



Proofreader

Enhancing Quality, Maximising Clarity

What does a proofreader do? Three research students' perspectives

By a PhD student, Leeds Beckett University

After spending almost a month repeatedly reviewing my final thesis draft, having my supervisors review my draft, and a close friend and a family member go through individual chapters of my thesis, I was certain I had eliminated all possible mistakes and inconsistencies within my document and that my thesis was finally ready to be submitted! It was then that my Director of Studies suggested that I get a proofreader to look at my thesis for a final polish and a professional finish.

I approached Dawn to proofread my thesis after being made aware of her decade long association with Leeds Beckett University and also after going through her impressive online portfolio. It was when my first chapter was sent back to me with highlighting, comments and suggestions that I realised how vital a role proofreading plays prior to submission.

To me, Dawn is a specialist, a language expert who checked every single sentence I had written for spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors and looked to ensure that there were no inconsistencies by way of my word choice and that the sentences I constructed flowed well, were logical and had the intended meaning. She would not rewrite any of my text but rather would give me food for thought and advice on the structuring of certain parts of the text to ensure that it remained logical and coherent. Dawn assisted me with configuring my contents page, appendices and formatting my draft. Her attention to detail in relation to my Bibliography was unmatched and ensured that each reference was consistent with the standard referencing practice followed by the university. All this after I was undeniably certain that my references were flawless when I adopted Endnote as my referencing management tool and then meticulously worked on each individual reference!

Dawn is very thorough, methodical and punctual and I received each worked upon chapter right on time (most often sooner) as was outlined in our initial contract. After writing almost 90,000 words, it is easy for one to overlook obvious errors and make common mistakes such as the repetition of meaning within sections or paragraphs, but through Dawn's razor-sharp eyes, these were identified, highlighted and brought to my attention prior to submission.

I cannot stress enough how critical it is to have one's thesis proofread. In hindsight, I think being so close to my work day in and day out, in some way made me miss things that I had written. As they say having a fresh set of eyes read through your work is important, I would say a proofreader's pair of eyes is imperative.

By a research student, Leeds University

Why employ a proofreader?

1. Because the journal requires my article to be proofread by a native English speaker before submission. As a student whose mother tongue is not English, I feel safer if I have my work checked, especially if it is an important piece of writing.
2. A proofreader checks the language of your writing such as spelling, punctuation, grammar and coherence. They raise questions and make suggestions about points which are not clear from a reader's perspective. If required, they also check formatting, layout and referencing style.
3. My experience of getting my article proofread matched my expectations. I had already attended a workshop at the Language Centre, so I understood a proofreader only checks the language, not the content, and the University only allows such practice.

19 Plantation Avenue, Leeds LS17 8TB

Mobile: 07979 872210 Email: dawn@dawnleggott.co.uk www.dawnleggott.co.uk



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What does a proofreader do? Email 'interview' with a former PhD student

By Dr Winnie Bedigen, former PhD student in International Relations at Leeds Beckett University

Why employ a proofreader?

- English grammar
- Second opinion on written work
- If recommended by supervisor
- If one is looking to publish, professionally proofread work is always advised.

What does a proofreader do?

- Reads the work, spots "all" writing issues in the text
- Second pair of eyes
- Referencing issues
- Gives insights, encourages the writer
- Often helps the writer discover their limitations and makes suggestions.

What difference does a proofreader make to your final thesis?

- Enhancement, quality, professionalism.



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07979 872210
dawn@dawnleggott.co.uk

www.dawnleggott.co.uk/proofreading
 www.linkedin.com/in/dawnleggott



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