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# Final Revisions Checklist

You’ve worked hard writing your paper. But when is it really ready to be turned in? This handout, while not exhaustive, will help you polish your paper by showing you how to double-check main components and make final revisions. It’s easier to spot problems on a hard copy, so try printing your paper and checking off the following items. Remember: ultimately, *you* have to decide when you’re satisfied with your revisions and final product.

## First Checks

* Have you followed the **assignment instructions/prompt** for your paper as a whole? Does your paper fulfill all of the assignment’s individual components?
* Have you appropriately addressed your **audience**? In other words, does your paper convey an awareness of who your audience is?
  + Consider **tone** and **style**:
    - Should you use jargon or no jargon?
    - Should you use passive or active voice?
    - Should your tone be conversational or formal?
  + Consider **clarity**:
    - Does your language/**word choice** effectively express your ideas?
* Have you clearly **organized** your paper?
  + Get a friend to read the paper aloud to you, which can help distance you from it so you can evaluate its organization.
  + Use our handout on **Revising Organization** to help you see if your paper has structural problems.
* Have you used and cited your research **sources** appropriately?
  + Are your sources appropriate?
  + Have you followed one of the major style guides (MLA, APA, Chicago, or IEEE)? Is it the one your professor specified?
    - Have you used quotations, if those are required by the assignment?
    - Have you paraphrased sources?
    - Have you formatted in-text citations for both quotations and paraphrases correctly?
    - Is your Works Cited/References page formatted correctly?
* Is your **formatting** in keeping with the instructions for the assignment and the citation style you are using? Review your prompt and style guide for formatting requirements, such as those related to
  + Name
  + Date
  + Title
  + Template
  + Length
  + Font
  + Spacing
  + Alignment
  + Pagination

## Additional Concerns

* **Spelling**. Check for spelling mistakes that the spell check may have missed.
* **Typos.** For example, perhaps you meant to type the word *work* but instead typed *word.* Spell check won’t catch this error, but it will be glaringly obvious to your instructor.
* **Awkward grammar**. Don’t rely on the computer’s grammar check or on Grammarly! When in doubt, keep your sentences as simple as possible. A more complex sentence isn’t always a better sentence. Also make sure that you are using consistent verb tense throughout your paper.
* **Punctuation**. Ensure that you are properly using capitalization, articles, prepositions, commas, ending punctuation, possessives, and parentheses.
* **Redundant sentence structures**. Do you use the same sentence structure repeatedly? Varying the syntax and length makes reading more interesting for your audience.

## Helpful Strategies

* Have someone else read your paper. Listen to his or her comments and make changes if necessary.
* Visit the University Writing Center for more help. A consultant will be glad to talk with you regarding revision.

Some information in this handout is taken from the “RHE 306 Writing Checklist” handout created by Lisa Leit, July 2008.