



Editing and proofreading your work

As your studies progress it is important to become more independent with refining your own work. **Editing** involves improving the 'big picture' of your assignment: whether it addresses the task requirements fully, how the paragraphs are structured and flow and so on. **Proofreading** focuses on specific details like spelling, sentence structure, referencing etc. The following points may be printed as a checklist, with space for notes about your assignment.

Editing	Your notes
<p>Structural aspects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction: does it clearly state the topic and how it will be dealt with? • Paragraphing: does it have clear topic sentences? Do the ideas 'hang together' cohesively? • Are there links between paragraphs and sections (implicit / explicit connectors)? • Conclusion: does it sum up your main points? Is there a final observation? 	
<p>Coverage of your topic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you answered the question? • Have you explored the issues raised by the topic to sufficient depth? 	
<p>Analysis and argument</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you provided adequate analysis? • Have you demonstrated an independent, original approach? • Is your argument supported by sufficient evidence and supporting information? 	
<p>Citations, quotations, paraphrasing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there too many or too few quotations? • Are the quotations and citations all from reliable, representative sources? • Are the paraphrases in your own words? • Do the quotations fit grammatically and add meaning to your writing? 	
<p>Coherence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the thought relationships clear? • Are headings clear and concise? • Are there signposts throughout to indicate where you have come from within the argument, and where you are going next? 	
<p>Logical development and flow of writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is it in a consistent style appropriate for an academic audience? • Is the flow of ideas logical and smooth? 	

Proofreading	Your notes
<p>Formatting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check for consistency of heading levels, diagrams and tables, margins and indentation, bibliography and footnotes (if used). • Is your table of contents consistent and accurate? 	
<p>Referencing information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are all sources listed in the bibliography or list of references? • Are all reference details complete? • Are all references consistently presented in the required style? 	
<p>Sentence-level language</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check grammar, word choice, sentence fragments, spelling, punctuation (see checklist on next page) 	

Checklist	Examples and comments
Subject-verb agreement	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do subjects and their verbs agree in number, particularly when a long or complex subject precedes the main verb? 	<p><i>Incorrect</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The lecturer, as well as some of the tutors, <i>are</i> planning a test. <p><i>Correct</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The lecturer, as well as some of the tutors, <i>is</i> planning a test.
Tenses	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are your verb tenses consistent? Is there a logical reason for you to change the tense? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The present tense is used for stating main points, stating a scientific fact, reporting the position of a writer, and for making your own statements. The past tense is used to report or describe the contents, findings or conclusions of past research or events. Using past simple would suggest that a writer's research is not currently accepted.
Sentence fragments	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have you used complete sentences? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sentence fragments lack a subject, a verb or both.
Run-on sentences	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have you divided run-on sentences into two by using either a full stop or a semi colon? 	<p><i>Incorrect</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We can see changes but not learning itself, the concept is theoretical and hence not directly observable. <p><i>Correct</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We can see changes but not learning itself; the concept is theoretical and hence not directly observable.
Articles (a/an/the/zero article)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the noun countable or uncountable, specific or general? Does the noun require an article, and if so, which one? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Normally, uncountable nouns cannot be pluralised in English: e.g. information, evidence, advice, knowledge, public. A specific countable noun normally requires 'the', while a non-specific one (one of many, not a particular one) would take 'a'. <p><i>Correct</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Australia, a bill can only become a new law if it is passed by a majority vote in <i>the</i> House of Representatives and <i>the</i> Senate.
Parallel structures	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are components of your sentence grammatically equal? Are elements of your sentence, lists for example, made up of the same kinds of structures? 	<p><i>Incorrect</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The following actions were taken: <i>advertising</i> the product, <i>improve</i> quality control and <i>bring the</i> retail price down. <p><i>Correct</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The following actions were taken: <i>advertising</i> the product, <i>improving</i> quality control and <i>bringing</i> the retail price down.
Logical connectors	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have you over-used or under-used linking words? Do they provide clear links between sentences and paragraphs? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For example, <i>however</i>, <i>although</i>, <i>thus</i>, <i>as a result of</i>, <i>in comparison</i> are some common linking words.
Pronouns	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do pronouns refer clearly to an antecedent? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you leave the book on the table, you can take <i>it</i> after the class. Does the <i>it</i> refer to the table or the book?
Punctuation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have you used apostrophes correctly? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apostrophes show possession. For example: The <i>company's</i> after-tax profit fell in the second quarter of 2006. Contractions like <i>it's</i> and <i>won't</i> are rarely used in academic writing.
Spelling and capitalisation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have you spelt the same word in the same (correct) way throughout? E.g. <i>targeted</i>, <i>operationalise</i>, <i>honour</i>. Have you used capital letters consistently? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the spellcheck on your computer, but be warned: it will not find everything, and it will give you American spelling unless you set it to UK or Australian spelling.