

## **EDITING YOUR THESIS**

### **Some useful pointers**

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#### **What is involved?**

Editing is all about making it easy for the reader to read your work.

The editing process involves looking at the work in three distinct ways:

- editing for **structure** – helps the reader follow the logic of your argument
- editing for **language and style** – good use of grammar and consistency in writing style help the reader concentrate on the content
- **proof reading** – gets rid of the spelling errors, inconsistent formatting and other annoying distractions to allow the reader to remain focussed on your writing.

#### **Where to start?**

From the beginning – You need to start planning the **structure** and **style** of your thesis before you start writing it. You will need to find out the conventions required for your discipline, whether there is a particular style manual you will be required to follow, what referencing system needs to be used, etc. Deciding on and finding out about these from the beginning will save you a lot of time later on in the project.

English **language**: If you have concerns about your skills in formal written English, you need to seek advice and assistance as early as possible in the writing process. Ask your Supervisor how to find out about what workshops/tutorials/workgroups may be available.

At the end – if you have followed the planned structure and style, then editing these facets of your work should be a relatively straightforward check for consistency.

The **proofreading** side of the editing is the part that comes at the end of writing the thesis. While you will be checking your work as you go, the proof reading is where you stop writing and concentrate on accuracy and consistency - dotting the 'i's and crossing the 't's - after you have written the text.

## **Who can help?**

- Other people can help you with editing your thesis, providing the level of editing is limited to proof reading and general advice on structure, as set out in the CDU Guidelines on Editing of Theses.
- Your Supervisor will be able to provide advice on structure, style and conventions. They will also be able to advise on assistance available for improving skills in written English.
- Attend any available workshops/tutorials on Thesis Writing and Thesis Editing.
- You can find further resources through the Library catalog and by browsing the internet (see Further Resources section below).
- Other graduate students or work colleagues may be appropriate people to read all or part of your thesis and provide editorial advice, providing the level of editing is limited to proof reading and general advice on structure, as set out in the Guidelines.
- A professional editor may be used, providing the level of editing is limited to proof reading and general advice on structure, as set out in the Guidelines.
- Any editorial assistance provided should be on hard copy, rather than electronically.
- Any editorial assistance should be properly acknowledged in the Acknowledgements section of the thesis.

## **General pointers on structure**

### *Introduction*

- does the introduction define the topic, state the purpose of the work and present an outline of the argument?

### *Chapters*

- are the chapters ordered logically
- are the chapters divided into appropriate sections
- does each chapter have appropriate introductory and concluding sections
- is the material in the chapter ordered logically
- does the argument flow smoothly between paragraphs
- does each paragraph clearly state its topic
- does each sentence make sense
- are the details, examples and explanations adequately developed.

### *Conclusion*

- are the introduction and conclusion linked?
- Does the conclusion sum up the argument presented in the thesis.