Proof-Reading Policy Statement: guidance for students on proof-reading their texts

Approved by: Senate Learning and Teaching Committee
Reviewed June 2019

Proof-reading policy statement: guidance for students on proof-reading their texts

This policy statement is intended to assist students in the final presentation of their written work.

Proof-reading is the *last stage* in producing a piece of writing for assessment, when work should be checked for accuracy in spelling, grammar and punctuation. Wherever possible, a student should carry out their own proof-reading. Students should not ask any member of staff who teaches them to proof-read their work.

Editing is different from proof-reading and must not be carried out by a third party. Editing is the process of making sure the information is appropriate, facts are accurate, ideas are clear and the writing is well-structured. Students must always edit their own work.

Students taking a foreign language must show their own competence in writing in that language. Therefore, it is not appropriate for them to use any proof-reading service.

Where a proof-reader or proof-reading service is used they may:
- Identify spelling and typographical errors;
- Identify poor grammar;
- Highlight formatting errors or inconsistencies;
- Identify errors in labelling of diagrams, charts or figures;
- Draw attention to repeated phrases or omitted words.

Where a proof-reader or proof-reading service is used they may not:
- Rewrite passages of text to clarify the meaning;
- Change any words or figures, except to correct spelling;
- Check or rewrite calculations, formulae, equations or computer code;
- Rearrange or reformat passages of text;
- Contribute any additional material to the original;
- Re-label diagrams, charts or figures.

The proof-reader may indicate where the meaning is not clear but will not suggest alternative wording.

When submitting work that has been proof-read the student must attach a declaration from the proof-reader:

'In accordance with Regent's University London's proof-reading policy, this piece of work has been proof-read by … Signature. Date. Qualifications'

It is not University policy to recommend any proof-reader / proof-reading service. If a student chooses to seek a proof-reader they may wish to check the following:
- The total cost (some charge by the hour / some charge per page);

- The turnaround time;
- The proof-reader's qualifications / professional membership.

A student who chooses to employ a proof-reader / proof-reading service must give them a copy of this policy statement, which the proof-reader must agree to read and abide by. A student cannot appeal to the proof-reading service in any mitigation claims.

Students who feel that they need assistance in writing appropriate English for assignments should make use of the University's existing support systems. Some software programs can assist with the proof-reading process, but students should appreciate that these are not 100% accurate.

Students are advised to consult their tutors / programme handbooks about preferred methods of referencing – e.g. Harvard, American Psychological Association. Guidance on using these referencing systems is available from the Library.

Acknowledgement is made to the University of Leicester's Guidance on proof-reading. In addition, in creation of this policy statement, the following sources were consulted:
http://www.essex.ac.uk/proofreading/policy.aspx#Intro
http://www2.le.ac.uk/offices/sas2/assessments/documents/proof-reading.docx/view
http://www.reading.ac.uk/exams/Policies/exa-proofreading.aspx
http://www.library.dmu.ac.uk/Images/CLASS/Student_Proof_Reading.pdf

This policy will be monitored by the Senate Learning and Teaching Committee