

## Query Critique

I am seeking representation for my commercial fiction novel, [REDACTED] complete at [word count] words. As a retired British Army officer with a background in Information Warfare and experience as a [REDACTED] Officer in Iraq, I bring a wealth of real-world experience to my writing. I hold a degree in International Relations, a Masters in Terrorism and Political Violence from [REDACTED] University, and I am planning to pursue a PhD in War Studies at [REDACTED] University next year.

[REDACTED] is the first book in a planned trilogy called [REDACTED]. The protagonist, Emma, starts as a shy sixteen-year-old, forcibly taken from her life in a sleepy North Wales town to attend Minley Academy, a military finishing school. Her genetic enhancements, made possible through a government IVF programme, ensure she can unlock her full potential. In exchange, her parents agreed to her three-year education at Minley and subsequent three-year service to the government.

The novel is a character-driven piece that follows Emma's transformation as she undergoes rigorous training akin to that of British Army officers, Royal Marines, and UK Special Forces. Described as [REDACTED] is a thriller that delves into state espionage where not everything is as it seems. Emma must navigate the complexities of Op SPECTRE, a genetic assistance programme, and the mysterious government intelligence agency, UKCHIS, that oversees it. And who are GB75? As Emma evolves from a shy teen into a confident, albeit slightly damaged, leader, she faces moral dilemmas and battles to accept or escape her new reality.

**Commented [KV1]:** Open with a Dear [Agent's Name] to personalize

**Commented [KV2]:** Consider being more specific with your genre. Maybe YA Thriller or even Upmarket Thriller

**Commented [KV3]:** Title should be in all caps: [REDACTED]

**Commented [KV4]:** Typically, the bio is placed at the end of the query. However, this information creates more intrigue and shows your expertise over the subject. 👍

**Commented [KV5]:** Consider placing this at the end of the letter as a sort of bookend, reminding agents of your expertise.

**Commented [KV6]:** [REDACTED]

**Commented [KV7]:** [REDACTED]

**Commented [KV8]:** How so? Can you illustrate this to immerse the reader?

**Commented [KV9]:** Loving the concept, but at the moment, your blurb reads more like a detailed synopsis than a pitch. This is telling rather than showing. These 2-3 paragraphs are an opportunity to present your writing voice and immerse your reader in the story: 3rd person, present tense. More tips on this in your report!

**Commented [KV10]:** This is a unique note considering that most commercial novels are more plot-driven.

**Commented [KV11]:** Great hook :) But is there magic in this series? If so, the magic system should be hinted at in the blurb. If not, this hook might lean more toward The Hunger Games or Divergent. It's also wise to include 2 comp titles (published in the last 5 years) that are similar to the book. The titles shouldn't be "too" popular.

**Commented [KV12]:** [REDACTED]

**Commented [KV13]:** It would be good at some point to address this more specifically: In what way is everything not as it seems?

**Commented [KV14]:** This is better in your intro paragraph to hook the reader.

**Commented [KV15]:** You might want to cut this one. It's said that it's best to avoid rhetorical questions when you can.

**Commented [KV16]:** I think this is our premise, but we need to be more specific.

**Commented [KV17]:** Very intriguing plot. I think it has high-concept potential and would definitely want to read it. You just have to pitch it in a way that will grab the reader's attention and make it clear to understand.