

Writing and Tutorial Center

All Writing is Editing

After you have written a draft, make sure you give yourself time to edit your work. Read it out loud to catch minor errors and to listen for clarity. Editing over time (i.e. the next day) allows you to see or “hear” the text in a new way and to possibly catch mistakes that previously went unnoticed. Try asking yourself:

Does this paper fulfill all requirements of the assignment?

Have I used the proper format (spacing, heading, font, etc.)?

Does this paper have a meaningful thesis statement? Is it arguable, not too vague, not too specific?

Does each paragraph contain a topic sentence?

Do they connect to the thesis and introduce what you will be addressing in the paragraph itself?

Is there information that can be moved or removed that doesn't relate to the topic sentence?

Are there paragraphs that appear to be too long or too short? Are the paragraphs similar lengths?

In academic writing, length will vary based on complexity of the idea, but paragraphs tend to have 5-6 sentences.

Is there enough information for the reader to understand your point? What specific supporting details help to convey your ideas? Do you need more context?

Are the details arranged in a logical order?

Have sources been logically integrated into the text before giving your interpretation or commentary?

Is there a signal phrase to introduce the source material?

Is each source of information accurately cited using the correct style?

Are quotes over four lines properly formatted (using indentation)?

Are there an appropriate number and variety of sources (per the assignment requirements)?

Have you proofread for any problems with punctuation, grammar and/or spelling?

Are there any sentence fragments or run-on sentences?

Are there any repetitive words, phrases, or sentence constructions?

Is the writing succinct and are unnecessary words eliminated?

You may use a thesaurus for variation, accuracy and to craft your writing.

Are transitions used clearly and purposely to highlight the organization of ideas?

Does the conclusion summarize your key idea(s)?

Provide a forward-looking thought such as a related question, reflection, recommendation, etc.

This is the last impression your reader is left with, so be sure to make it meaningful and impactful.

TIPS

Although your professor will most likely be your main audience, make sure your ideas are clear enough to stand on their own with the context you have provided.