

Before Submitting Your Final Draft . . .

- Revisit your thesis statement. Is it easily identifiable? Is your position clearly conveyed? Is your thesis the true focus of your essay? Does your thesis answer the prompt?
- Pretend you completely disagree with your argument and reread your essay, looking for sections in which you may need to further develop the counterargument.
- Read each paragraph separately to be sure it clearly connects to your thesis. *If a paragraph doesn't establish a clear connection to the thesis, either it is underdeveloped or it is tangential and should be deleted.*
- Reread your conclusion and make sure it does more than simply summarize your argument. *A strong conclusion will leave the reader with something to think about, and may begin to open the argument to larger contexts.*
- Revisit your paragraph transitions to be sure that your essay moves smoothly from one idea to the next.
- Check your tone. *(Is it consistently appropriate for an academic audience? Or, at the least, is it consistent?)*
- Eliminate wordy, vague, or recycled language.
- Make sure you have met the length requirement indicated on the assignment sheet. *Remember that just hitting the page requirement does not meet it: for example, if the length req. is 4-6 pages and your essay ends a third of the way down the fourth page, that's really only 3 1/3 pages.*
- Check your sources. *Have you cited all the sources you've used in the essay? Are all sources cited correctly? Is your reference page complete and correctly formatted?*
- Run spell-check.
- But don't rely on spell-check alone! *Proofread for spelling and grammatical mistakes. The BEST way to do this is to **print a draft and read the essay aloud**, correcting grammatical and spelling mistakes as you go.*
- Follow the correct formatting as outlined in the syllabus, writing directions, or assignment template.
- Make a "reverse outline:" instead of outline before writing, outline the paper you've already written. Use the "Rough Plan" worksheet, and fill in the thesis and the topic sentences. *Does each topic sentence support your thesis? Did you include evidence for each topic sentence? Are there any gaps between paragraphs that need to be "filled in" with transitional paragraphs? Are there any redundant topic sentences or paragraphs that can be eliminated?*