Creative Writing Proofreading Checklist (Non-Fiction Manuscript)

Getting Set Up	
Create a track changes/clean copy of the document with the appropriate file name stem	
Check your client's style guide and/or brief	
Set the proofing language	
Use Find and Replace to check for double spaces (but do not use Replace All)	

Things To Look Out For	
The extent of edits specified in the client's brief	
The author's voice, writing style, and target audience	
Typos and spelling mistakes, especially ones that will not appear as errors (e.g. from/form)	
Dialect-specific spelling, grammar, and punctuation issues	
Use of quotation marks	
Comma usage (e.g. comma splices, use of serial/Oxford commas)	
Usage of hyphens, en dashes, and em dashes according to style guide and/or dialect (the Search function can be used for this)	
All other punctuation use (e.g. colons, semicolons, apostrophes, ellipses, parentheses)	
Capitalisation of common vs proper nouns, job titles, etc.	
Use of 'which' and 'that'	
Use of active vs passive voice	
Sentence fragments and misplaced modifiers	
Verb agreement and parallelism	
Uses of non-standard English	
The use of jargon and overly complex language that detracts from clarity	
Place names and other terminology	
Issues with narrative point of view or tense	

Things To Check Back On	
Consistency of citations and references (if included)	
The introduction, punctuation, and formatting of quotes	
Heading and subheading capitalisation, size, and alignment	
Formatting (only if specified in the brief): page numbers, table of contents, headings and subheading styles, page/section breaks, font size and typeface, paragraph and line spacing, margin sizes	

Check Your Comments:	
Comments should be...	
Only used on changes that might confuse the author or need their attention	

In full, grammatically correct sentences, polite, and free from errors	
Written using the same dialect as the rest of the document, including spelling and punctuation	

Final Checks	
Check for typographical issues such as orphans, widows, incorrect word divisions, stacks, and rivers	
Double check any specific requests in the client's brief	
Repeat Find and Replace to check for introduced double spaces	
Check your edits (especially larger ones that may have changed the meaning of the original text)	
Use a spellchecker to pick up any missed or introduced errors	
Create the second proofread version of the document (TC or clean) and give it the appropriate file name stem	
If necessary, provide any general comments or feedback that you think would be helpful to your client	