



University of  
St Andrews

## Language correction

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<b>Purpose</b>	This policy provides guidance for students and staff on language correction and proof-reading services.

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01	Amendments to policy providing guidance for students and staff on language correction and proof-reading services, and clarify boundaries between legitimate support and unacceptable intervention when receiving assistance.	Updated	-	June 2020

**UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREWS**  
**POLICY ON LANGUAGE CORRECTION**

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1. This document aims to provide guidance for staff and students on the University's policy on language correction and proof-reading services.
- 1.2. The policy rests upon the principle that any assessment submitted by a student represents their own effort, ability and understanding of the assignment.
- 1.3. This policy will clarify the boundaries between legitimate support and unacceptable intervention when receiving assistance from an individual or proof-reading service.

**2. Policy**

- 2.1. The level of support provided by an individual (not including a Postgraduate Supervisor for the purposes of instruction), or proof-reading service (including that provided using software) is limited to improving the accurate use of the written language and identifying language errors within the text.
- 2.2. Students may obtain assistance from an individual or service, whether paid for or not, under the following conditions:
  - a) Where it is not forbidden to do so by their School as stipulated in the School Handbook or assessment description; and
  - b) Where it is explicitly acknowledged in the submitted work.
- 2.3. For a particular assessment, it may not be appropriate for a student to access a language correction or proofreading service. For example, the learning outcomes for a module may include the student's ability and understanding of a written language.

**3. Guidance for Students**

- 3.1. Proof-readers can provide support and guidance to students in the following ways:
  - (a) suggesting adjustments in grammar, style, vocabulary, spelling and punctuation
  - (b) identifying passages within a text where the meaning is overly complex or unclear
- 3.2. Students are responsible for ensuring that an individual or proofreading service does not make the following amendments to an assignment:
  - (a) adjustments to the content, structure or meaning of the text
  - (b) changes to citations or references
  - (c) amendments to calculations, formulae or code
  - (d) additional sources, figures, diagrams or materials
- 3.3. Students should follow the guidance in conjunction with the [University's Good Academic](#)

#### 4. Acknowledgement

- 4.1. Any language correction assistance (including friends and family, professional bodies, electronic proofreading, language correction and translation services), must be explicitly acknowledged in the following signed declaration at the front of the submitted work:

'I, [INSERT MATRICULATION NUMBER], received particular assistance in the writing of this work in respect of matters of grammar, style, vocabulary, spelling or punctuation.

The assistance was provided by (delete as appropriate):

- A member of the Academic Staff
- A member of professional or support staff
- A fellow Student
- Other Source (please specify)

#### 5. Exceptions

- 5.1. Students who are registered with Student Services as having a disability or learning difficulty for which proof-reading or language correction is recommended are not required to acknowledge this assistance but may wish to do so.
- 5.2. In a group project or assessment, it is appropriate for students to proofread the contributions of other individuals for grammatical errors or consistency in format and style.
- 5.3. Where sharing of academic work for language correction contravenes Section 2.2 of the Good Academic Practice Policy.

#### 6. Infringements

- 6.1. If a student uses an individual or service to proofread their work, they remain responsible for the content of the work which is submitted for assessment.
- 6.2. Suspected use of non-permissible types of adjustment will be considered in accordance with the [University's Good Academic Practice Policy](#).

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