



PROOFREADING

Proofreading is the last chance you will have to correct any errors that might have slipped past the editing stage, before your work is published. What most people are referring to when they use the word *proofreading* is the process of checking a document for any kind of grammatical, typographical, punctuation or formatting errors. The proofreader will also make sure the document adheres to the chosen style guide if one is being used. It is commonly held that proofreading should always be the last step taken before a document is published, handed in to a professor, submitted for a job application, or otherwise shared with its intended audience and this is really just common sense – there is no point in doing a ‘fine toothcomb’ proofread if there will be more re-writes or changes to the text. You’d just have to organise another one. The final proofread is an important step when preparing a piece of writing to be read by other people, as errors can cause confusion or be seen as unprofessional. In the case of academic writing, it can make the difference between a pass or a fail.

What does it include?

Proofreading will include:

- Correcting grammar, spelling, and punctuation errors
- Tweaking sentences to ensure that they flow smoothly
- Removing inconsistencies, including in capitalisation and punctuation
- Highlighting unclear sentences and suggesting corrections
- Where applicable, checking that citations and references are clear and correct

When should it be done?

By the time a document is ready to be proofread, it should have been fully edited already. This means its content should already be well organised, well written and easy to understand, with a good ‘flow’. Editing also involves removing errors, but it focuses more on making sure that the document makes sense as a whole and reads well. Strictly speaking, proofreaders are not limited in the number of revisions they can make to a document, but if they find that most of the document still requires extensive changes, they may recommend that it undergoes another round of editing. In short, proofreading applies a final polish to your work.

Increasing/decreasing word counts

Please note: increasing or decreasing a document’s word count can be included in my proofreading service as an optional extra.