

# Editing and proof-reading your work

## *Quick study guide*

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

## Editing

## *Your notes*

### *Structural aspects*

- 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?

### *Coverage of your topic*

- Have you answered every aspect of the question?
- Have you explored the issues raised by the topic to sufficient depth?

### *Analysis and argument*

- Have you provided adequate analysis?
- Have you demonstrated an independent, original approach?
- Is your argument supported by sufficient evidence and supporting information?

### *Citations, quotations, paraphrasing*

- Are there too many or too few quotations?
- Are the quotations and citations all from reliable, representative sources?
- Are the paraphrases all in your own words?
- Do the quotations fit grammatically and add meaning to your writing?

### *Coherence*

- 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?

### *Logical development and flow of writing*

- Is it in a consistent style appropriate for an academic audience?
- Is the flow of ideas logical and smooth?

## Proofreading

## *Your notes*

### *Formatting*

- 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?

### *Referencing information*

- 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?

### *Sentence-level language*

- Check grammar, word choice, sentence fragments, spelling, punctuation (see Editing and proof-reading: grammar checklist for more detail)

## Use of acronyms and abbreviations

### *Terminology*

- Explain any terminology which you think may not be familiar to the reader, or which they may not necessarily know you know
- Always write a long name in full the first time you use it - no matter how well known it is

### *For example*

- The World Health Organisation (WHO) is affiliated with the United Nations (UN). The UN provides funds which help the WHO perform its role effectively.
- Research into weapons of mass destruction (WMD) has increased the risks from bioterrorism. Agencies involved in the development of WMD have on occasion failed to maintain adequate levels of security.

### *Abbreviations*

- Abbreviations should generally be avoided. However, standard abbreviations can be used in scientific writing.
- The first time the term is used it should be in full with the abbreviation in brackets, subsequent use of the term should be used.

### *For example*

- Where the patient exhibits these symptoms it is appropriate for the doctor to request a electrocardiogram (ECG). An ECG may help to determine.....

In academic writing usually the full form is used, as follows

Full form	Contraction
do not	don't
cannot	can't
will not	won't
must not	mustn't
he would	he'd



MONASH University