

Proofreading and Editing



University of
Southern
Queensland

Proofreading versus Editing

Once you have completed a draft of your writing it is essential to check it over to ensure your writing is clear, organised, and meets the writing's intended purpose. Proofreading and editing both play important roles in the process of checking your writing. The purpose of proofreading is to correct errors with spelling, grammar, punctuation, and formatting. Editing involves correcting errors with structure, content, clarity, and citations.

Editing Strategies

To begin editing, refer to your assignment's task sheet and rubric, and check your draft for the following:

- Have you used the correct document structure (e.g., essay, report, reflection)?
- Are all required elements of the structure present (e.g., Executive Summary, Introduction, Body Paragraphs, Recommendations)?
- Have you answered all task questions/responded to all task requirements?
- Does all your evidence have an in-text citation and is it referenced correctly, according to the task requirements?
- Are paragraphs structured appropriately?
- Is information presented in a way that effectively links together?
- Are sentences, and phrases formed clearly and concisely?
- Is the text written in an active voice using an academic tone?
- Does the text contain unnecessary information?
- Is your word choice correct for the required structure, e.g. don't say essay if the task is a report.

Proofreading Checklist

As you proofread your text check the following aspects of your spelling, grammar, and punctuation:

Check that:	Example
You have avoided contractions.	× The author didn't state the number of students surveyed. ✓ The author <u>did not</u> state the number of students surveyed.
You have avoided slang, colloquialisms, and idioms.	× The practicum was held in the arvo. ✓ The practicum was held in the <u>afternoon</u>. × I'd be late for my own funeral, so I am not surprised I struggled with being on time during my practicum. ✓ <u>I am conscious of my inability to manage my time effectively</u>; therefore, I was not surprised that this was a skill I struggled with during my practicum.
You have written numbers under 10 as whole words.	× The study took 3 days to complete. ✓ The study took <u>three</u> days to complete.

The subject and verb agree in each sentence.	× These problems is difficult to solve. ✓ These problems <u>are</u> difficult to solve.
Singular and plural forms are correct.	× The first recommendation is to increase training in communication skill. ✓ The first recommendation is to increase training in communication <u>skills</u> .
Each noun has the correct article.	× Second event she organised at the conference was interesting. ✓ <u>The</u> second event she organised at the conference was interesting.
You have used correct word forms of adjectives and adverbs.	× The manager should careful weigh up the costs and benefits ✓ The manager should <i>carefully</i> weigh up the costs and benefits.
Verb tense is correct and consistent.	× The flood occurs in 1994 and created many problems. ✓ The flood <u>occurred</u> in 1994 and created many problems.
Each sentence is complete (i.e., does it have a subject and a main verb?).	× The increase in the cost of renting an apartment. ✓ The increase in the cost of renting an apartment <u>is due to a lack of governmental intervention</u> . ✓ <u>The cost of renting an apartment has increased</u> .
You have used correct punctuation to start and finish sentences.	× The theory was developed in the 19 th century, it is used mainly in healthcare. ✓ The theory was developed in 19 th century, <u>and it is used mainly in healthcare</u> . ✓ The theory was developed in the 19 th century. <u>It is mainly used in healthcare</u> . ✓ The theory was developed in the 19 th century; <u>it is mainly used in healthcare</u> .

Tips for Success

- Include editing and proofreading time into your assignment planning.
- When editing, check structure, formatting, and task requirements.
- When proofreading, check your spelling, grammar, and punctuation.
- Try reading your text out loud, or reading it from end to beginning, to identify issues.
- Fix one issue at a time e.g., spelling, tense, subject/verb agreement, punctuation.
- Take breaks for editing and proofreading to help refocus.

By considering these tips and tricks, you can create an effective approach to editing and proofreading.

Further support

Contact your student learning advisors via the Support for Learning team here:

supportforlearning@unisq.edu.au

Ph: +07 4631 2372