

# Checklist for text revision and editing

Once you've finished the first draft of your text, it's time for revision. This process can be exhausting if you don't approach it with a proper structure in mind. Hence, we've prepared a checklist for you to use as a guideline when revising your text.

## Step one: Large-scale text revision

### 1. Crucial statements

- Does your introduction clearly state the aim of the experiment (the research question)?
- Is the research question adequately addressed in the discussion?

### 2. Information/Data

Are your information and data...

- ... complete?
- ... correct?
- ... relevant to the research question and/or the topic?
- ... attributed to the appropriate source?
- ... precise and as detailed as necessary?
- ... presented clearly and unambiguously, with a competent reader in mind?
- ... presented graphically (with accompanying text) where needed/possible?

### 3. Text structure

- Does the text follow the appropriate structure (IMRaD<sup>1</sup>)?
- Are the statements arranged in a reader-friendly way, i.e. by ascending complexity/level of detail?
- Do the headers and titles facilitate reading comprehension?

### 4. Graphic elements

- Are the graphs, tables and figures named appropriately?
- Are the relevant statistical data (errors, uncertainties) represented clearly?
- Are the variables, units and axes named appropriately?
- Are the numerical data presented precisely and uniformly?

### 5. Formatting

- Does the text fulfil the given formatting guidelines?
- Does the text look appealing and legible?
- Do the graphic elements fit in neatly and are they legible?
- Is the document saved in the appropriate format and titled appropriately?

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<sup>1</sup> IMRaD stands for *Introduction, Materials and Methods, Results and Discussion*, and poses the most prominent text scheme in the modern natural sciences.

## Step two: Section-by-section editing

1. **In every large section (e.g. introduction, discussion etc.)...**
  - Are the paragraphs arranged in a logical way?
  - Is there an analytical/logical step missing?
  - Could the text benefit from a different paragraph structure (joining paragraphs together, dividing an existing paragraph)?
  - Are any paragraphs redundant, unnecessary or out of place?
  - Is the *Works Cited* section appropriately structured?
  - If necessary, is an appendix and/or an abstract included?
  
2. **In every paragraph...**
  - Are the sentences arranged in a logical way?
  - Are the sentences appropriately linked?
  - Are any sentences redundant or unnecessary?
  
3. **Sentence structure**
  - Are the sentences phrased clearly and unambiguously?
  - Are the sentences easy to understand and reader-friendly?
  
4. **Diction**
  - Have you used the most precise words and expressions?
  - Can any words or modifiers be skipped without altering the quality of the statement?
  - Is the language formal and appropriate for the topic?
  - Are special terms defined precisely and sufficiently?

### Literature:

Frank, Andrea/Haake, Stefanie/Lahm, Swantje: *Schlüsselkompetenzen: Schreiben in Studium und Beruf*. Stuttgart 2007, S. 66 f.

Hoffmann, Nora: *Überarbeiten – mehr als Korrigieren*. In: Herfurth, Sarah; Kaufholz-Soldat, Eva (Hrsg.): *Schreiben in den MINT-Fächern*. (i. Dr.).

Märtin, Doris: *Erfolgreich texten! München* 2003, S. 99-101.

Concept: *Schreiblabor der Universität Bielefeld*. Adapted and extended by the Writing Center of Goethe University Frankfurt and the Writing Center am Riedberg.

