

Proofreading your thesis / dissertation

If you're a student, you may be thinking of getting some editorial support to ensure your thesis or dissertation is ready for submission.

What type of student are you?

I offer proofreading for PhD and Masters students, mainly in the fields of finance and business, environment and humanities. I work only with students whose first language is not English, and who have permission from their tutor to hire a proofreader.

I do not work with undergraduates and I do not work with students whose first language is English, unless you have permission from your tutor for editorial support – for example, if you have dyslexia.

What I will do

I will ask you to complete my student form before starting work. The form includes information about your thesis, such as length, UK or US spelling, whether you have tables and figures, references, bibliography, etc. I also ask for your supervisor or tutor's contact details.

If your university has proofreading guidelines, I will ask you to supply them before I start work. Otherwise I will follow standard best practice for proofreading student work.

For the proofreading process, I will:

- fix typos, spelling and punctuation errors
- fix formatting and layout errors and inconsistencies (e.g. page numbers, font size, line spacing, headers and footers)
- fix grammatical and syntactical errors and anomalies or ambiguities in phrasing
- fix minor formatting errors in referencing (for consistency and order)
- fix errors in the labelling of diagrams, charts or figures
- flag lexical repetition or omissions
- flag ambiguity
- flag any other issues for your attention
- apply the requested academic style, e.g. Harvard, APA etc.

What I will NOT do

- add any content on your request
- check or correct facts, data calculations, formulae or equations
- rewrite content where the meaning is ambiguous
- alter your argument or logic where faulty

- rearrange or reorder paragraphs to enhance structure or argument
- implement or significantly alter a referencing system
- relabel diagrams, charts or figures
- reduce content so as to comply with a specified word limit

I always use Tracked Changes in Word so you can see exactly what I have done. I supply one tracked copy of your thesis on completion, with any margin comments visible.

How much will it cost?

The price depends on two things – the length of your thesis or dissertation, and how much work I need to do to correct your English. Any experienced editor or proofreader, including myself, won't give you a quote sight unseen, because it's impossible to give a price and timescale without seeing a sample of the text. The quality of English I see from students can vary considerably so some theses need more work than others.

Expect to be asked the following questions:

- What level of proofreading do you need?
- How long is your text?
- Can I see a sample of your work?
- What is your time frame?

The Chartered Institute of Editing and Proofreading has [suggested minimum rates](#), but these are only suggestions, and you may find that an experienced professional will charge more. On average, you can expect to pay around £20-25 per hour for proofreading. For more detailed information, ask for my factsheet on pricing, "What will it cost?"

Send a sample

I ask for a sample text in the first instance – ideally around 10 pages from the middle of your thesis. This will help me assess what I think you need.

Your time frame

I will need to know the following:

- When you will supply your thesis;
- Whether I will deliver your thesis to you whole, or in instalments;
- What your deadline is.

Please be aware that you should book my services in good time – you should allow a delivery deadline of at least one week before you submit your work to your supervisor so that you have time to review my proofreading and have copies printed and bound for your tutors.



LOUISE BOLOTIN
FREELANCE EDITOR

It is not possible for me to accept a thesis at short notice – it will take more than a couple of days to polish a thesis of 80,000 words. Most proofreaders, including me, do not work on weekends (and those who do are likely to charge double) so don't expect to ask on a Thursday if you can send your thesis on Friday and have it returned on Monday.

When do I pay my editor?

For a one-off job such as proofreading your thesis, be prepared to pay your editor in advance. This may be a deposit or the full amount. If you are a returning client, such as a post-doctoral researcher now submitting journal articles, your editor will probably be more flexible about payment terms.

- For doctoral and masters students paying privately, I ask for 50% upfront before starting work and 50% on completion, to be paid within 7 days.
- If your university is paying, please inform me as quickly as possible so your tutor can set up me as a supplier and get me in the university's payment system.