EDITING

You begin editing as soon as you finish your first draft. Re-read to see if your response is well-organised, transitioning between paragraphs is smooth & whether your evidence really does support your overall thesis/argument. After editing, you are ready move on to proofreading.

Description	What to do ......
1. For content	• Have I done everything that was required? (check your criteria) • Is all my information relevant to the topic/question or my writing goal? • Am I making accurate and consistent claims? • Have I made an argument, and is it complete? • Have I supported each point with relevant evidence?
2. For overall structure	• Is my writing structured according to the requirements of the genre? • Have I introduced the topic in a general way? • Have I clearly stated the thesis in the introduction? • Have I developed my argument throughout the body? • Have I made it clear how each paragraph's message supports my thesis? • Are my paragraphs arranged logically and developmentally? • Have I summarised the key points in my conclusion? • In my conclusion, have I supported/emphasised my thesis/argument?
3. For structure within the paragraph	• Does each paragraph have a clearly identified theme? • Does each sentence support the theme? • Does each sentence state its case clearly and completely or should more evidence be used? • Are all examples and quotes relevant to and supportive of my thesis/argument? • Am I using cohesive ties (linking words) to lead the reader through the argument?
4. For clarity	• Have I clearly defined terminology, concepts or ideas that any reader might need to completely understand the message? • Is the meaning/intent of each sentence clear? • Have I chosen the most appropriate word to express my idea? • Have I used discipline – specific vocabulary when needed, and correctly? • Are pronouns (he, she, it, they, which, who, this, etc.) used correctly, and is it clear what the pronoun refers to?
5. For style	• Have I used clear, concise language to convey my ideas? • Have I used a formal, neutral tone to express my message? • Have I used an active voice? • Have I used acronyms and gender-neutral language appropriately? • Have I eliminated emotive language and judgmental words from my text?
6. For citations	• Have I correctly cited and formatted quotes, paraphrases and the ideas of others?

Useful tips for both editing and proofreading

- **Make time to revise** – never submit work that has not been edited and proofread. You should aim to spend the last few days before submission editing and proofreading your work, so build this time into your assignment planning (ie. if a 2,500 word assignment is due week 6 and you were going to begin in week 3, then you will now begin in week 2)

- **Create distance between you and the text** – when you have 'finished' your final draft, try to put your work aside for a while so that when you begin to edit or proofread, you are reading it with 'fresh' eyes (if you can't afford to wait a day or two, a couple of hours may be enough)

- **Edit and proofread multiple times in manageable chunks of time** – It's always best to edit when you're alert, and you need to set aside time (1/2 hr or 1hr at a time) at different times over the last few days before submission. Don't edit and proofread for all types of mistakes at once. During each read-through, edit or proofread for different aspects, like meaning, clarity, errors in punctuation and grammar, consistent spelling, formatting styles, paragraph lengths and other issues

- **Read your text a different way** – try reading your document backwards, in segments, so aspects other than meaning – like typos and spacing – stand out for you more; read aloud or create a reverse outline to check for logical development of the text

- **Read each sentence separately and carefully -** read line by line to ensure it makes sense

- **If you don't have much time to revise, prioritise! –** at the very least edit for whole text level organisation and ensure your sentences make sense

- **Note your most common errors so you can pick them up quickly the next time**

Useful links:

James Cook University Learning Centre

James Cook University LibGuides

Other links:

Monash University

Purdue OWL

Flinders University

References

The Writing Center. (2014). Editing and proofreading. Retrieved from
http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/editing-and-proofreading/

The Writing Center. (2014). Reverse outline. Retrieved from
http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/reverse-outline/