

Guidelines for Proof-reading of Theses

Postgraduate Studies

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THE UNIVERSITY OF
WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

1. This document states that thesis masters' and doctoral candidates may use a proof-reader at any stage during their candidature, but they should discuss this with their chief supervisor and provide the proof-reader with a copy of these guidelines before the proof-reader commences work. The proof-reader may or may not be a professional proof-reader (see Notes below).
2. For the purposes of these guidelines, proof-reading is defined as the correction of errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar, sentence construction, referencing and idiomatic usage. Proof-reading may include identifying and alerting the candidate to passages that lack clarity of exposition or are poorly written or constructed.
3. While editing includes these proof-reading tasks, it goes beyond proof-reading to engage, at a deeper level, with the validity, coherence, substance and expression of the argument.
4. The role of the proof-reader is not to edit the thesis. Any proof-reading must be restricted to proof-reading only. The University of Waikato expects that editorial advice, which includes corrections to structure and style, will mainly, but not necessarily exclusively, be provided by candidates' academic supervisors.
5. The candidate bears the cost of any proof-reading services.
6. The proof-reader should be appropriately acknowledged in the thesis.
7. If material for proof-reading is supplied in electronic format, then the proof-reader must clearly annotate with 'tracking' on and make liberal use of comment boxes where suggested corrections are made.
8. Candidates must keep the original pre-proofed version of the thesis, in the event that further questions arise. Chief supervisors should also be supplied with a copy of the proof-reader's annotated version.

Candidates are ultimately responsible for the quality of writing and the presentation of the thesis and should make every effort to ensure that the written work that they submit is of the highest possible standard. This may entail additional practice and training as recommended by their supervisors.

Notes:

(i) Candidates are free to choose whomever they wish to proof-read their work.
(ii) The Tutors in Student Learning do not proof-read theses but may be consulted with regard to more general advice on writing structure. Student Learning tutors can also assist students to develop self-editing skills; this may take the form of proof-reading a selected passage of a thesis together to highlight common mistakes or introducing the student to appropriate software tools. Student Learning also offers on-going writing development for doctoral candidates through the Doctoral Writing Conversations.

Appendix: Editorial Advice for Postgraduate Supervisors

The University of Waikato expects that the academic supervisors of masters' and doctoral thesis candidates will provide discipline-appropriate editorial advice to their candidates. Library staff can also advise on useful resources. This advice is covered in Standards C, D and E of the Australian Standards for Editing Practice (ASEP) which supervisors are encouraged to become familiar with:

Substance and Structure (Standard C)

Supervisors should advise on the form, arrangement, focus and length of the thesis. This includes paragraphing, referencing, tables, figures, and headings.

Language and Illustrations (Standard D)

Supervisors should advise on the suitability of the language and illustrations used in the thesis. This includes for example, principles of clear language, avoidance of ambiguity, repetition, or verbosity, use of clear and logical connections between phrases, clauses, sentences, paragraphs, and sections, conventions of grammar and syntax in written English; conventions of appropriate spelling and punctuation, consistency of tone, and principles of presenting information in visual form (tables and figures).

Completeness and Consistency (Standard E)

Supervisors should advise on whether the elements within the thesis are complete and consistent. This includes title page, table of contents, acknowledgements, abstract, appendices, list of references, cross-references, tables, illustrations, captions, notes, page numbers, margins, headers, and footers.

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