer's entitlement to contingent compensation tied to the receipt of credit on the screen. Participants shall not include such references in their statements. Participating writers also shall not include as part of their statements to the Arbitration Committee any letters of support from other individuals.

Statements should not contain information pertaining to the development process that is not germane to the arbiters' analysis of the literary material. For example, the fact that a project was "greenlit" after a certain draft is irrelevant in determining credits. The Arbitration Committee must base its decision on each writer's relative contribution to the final shooting script, and not on the perceived quality of work or other extraneous factors. In addition, statements may not contain information irrelevant to the written work which may prejudice any writer in the process.

As the written statement is the participant's only opportunity to communicate his/her position to the arbiters, it is advised that the writer take due care in its preparation. There is no set form or required length. Because of the limitation of 21 business days for the arbitration, this statement must be delivered to the Guild within 24 hours after the writer has notice that there has been a protest. At the request of a participating writer, additional time to submit a statement may be granted by the Screen Credits Administrator within the time constraints for determination of credits. Such requests will not be unreasonably denied. A participant's failure to submit a statement in a timely fashion shall not preclude the Guild from proceeding with an arbitration with the statements then available to the Guild. If a participating writer submits a statement after the materials have been submitted to the Arbitration Committee, the Screen Credits Administrator will forward such

statement to the Arbitration Committee, provided such statement is received prior to a decision of the Arbitration Committee.

As a matter of Guild policy, in each arbitration the participants' statements are held confidential by the Guild. They are not provided to other participants, the Company or anyone else outside the credit determination process.

c. Anonymity of Writers

The names of all participating writers on the production shall not be revealed to the Arbitration Committee. Writers will be identified to the Arbitration Committee only as "Writer A," "Writer B," etc., such designations to reflect the order in which the participating writers wrote.

5. Pre-Arbitration Hearing

In the event that a dispute exists as to the authenticity, identification, sequence, authorship or completeness of any literary material to be considered in a credit arbitration, a Special Committee consisting of three members of the Screen Credits Committee shall conduct a hearing at which all participating writers may present testimony and documentary evidence. Such Special Committee is empowered to make a binding determination for purposes of submission of material to the arbiters. Following a decision of a credit Arbitration Committee, findings and/or conclusions of a Special Committee may be reviewed by a Policy Review Board to determine if there has been a misinterpretation, misapplication or violation of Guild policy.

6. Procedure of Arbitration Committee

The following information and material is sent to each member of the Arbitration Committee by the Screen Credits Administrator:

- a. Writing credits as tentatively determined by the Company.
- b. Statements submitted by participating writers.
- c. A statement of the issues to be determined by the Committee and any other relevant information as formulated by the Screen Credits Administrator.
- d. Literary material, including scripts, stories, treatments, etc., verified for inclusion in the credit arbitration and source material submitted by the Company, together with a list of the dates of the material in chronological order.

Each participating writer may choose to have submitted those verified literary materials he/she deems relevant to demonstrate his/her writing contribution to the final shooting script. Every draft need not be submitted. Each writer should review his/her material in order to make this determination.

As has been the practice, where appropriate, only the final shooting script and not prior drafts will be submitted to the Arbitration Committee on behalf of the last participating writer.

The literary material submitted to the Arbitration Committee includes material written by participating writers who are not seeking writing credit. This is necessary so that the Arbitration Committee can separate out the contribution of a subsequent writer from that of a prior writer who is not seeking credit.

- e. A copy of this Credits Manual.

- f. Request for telephonic communication to the Screen Credits Administrator by each member of the Arbitration Committee, indicating each arbiter's determination of writing credit, with confirmation of this decision to follow in writing.

Each member of the Arbitration Committee reads all the material submitted independent of the other two arbiters and makes a decision based on the guidelines for determining credits. In determining relative contributions, the Arbitration Committee bases its determination on what material was actually used, not the Committee's personal preference of one script over another.

Upon reaching a decision, each member of the Arbitration Committee shall telephone it to both the Credit Arbitration Consultant and Screen Credits Administrator.

In the event the members of the Arbitration Committee are not in unanimous agreement, the Arbitration Committee and the Credit Arbitration Consultant will participate in a teleconference administered by the Screen Credits Administrator. The members of the Arbitration Committee will discuss their decisions in an effort to achieve a unanimous decision. During the teleconference, the members of the Arbitration Committee shall not be informed as to the name or identity of the other members of the Committee.

If the Arbitration Committee is unable to reach a unanimous decision during the teleconference, the majority decision shall be deemed the decision of the Arbitration Committee. When the Arbitration Committee reaches a decision, each member of the Committee shall confirm his/her individual decision in writing with a summation of the reason therefor. The decision of the Arbitration Committee shall be accepted as final and communicated by the Screen Credits Administrator to all interested parties.

7. Appeals Before a Policy Review Board

Within twenty-four hours of the initial notification of the Arbitration Committee's decision, any of the participating writers may request an internal Guild appeal to a Policy Review Board, consisting of the Chair or Vice-Chair and any other two members of the Screen Credits Committee except the Consultant in the case. If the Chair or Vice-Chair are unavailable or otherwise unable to serve on a Policy Review Board, the Policy Review Board shall consist of three members of the Screen Credits Committee. No member of the Policy Review Board shall have an interest in the outcome of the credit determination.

The function of the Policy Review Board is to determine whether or not, in the course of the credit determination, there has been any serious deviation from the policy of the Guild or the procedure as set forth in this Manual.

The members of a Policy Review Board are not permitted to read the material involved for purposes of independently judging writers' contributions to the final shooting script, and the Policy Review Board is not empowered to reverse an Arbitration Committee in matters of judgment as to the participating writers' relative contributions to the final script.

Only the following are grounds for a participant's appeal to a Policy Review Board:

- a. Dereliction of duty on the part of the Arbitration Committee or any of its members;
- b. The use of undue influence upon the Arbitration Committee or any of its members;
- c. The misinterpretation, misapplication or violation of Guild policy; or
- d. Availability of important literary or source material, for valid reasons not previously available to the Arbitration Committee.

If a writer is considering requesting a Policy Review Board, the writer may request copies of the arbiters' written summaries of their decisions, which will be provided by the Guild without any indication of the arbiters' identities.

Prior to the Policy Review Board hearing, writers requesting such Policy Review Board should submit a written statement to the Policy Review Board setting forth the grounds upon which the Policy Review Board is being requested (i.e., items a., b., c. and/or d. listed above) and the basis for such claims in reasonable

detail. It is not necessary to bring an attorney to the Policy Review Board as the hearing is informal, although writers are free to do so if they so choose.

In those cases where it is empowered to act, the Policy Review Board shall have the authority to direct the original Arbitration Committee to reconsider the case or to direct the Screen Credits Administrator to form a new Arbitration Committee.

The Policy Review Board hearing must be held and its decision rendered within the 21 business days allowed for the arbitration under the provisions of the Minimum Basic Agreement.

8. Notification

The Screen Credits Administrator shall write a letter to the Company and the participating writers notifying them of the final decision of the Arbitration Committee.

9. Guild Decision Final

Theatrical Schedule A provides:

"The decision of the Guild Arbitration Committee, and any Policy Review Board established by the Guild in connection therewith, with respect to writing credits, insofar as it is rendered within the limitations of this Schedule A, shall be final, and the Company will accept and follow the designation of screen credits contained in such decision and all writers shall be bound thereby."

"The decision of the Guild Arbitration Committee may be published in such media as the Guild may determine. No writer or Company shall be entitled to collect damages or shall be entitled to injunctive relief as a result of any decision of the Committee with regard to credits. In signing any contract incorporating by reference or otherwise all or part of this Basic Agreement, any writer or Company specifically waives all rights or claims against the Guild and/or its arbiters or any of them under the laws of libel or slander or otherwise with regard to proceedings before the Guild Arbitration Committee and any full and fair publication of the findings and/or decisions of such Committee. The Guild and any writer signing any contract incorporating by reference or otherwise or referring to this Schedule A, and any writer consenting to the procedure set forth in this Schedule A, shall not have any rights or claims of any nature against any Company growing out of or concerning any action of the Guild or its arbiters or any of them, or any determination of credits in the manner provided in this Schedule A, and all such rights or claims are hereby specifically waived."

¹ The MBA generally defines a "professional writer" as a person who has received employment for a total of thirteen weeks as a television or theatrical motion picture writer; or received credit on the screen for a television or theatrical motion picture; or received credit for a professionally produced play or a published novel. A writer may also negotiate with a Company to be treated as a "professional writer" even if the writer would not otherwise qualify as a "professional writer" under the MBA.

III. Guild Policy on Credits

A. DEFINITIONS

1. Writer

The term "writer" is defined in the Minimum Basic Agreement. In general, the term "writer" means a person employed by a Company to write literary material or a person from whom a Company purchased literary material who at the time of purchase was a "professional writer," as defined in the Minimum Basic Agreement.

For purposes of credit, a team of writers, as defined in the Screen Credits Manual Section I.B., is considered as one writer.

If literary material covered under the Minimum Basic Agreement is written by one member of a team, separate and apart from the work of the team, such literary material shall be considered separate from the literary material by the team for purposes of assessing contributions to the final shooting script. Therefore, such individual is eligible to receive writing credit as an individual writer and/or as a member of a team.

2. Literary Material

Literary material is written material and shall include stories, adaptations, treatments, original treatments, scenarios, continuities, teleplays, screenplays, dialogue, scripts, sketches, plots, outlines, narrative synopses, routines, and narrations, and, for use in the production of television film, formats.

3. Source Material

Source material is all material, other than story as hereinafter defined, upon which the story and/or screenplay is based.

This means that source material is material assigned to the writer which was previously published or exploited and upon which the writer's work is to be based (e.g., a novel, a produced play or series of published articles), or any other material written outside of the Guild's jurisdiction (e.g., literary material purchased from a non-professional writer). Illustrative examples of source material credits are: "From a Play by", "From a Novel by", "Based upon a Story by", "From a series of articles by", "Based upon a Screenplay by" or other appropriate wording indicating the form in which such source material is acquired. Research material is not considered source material.

4. Story

The term "story" means all writing covered by the provisions of the Minimum Basic Agreement representing a contribution "distinct from screenplay and consisting of basic narrative, idea, theme or outline indicating character development and action."

It is appropriate to award a "Story by" credit when: 1) the story was written under employment under Guild jurisdiction; 2) the story was purchased by a signatory company from a professional writer, as defined in the Minimum Basic Agreement; or 3) when the screenplay is based upon a sequel story written under the Guild's jurisdiction. If the story is based upon source material of a story nature, see "screen story" below.

5. Screen Story

Credit for story authorship in the form "Screen Story by" is appropriate when the screenplay is based upon source material and a story, as those terms are defined above, and the story is substantially new or different from the source material.

6. Screenplay

A screenplay consists of individual scenes and full dialogue, together with such prior treatment, basic adaptation, continuity, scenario and dialogue as shall be used in, and represent substantial contributions to the final script.

A "Screenplay by" credit is appropriate when there is source material of a story nature (with or without a "Screen Story" credit) or when the writer(s) entitled to "Story by" credit is different than the writer(s) entitled to "Screenplay by" credit.

7. "Written by"

The term "Written by" is used when the writer(s) is entitled to both the "Story by" credit and the "Screenplay by" credit.

This credit shall not be granted where there is source material of a story nature. However, biographical, newspaper and other factual sources may not necessarily deprive the writer of such credit.

8. "Narration Written by"

"Narration Written by" credit is appropriate where the major writing contribution to a motion picture is in the form of narration. The term "narration" means material (typically off-camera) to explain or relate sequence or action (excluding promos or trailers).

9. "Based on Characters Created by"

"Based on Characters Created by" is a writing credit given to the writer(s) entitled to separated rights in a theatrical or television motion picture on each theatrical sequel to such theatrical or television motion picture.

Where there are no separated rights, "Based on Characters Created by" may be accorded to the author of source material upon which a sequel is based.

10. "Adaptation by"

This credit is appropriate in certain unusual cases where a writer shapes the direction of screenplay construction without qualifying for "Screenplay by" credit. In those special cases, and only as a result of arbitration, the "Adaptation by" credit may be used.

B. RULES FOR DETERMINING CREDIT:

In determining relative contribution, the relevant factors shall be what material was actually used, not the Arbitration Committee's personal preference of one script over another.

A team of writers shall be treated in all respects as a single writer.

1. "Written by"

(See Section III.A.7.)

2. "Story by"

(See Section III. A.4)

Story credit may not be shared by more than two writers.

A story may be written in story form or may be contained within other literary material, such as a treatment or a screenplay, for purposes of receiving a "Story by" credit.

3. "Screen Story by"

(See Section III. A.5)

Screen Story credit may not be shared by more than two writers.

If the writer is furnished source material but takes from it only a springboard, a characterization, an incident or some equally limited contribution, creating a substantially new and different story from the source material, he/she may receive "Screen Story by" credit but only as the result of arbitration. In such cases, the author of the source material may be given credit that specifies the form in which such material was acquired -- for instance, "From a Play by," "From a Novel by," "From a Saturday Evening Post Story by," "From a Series of Articles by," "Based on a Story by," etc.

4. "Screenplay by"

(See Section III. A.6)

Screen credit for screenplay will not be shared by more than two writers, except that in unusual cases, and solely as the result of arbitration, the names of three writers or the names of writers constituting two writing teams may be used. The limitation on the number of writers applies to all feature length photoplays except episodic pictures and revues.

a. Percentage Requirements

Any writer whose work represents a contribution of more than 33% of a screenplay shall be entitled to screenplay credit, except where the screenplay is an original screenplay. In the case of an original screenplay, any subsequent writer or writing team must contribute 50% to the final screenplay.

b. Original and Non-Original Screenplays

For purposes of determining "Screenplay by" credit only, two categories of screenplays are recognized:

(1) Original screenplays (i.e., those screenplays which are not based on source material and on which the first writer writes a screenplay without there being any other intervening literary material by another writer pertaining to the project).² If a writer is furnished or uses research material, the screenplay is still considered an original screenplay; and

(2) Non-original screenplays (i.e., screenplays based upon source material and all other screenplays not covered in (1) above, such as sequels).

c. Additional Guidelines for the Arbiters in Determining Screenplay Credit

In each case, the arbiters read any source material and all literary material provided to them in connection with the development of the final screenplay in order to assess the contribution of each writer to the final shooting script.

The percentage contribution made by writers to screenplay obviously cannot be determined by counting lines or even the number of pages to which a writer has contributed. Arbiters must take into consideration the following elements in determining whether a writer is entitled to screenplay credit:

* dramatic construction;

* original and different scenes;

* characterization or character relationships; and

* dialogue.

It is up to the arbiters to determine which of the above-listed elements are most important to the overall values of the final screenplay in each particular case. A writer may receive credit for a contribution to any or all of the above-listed elements. It is because of the need to understand contributions to the screenplay as a whole that professional expertise is required on the part of the arbiters. For example, there have been instances in which every line of dialogue has been changed and still the arbiters have found no significant change in the screenplay as a whole. On the other hand, there have been instances where far fewer changes in dialogue have made a significant contribution to the screenplay as a whole. In addition, a change in one portion of the script may be so significant that the entire screenplay is affected by it.

It is possible to consider the writer of a story or treatment as eligible for screenplay credit, but only in those cases where the story or treatment is written in great detail, to an extent far beyond the customary requirements for a story or treatment.

d. Selection from Source Material

As a guideline for arbiters in cases involving a non-original screenplay based upon source material, it is a fundamental principle that selection of **screenplay elements** from the source material is a part of the creative process of writing the screenplay. Arbiters should give weight to any writer's original and unique utilization, choice, or arrangement of source material when it is present in the final shooting script, but not the employment of basic **story elements** which any other writer may have also selected. (See screenplay elements - Section III. B. 4.c. See story elements - Section III.A.4.)

5. "Adaptation by"

(See Section III. A.10)

Because of the strong feeling against a multiplicity of credits, the Guild is opposed to the general use of the "Adaptation by" credit. However, the Guild recognizes that there are certain unusual cases where credit is due a writer who shapes the direction of screenplay construction without qualifying for "Screenplay by" credit. In those special cases, and only as a result of arbitration, the "Adaptation by" credit may be used.

6. Irreducible Story Minimum

In the case of an original screenplay, the first writer shall be entitled to no less than a shared story credit.

7. No Other Credits Approved

Any form of credit not expressly described in this Manual shall be used only upon receipt of a waiver from the Guild. Fewer names and fewer types of credit enhance the value of all credits and the dignity of all writers.

C. PRODUCTION EXECUTIVES

The term "production executives" includes individuals who receive credit as the director or in any producer capacity. The following rules govern writing credits of production executives who also perform writing services when there are other writers involved on the same project.

1. Automatic Arbitration Provisions

Schedule A of the Minimum Basic Agreement provides:

"Unless the story and/or screenplay writing is done entirely without any other writer, no designation of tentative story or screenplay credit to a production executive shall become final or effective unless approved by a credit arbitration as herein provided, in accordance with the Guild rules for determination of such credit."

2. Notice Requirements

If a production executive intends to claim credit as a team on any literary material with a writer(s) who is not a production executive, he/she must, at the time when such team writing begins, have signified such claim in writing to the Guild and to the writer(s) with whom he/she claims to have worked as a team. Failure to comply with the above will preclude such production executive from claiming co-authorship of the literary material in question, and such literary material shall be attributed to the other writer.

3. Percentage Requirements to Receive Screenplay Credit

At the time of the credit arbitration, the production executive or production executive team must assume the burden of proving that he/she/they had, in fact, worked on the script as a writer and had assumed full share of the writing. If the production executive or production executive team is the second writer he/she/they must have contributed more than 50% of the final script to receive screenplay credit. His/her/their contribution must consist of dramatic construction; original and different scenes; characterization or character relationships; and dialogue.

As in all cases, decisions of Arbitration Committees are based upon literary material. Therefore, production executives, as well as other writers, should keep dated copies of all literary material written by them and submitted to the Company.

D. REMAKES

In the case of remakes, any writer who has received writing credit under the Guild's jurisdiction in connection with a prior version of the motion picture is a participating writer on the remake. As such, those prior writers are entitled to participate in the credit determination process and are eligible to receive writing credit pursuant to the rules for determining writing credits. The final shooting script written by a prior writer(s) shall be considered literary material.

If under the "Rules for Determining Writing Credits" (Section III.B.) the Arbitration Committee determines that such prior writer(s) is not entitled to receive writing credit, the Arbitration Committee may, within its discretion, accord such prior writer(s) a credit in the nature of a source material credit, such as "Based on a Screenplay by...."

However, the rules do not preclude a prior writer(s) from receiving both writing credit and a credit in the nature of a source material credit at the discretion of the Arbitration Committee.

Remakes shall be considered non-original screenplays under Section III.B.4.b.(2) of this Manual.

E. WITHDRAWAL FROM CREDIT

Prior to the time a credit question has been submitted to arbitration, a writer may withdraw from screen writing credit for personal cause, such as violation of his/her principles or mutilation of material he/she has written. If the other writer-contributors do not agree, the question shall be referred to arbitration. The Arbitration Committee in such cases shall base its determination on whether there is such personal cause.

After screen credits have been determined by arbitration, a writer may not withdraw his/her name from screenplay credit. He/she may, however, by notification to the Guild, withdraw from any other form of credit.

Withdrawal from writing credit will result in loss of any and all rights accruing from receipt of writing credit. Use of a pseudonym rather than withdrawing from credit will not result in such a forfeiture. (See H. below.)

F. GUILD'S RIGHT TO PROTEST

Pursuant to the provisions of the Minimum Basic Agreement the Guild has the right to protest credits proposed by the Company. The Guild may act irrespective of the wishes of any of the participating writers in order to ensure that the credit rules are properly applied.

G. ORDER OF NAMES

The order of writers' names in a shared credit may be arbitrated. Generally, the most substantial contributor is entitled to first position credit. Where there is no agreement among the arbiters as to order of names, or where the Arbitration Committee determines that the credited writers' contribution is equal, then the Arbitration Committee shall order the writers' names chronologically.

H. PSEUDONYMS

The Minimum Basic Agreement provides that any writer who is entitled to credit on the screen and who has been paid, or is guaranteed payment of, less than two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000) for writing services or literary materials relating to the particular motion picture shall have the right to be accorded credit on the screen, in advertising or otherwise, in a reasonable pseudonymous name. A writer must exercise this right within five (5) business days after final determination of writing credits. None of the writer's rights, including but not limited to compensation of any kind, shall be affected by use of such pseudonym.

Before using a pseudonym a writer must register it with the Guild by sending a written notice to the Membership Department with the writer's Social Security number, if any. A pseudonym may not duplicate the name or pseudonym of another writer or the name of a public figure.

Subject to the terms of a fully-executed strike settlement agreement between a signatory company and the Guild, the Screen Credits Administrator shall be empowered to obtain the true name and identity of any writer listed by pseudonym on any Notice of Tentative Writing Credit submitted to the Guild. In the event that the Company or writer refuses to reveal the true identity of a writer listed by pseudonym on a Notice of Tentative Writing Credit on which the names of one or more other writers also appear, such writer listed by pseudonym shall not be entitled to receive writing credit, and credit shall be awarded to the other writers as the Arbitration Committee or the Screen Credits Administrator determines.

I. WRITTEN MATERIAL PREVAILS

Decisions of Arbitration Committees are based upon literary material. Claims of authorship must be supported by literary material appropriate for submission to the Arbitration Committee. In the event of conflicting claims, literary material always prevails.

J. REVISION OF SCRIPT AFTER FINAL CREDIT DETERMINATION

If, after screen credits are finally determined, material changes are made in the literary material, either the Company or a participant and the Guild jointly may reopen credit determination by making a claim within 48 hours after completion of the writing work claimed to justify the revision of credits; and in such case the procedure for the original determination of credits is followed.

K. PUBLICIZING OF CREDITS

The Minimum Basic Agreement and Guild Working Rules provide that no writer shall claim credit for screen authorship on any motion picture prior to the time when the credits have been determined, and no writer shall claim credits contrary to such determination. In addition, the Guild believes that it is in the best interest of all writers that certain facts relating to any particular credit determination should remain confidential. For example, participating writers are asked to refrain from commenting in the press or media about issues related to pre-arbitration hearings, arbiters' written decisions or Policy Review Board hearings.

L. CONCLUSION

These rules and procedures have been derived from the experience and practice of the past years. Although they remain the guiding policy by which credits are determined, they are not to be considered rigid or inflexible. The Guild has the discretion to depart from precedent when new conditions, new problems, or new methods of work may require an alteration of the rules or a new application of an existing rule to a unique set of facts and circumstances.

It is now accepted that administration of writers' credits belongs to the writers themselves. It is their responsibility to see to it that credits are administered wisely and well, that the written work product of participating writers is credited as accurately as possible, and that the overall result leads ultimately to a recognition of the importance of the writers' contribution to the screen.

² In the case where a team writes a story, and there is no source material, and one member of the team goes on to write a screenplay without there being any other intervening literary material by any other writer, the screenplay shall still be considered an "original screenplay."