

Student Writing Center Resource: Revision Checklist

Once you have a working draft of an assignment, revision can begin. This is often the most important part of the work, because it allows you to step back from the process of getting words onto the page and become a critical reader. As a reader, you want to be sure your writing flows well and is clearly organized; and of course, you need to be sure you have completed the assignment as it was outlined.

Here are some steps that may help with revision. Note that not all assignments are structured in the same way, so focus on the tips that apply to your work.

Writing to Task

- Read to ensure that all aspects of the paper (content, format, types of evidence, etc.) follow the professor's instructions and fulfill the aims of the assignment.
- Review the rubric alongside your draft, paying attention to how points are weighted for different elements of the assignment and ensuring that you have addressed each element.

Structure

- The paper has a stated purpose.
- Every main idea is introduced by a topic sentence.
- The structure of the paper is appropriate to the assignment and helps to achieve the purpose.

Organization and Development

- Main points are presented in a logical order.
- Effective transitions are used to: 1) show the relationships between ideas within each paragraph; 2) move from one concept to the next between paragraphs.
- Every main idea is explained as fully as is necessary for a reader to follow and clearly understand.
- Evidence is introduced clearly and interpreted for the reader.
- See the "Reverse Outlining" handout for more strategies to improve organization.

Language Use

- Style and tone are appropriate for the assignment.
- Word choice is specific and precise.

Documentation

- Quotes are accurate, embedded smoothly, and cited correctly.
- Paraphrases are completely in your own words and are cited correctly.
- End documentation (references list) is accurate and complete, following relevant style guidelines (such as, APA). Our website includes several links to additional resources for APA style.

Style

- Cut out unnecessary words, phrases, or details.
- Eliminate repetition wherever possible.

Proofreading

- Grammar and punctuation are correct.
- Spelling is correct.
- Note that Jefferson students have free access to the premium version of Grammarly: <http://library.jefferson.edu/librarynews/?p=9545>. See the “Grammarly” handout for additional information about how to use this writing software.

****Read your draft aloud****

- An especially helpful strategy is to read your paper aloud at full volume, as if you were reading to an audience. When you stumble over a sentence, mark the spot. Something is probably wrong and you will want to return to it later.
- Make sure the words you read aloud are actually on the page. When reading aloud, people often unconsciously fill in missing words.
- Some writers like to read aloud into a recorder and then re-read their draft while
- playing back the recording. Consider trying this to see if it works for you, as it can be a powerful editing technique.