

GUIDELINES FOR THE PROOFREADING OF POSTGRADUATE THESES AND DISSERTATIONS AT AUT

1. PURPOSE AND DEFINITION

AUT acknowledges the right of postgraduate students to contract a proofreader to read and correct a thesis or dissertation before it is examined.

The purpose of this document is to provide guidelines for students, supervisors, faculties/schools and proofreaders as to what constitutes appropriate proofreading of a thesis or dissertation.

1.1 Definition

The following definition is adopted:

Proofreading is the correction of errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar and sentence construction, referencing, and idiomatic usage. Proofreading may include identifying and alerting the author to passages that lack clarity, ie, are poorly written or poorly constructed. Proofreading may also extend to feedback on structural issues.

Proofreading does not include structural editing or revising/rewriting of passages that lack clarity. Revising and rewriting is the responsibility of the student alone.

Proofreading does not include making any contribution to the intellectual content of the document.

2. GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS

The student must seek their supervisor's agreement to sending the work to a proofreader. The intention here is to ensure that the supervisor is satisfied that the content of a thesis or dissertation is in an approximately final state, and that it is appropriate for proofreading to take place. Failure to consult with their primary supervisor may result in the supervisor not signing off the PGR12 - Lodgement for Examination form.

Students should check with Faculty administrators for the list of proofreaders that they maintain. AUT recommends that, before the work is begun, students clarify with the proofreader the charge rates and period of time for completion of the work.

Funding: the research budget may include proofreading at the discretion of the faculty. This would need to be detailed in the PGR9 budget.

The student must supply the proofreader with a copy of these guidelines. A proofreader correcting a thesis or dissertation before it is examined must work within the terms of the definition of “proofreading” stated in section 1.1. It is important that the intellectual content of the thesis or dissertation remains entirely the work of the student alone.

The student may submit a hard or electronic copy to the proofreader. It is recommended that students review the proofread copy of their work carefully, page by page, and consider each suggested correction. For electronic submissions, typographical changes can be made using tracked changes but larger recommended changes should be made via comments. It is best to avoid the wholesale acceptance of suggested corrections on electronic documents without due consideration, so that the student maintains control of and responsibility for the final version of the document submitted for examination. If the student accepts the suggested corrections without careful consideration, the student may be accepting intellectual contribution of the proofreader, or amending the structure of the theses, which may invalidate the attestation of authorship statement of originality of authorship of the thesis or dissertation.

In case of any doubts arising about the academic integrity of the work, it is recommended that students keep a copy of the document with proofreader’s corrections.

The student must include, in the acknowledgements section of the thesis submitted for examination, a statement which indicates the name of the proofreader and the nature of the services rendered by that person. Any academic or professional experience relevant to the research topic that is possessed by the proofreader should also be indicated. The student should ask the proofreader to provide information about any such relevant experience.

3. GUIDELINES FOR SUPERVISORS

Supervisors provide their students with advice on the content, structure and style of a thesis or dissertation. It is not the responsibility of the supervisor to proofread and correct an entire thesis or dissertation. Any supervisor who has concerns about a student's writing skills should advise the student to contact Learning Advisors at the earliest opportunity.

The supervisor should be satisfied that the content of a thesis or dissertation is in an approximately final state before proofreading takes place. The student must therefore seek their supervisor's agreement before taking a draft to a proofreader.

A supervisor should not request a third person to proofread a thesis for their student.

4. GUIDELINES FOR PROOFREADERS

The thesis or dissertation is a record of an original research project that will be examined to ensure that the student has demonstrated their ability to carry out a sustained investigation. It must therefore be wholly the work of the student. Therefore, AUT asks proofreaders to adhere to the definition of proofreading provided in section 1.1 of this document.

The student can submit a hard or electronic copy. Typographical changes can be made using the tracked changes function, but larger changes should be communicated using the comments function.

4.1 Conflicts of interest

In order to avoid any potential conflict of interest when the proofreader is an AUT staff member, the following must be applied:

- 1) If an AUT employee is engaged to carry out proofreading services for a student, the AUT employee must do this work outside of their normal AUT work hours and must not use AUT resources. The proofreading work should not impact on their substantive AUT position.
- 2) Proofreading of student work should ideally be done outside of the AUT employee's

discipline and/or teaching area eg: A lecturer in Tourism should not be providing proofreading services for a student in Tourism.

3) Remuneration – payment for provision of proofreading services is a private transaction between the proofreader and the student. The proofreader is responsible for all tax matters related to the work being completed.

5. DISCLAIMER

The following disclaimer applies: A contract for services between a student and a proofreader is a private matter between the student and the proofreader. The charges for such services are also a private matter, but AUT recommends that, before the work is begun, students clarify with the proofreader the charge rates and period of time for completion of the work. AUT can accept no responsibility for the quality of a proofreader's work or for a student's failure to pay for a proofreader's work.