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## **EDITING & PROOFREADING CHECKLIST**

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**\*For specific examples on how to implement any of the revisions listed in this checklist, please read the related blog post here: [www.scribendi.com/advice/how to edit and proofread your writing](http://www.scribendi.com/advice/how_to_edit_and_proofread_your_writing).**

## ***CONDUCT A FIRST PASS***

### **1. ENSURE EFFECTIVE ORGANIZATION.**



- 
- Ensure that conventional organization and structure are followed for the type of document.**
  - Make sections and headings consistent with the specified style guide.**
  - Check that paragraphs are structured correctly.**
  - Organize list items effectively, observing grammar rules.**



## 2. CHECK THE FLOW AND TONE.



- 
- Improve awkward sentence constructions.**
  - Suggest smooth transitions between ideas.**
  - Ensure appropriate tone and word choice for the context and audience.**
  - Point out or remove obviously biased information.**
  - Implement sentence variety or remove short sentences as appropriate to the document type.**



### **3. CHECK FOR CORRECT MECHANICS.**



- 
- Run a spell check to correct typographical errors.**
  - Maintain consistent tense and voice throughout.**
  - Use appropriate vocabulary for the type of writing and audience.**
  - Remove unnecessary jargon and clarify word choice.**
  - Ensure subject–verb agreement throughout.**
  - Check that complete sentences are used throughout.**
  - Ensure that all acronyms are defined on their first use and then used consistently throughout the document.**
  - Remove acronyms if they are not used more than once; use the full terms instead.**



## 4. ENSURE CLARITY AND CONCISION.



- 
- Remove redundant content or repetitive wording.
  - Rearrange content for logical flow.
  - Improve the clarity of arguments or statements.
  - Remove wordiness and make the writing concise and clear.



## 5. MAKE SURE EVERYTHING IS PUNCTUATED CORRECTLY.



- 
- Remove punctuation that is contextually inappropriate, such as exclamation marks or ellipses.
  - Apply parenthetical commas where appropriate to improve readability.
  - Use colons as appropriate to introduce lists, but never after "include" or verbs of being.
  - Apply semicolons properly between independent clauses or lists with long phrases.
  - Use em dashes for parenthetical information and en dashes for ranges (e.g., dates, numbers, or measurements) and relationships (e.g., win–win).
  - Use italics for emphasis rather than quotation marks.
  - Ensure the consistent use of straight or curly quotation marks throughout.
  - Check for the consistent placement of punctuation inside or outside quotation marks.
  - Ensure that single or double quotation marks are used first.
  - Ensure that all hyphenated terms are hyphenated consistently.



## **6.** FOLLOW THE CONVENTIONS OF THE TYPE OF ENGLISH.



- 
- Ensure that the conventions of Oxford comma use are followed based on the type of English.**
  - Check that all spelling conforms to the conventions of the type of English.**
  - Ensure that the conventions for the use of single or double quotation marks are followed based on the type of English.**
  - Place punctuation inside or outside quotation marks based on the conventions of the type of English.**
  - Check that abbreviation conventions are followed based on the type of English.**
  - Check that number and date presentation conventions are followed based on the type of English.**



## **7. ■ REVIEW THE CITATIONS AND REFERENCES.**



- 
- Check the in-text citations for conformance with the target style guide.**
  - Ensure the consistent placement of punctuation around in-text citations.**
  - Format the reference list, including the heading, justification, line spacing, and indentation, according to the target style guide.**
  - Consecutively number or correctly alphabetize references.**
  - Revise each reference according to the target style guide.**
  - Cross-check the in-text citations against the reference list.**
  - Point out information that is not cited but should be.**



## **8.** ENSURE CONSISTENT FORMATTING.



- 
- Review line justification and spacing for consistency.**
  - Check that the page margins are appropriate.**
  - Apply a consistent font type, size, and color throughout.**
  - Ensure appropriate and consistent heading and subheading capitalization, numbering, and formatting in terms of font type, size, and color throughout.**
  - Check that spacing is consistent between sections, chapters, paragraphs, and sentences.**



## 9. CHECK THE FIGURES AND TABLES.



- 
- Check that tables are formatted consistently in terms of font type, size, and color and in the use of capitalization and justification.
  - Format table and figure referrals consistently.
  - Number all table titles consecutively and format them consistently in terms of font type, size, and color and in the use of capitalization, numbering, and punctuation.
  - Consistently place table titles and figure captions before or after tables and figures (usually before and after, respectively).
  - Ensure appropriate and consistent figure formatting and justification.
  - Format figure captions consistently in terms of font type, size, and color and in the use of capitalization, numbering, and punctuation.



# 10. CHECK THE LISTS AND EQUATIONS.



- 
- Ensure that lists are formatted consistently throughout.**
  - Appropriately and consistently format equations and their numbering and referrals throughout.**



# 11. REFER TO ANY SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS.



- 
- Follow any specific instructions from the client.
  - Use the appropriate journal guidelines or assignment details when requested.
  - Identify and comment on any legal or social concerns.
  - Check that the target word count has been met.



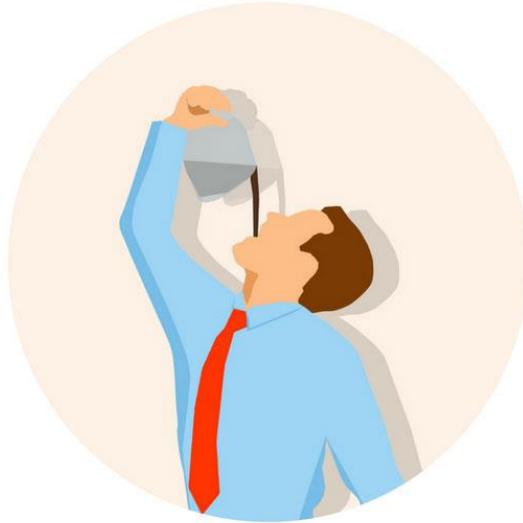
## **12. PROVIDE YOURSELF WITH SUBSTANTIVE FEEDBACK.**



- 
- Provide suggestions or word choices to strengthen arguments, research questions, and thesis statements.**
  - Identify statements or arguments that require further evidence.**
  - Point out when an author is telling, rather than showing, in their fiction.**
  - Suggest a logical flow of ideas, plot, or character development.**
  - Identify areas that require more detail or explanation for clarity or to strengthen the writing.**
  - Show where word choice, clarity, and concision can improve the strength of ideas.**
  - Point out where the client might move, remove, or add content to improve pace or tension.**
  - Identify logical fallacies and suggest improvements.**
  - Suggest ways to strengthen underdeveloped writing in fiction, academic writing, and resumes.**
  - Point out inconsistencies in character names, evidence, and plotlines.**
  - Make suggestions to improve both introductions and conclusions to strengthen academic writing.**
  - Suggest the removal of new information that is introduced in conclusions.**



# COFFEE BREAK



## ***CONDUCT A SECOND PASS***

- Review the whole document again, checking for missed and introduced errors.
- Pay particular attention to clarity and flow, making comments where necessary to query the author.

## ***CONDUCT A FINAL PROOFREAD***

- Review the whole document for the final time, checking for missed and introduced errors.



# COMPLETE

