Proof reading, editing and letting go

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Overview

Aim of the session is to explore:

• Proof reading and editing strategies
• How to utilize feedback
• Coming to terms with and ‘letting go’ of your writing
Proof reading strategies

1. Plan in sufficient time for proofing
2. Consider what you want your supervisor to do when you give them your work (focus on the research quality or correct grammar?)
3. Utilise software available e.g. Microsoft Word – spell checker, Grammarly [www.grammarly.com](http://www.grammarly.com)
4. Ask for others input, colleagues, supervisor, etc.
5. Plan in sufficient time for others to give you feedback
6. Write more – write for an newsletter, editorial, papers, conferences etc.
7. Read more – makes spotting mistakes easier
8. Have a plan to proof and work through in order, plan any changes you wish to make and approach this systematically
Proof reading strategies

9. Take time away from your writing – re-visit afresh to make spotting errors easier

10. Work in sections – start with the section you feel requires most attention

11. Proof back to front – start at the end and work backwards. This is a good approach to check understanding and writing flow

12. Use highlighters – highlight areas that need to be re-written as you go through the document

13. Don’t use a proof reader – this doesn’t improve your writing and they are not responsible for your writing

14. Allow 10% of time for proofing, e.g. 6 minutes for proofing out of every hour writing

15. Allow double time for corrections – if you spend 30 minutes writing, you will need to allow an hour for corrections
Utilising feedback

1. Plan in sufficient time for getting feedback
2. Extrapolate your feedback comments: ensure you apply the principle throughout the document not just once
3. Don’t assume a correction is corrected throughout the document – it usually is only identified once
4. Don’t assume all errors have been picked up – check yourself
5. Note down all comments in a list and check off as you correct these
6. Create your own list of common mistakes – for future writing and self proofing
7. Split the proofing feedback into smaller tasks, e.g. editing, finding further information etc.
8. Work through feedback systematically
Utilising feedback

9. Read all feedback first – before your begin to make changes
10. Consider if you agree with the feedback or not?
11. Look for recurring themes
12. If you don't understand the feedback ask for clarification
13. Consider who to get feedback from? Non-specialist can help with clarity of meaning and the style of writing. A subject specialist will be better placed to give feedback on the accuracy and detail of the work.
14. Publish – it’s a great way to receive constructive feedback on your work
15. Plan in time to proof and correct others work – it helps develop your own writing.
Activity

• Use the SPARC booklets and select an abstract to use (it can’t be your own). In groups:

• Use the abstracts and proof, correct and provide feedback. Consider:
  • The writing/not the subject specifically
  • One thing that works well
  • One area to improve
  • Two Observations about the writing style
Letting go

In your groups discuss:

1. When is something ready to be submitted for feedback?

2. When is it ready to submit? (Final Version)

3. When is it, too early to submit?

4. What are the barriers to letting go?
Letting go - resources

Overcoming Perfectionism:
https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/perfectionism.htm

Halting procrastination:
https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newHTE_96.htm

Effective scheduling:
https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newHTE_07.htm
Next steps....

If you have any questions....
• Make a note of these to discuss with your supervisor
• Consider the discussions from today and approaches others are taking in similar/different situations

Next steps
• Set deadlines and actions to progress this further