Editing, Proofreading and Presenting your Essay

Well-structured, clear, easy to read work is the key to a well-presented essay.

Carefully edit and proofread your work to ensure that you have:

- organised your essay to present a well-structured argument that is supported by evidence from appropriate sources,
- used the APA Referencing system (or another referencing style as specified by your lecturer), to provide in-text references for quotations, paraphrases or summaries of the ideas of others, with an accompanying reference list at the end of the assignment,
- presented your essay in an acceptable format,
- used correct spelling, punctuation, and grammar throughout,

The following checklist will help you ensure you have covered everything.

Essay organisation

- The essay has an introduction, a body, and a conclusion.
- The essay paragraphs follow the outline in the introduction.
- Information / arguments are presented in a logical order.

Introduction

- The introduction provides background information that sets the context for the essay topic.
- Specific terms in the question are defined in the introduction.
- There is an outline of the information / arguments presented in the body paragraphs, in the same order as they are presented.
- There is a clearly identifiable thesis or purpose statement.

Body

- Each paragraph discusses one main point.
- Paragraphs are presented in a logical order.
Paragraphs

- Each paragraph has a topic sentence (e.g., ‘The introduction of email communications is one of the most significant changes to occur in the way businesses communicate.’).
- The topic sentence and why the paragraph topic is relevant are explained (e.g., sentences explaining why email is one of the most significant changes to occur in business communications).
- Paragraph contains supporting sentences from reliable sources (e.g., paraphrased / summarised or quoted information and examples from research conducted by internet technology experts about the introduction of email and its significance in relation to changes in business communications). This information can be found in journal articles, internet sources and textbooks.
- Every sentence is directly related to the topic sentence and strengthens the argument being presented.
- Paraphrased / summarised information from research sources (e.g., journal articles, internet sources, textbooks) is correctly referenced in text.
- Directly quoted information is correctly referenced in text (page number is included).
- Sources are current (i.e., the latest research available on the topic, usually no more than five years since publication and often less).
- Linking sentences / transition signals are used to link ideas / paragraphs.

Conclusion

- Synthesis (draws together in a single idea) the information in the body of the essay.
- Doesn’t introduce new information.
- Summaries how the arguments and evidence support the thesis statement and to what degree.
- Contains a final statement of the overall conclusion that you have drawn based on the evidence you presented in the body of the essay.

Reference list and bibliography

- Reference list contains only the sources that are cited in the essay.
- Bibliography contains all sources which contributed to your understanding of the essay topic, regardless of whether or not you referred to them in the essay. (Only include a bibliography if specified in the assessment instructions.)
• The reference list, bibliography and the individual references they contain are formatted to the American Psychological Association (APA) Referencing system (or another referencing style as specified by your lecturer).

Format

In the absence of specific instructions, the following formatting points are a general guide for presenting academic assignments.

There is a separate title page with your name, student number, subject code, lecturer’s name, and assignment details, including the assignment title.

• There is a header or footer with your name and student number on each page.
• Assignment is typed.
• There are adequate margins on both sides (2.5 cm on the left and right margins, or a 5 cm left margin).
• There is 1.5 cm line spacing within the paragraph.
• There is clear spacing between paragraphs.
• Font is 12 point Times New Roman.
• Pages are numbered.

Mechanics

• There is a full-stop or question mark at the end of every sentence.
• Capital letters are used correctly.
• Apostrophes are used correctly.
• Colons and semicolons are used correctly.
• Quotation marks are used to indicate all direct quotes.
• Spelling is correct (when using spell checker remember some words that sound the same are spelt differently [e.g., there, their and they’re], and therefore they may not be identified by the spell check).
• Print enhancements, such as bold, italics, and underlined words, are used sparingly and are appropriately applied.
Grammar and sentence structure

- Every sentence has a subject (the ‘doer’ of the verb) and a verb, and often a controlling idea (or object of the verb) - (e.g. Internet technology (subject) has changed (verb) the way businesses communicate (controlling idea).

- There are no sentence fragments. A sentence fragment is a sentence that is missing either a subject or a verb – it doesn’t contain the information necessary to make sense on its own (e.g., ‘Changed the way businesses communicate.’).

- There are no run on sentences (i.e., two or more ideas expressed without punctuation or connecting words). For example: Internet technology has changed the way businesses communicate it continues to change at an ever increasing pace.

- This sentence can be corrected as follows: Internet technology has changed the way businesses communicate and (conjunction) it is continuing to change at an ever increasing pace.

- English grammar has been checked throughout.

And finally

Have you saved a copy of your assignment?