LANGUAGE EDITING CHECKLIST

Always allow yourself time to do one final check of your written work.

After finishing writing, don't re-read your text immediately; put some time and space between yourself and what you have written–a few days is best– but if that is not possible, at least half a day.

When you do come back to your writing, use this list to help you check it.

Make a plan....	What do I do?	Is it done?
1. Know what is expected	• Have I answered the task	
	• Have I addressed each of the criteria	
2. Check the content for relevance	• Does the whole text make sense when I read it aloud	
	• Does each paragraph contribute to the whole text:	
	– does it introduce the paragraph topic	
	– does it communicate an understanding of the topic	
	– does it build on what we know about the topic	
	– does it establish what is already known about the topic	
	– does it identify an issue or controversy about the topic	
	– does it define/describe/exemplify something about the topic	
	– does it use evidence from authoritative sources to support the theory, concept, fact, practice or approach	
	– does it give a contrasting point of view	
	– does it conclude something about the topic	
	• Do my sentences make sense when I read them aloud	
	• Does my introduction and conclusion 'match'	
	In my introduction:	
	– have I made a focused statement about the topic	
	– have I shown the reader the position I will be arguing or explaining	
	– have I guided the reader to knowing how the text will develop	

	In my conclusion: – have I done what I said I was going to do (as stated in the introduction)	
	– have I summarised the main arguments I presented in the text	
	– have I restated and confirmed my thesis	
	– have I made an overall conclusion	
	– have I indicated the significance of the theory, concept, practice, approach	
	– have I introduced any new information (no new information should be presented here)	
	– have I made any recommendations	
3. Check the Style	• Have I consulted my subject outline	
	• Have I consulted my style guide (APA, Chicago, Harvard, MLA, AMA [Vancouver], etc.)	
4. Check the Language	• Have I been as clear, direct and concise as possible with what I wanted to say:	
	– have I used objective language	
	– have I spelled out words in full before I use the acronym (the initial parts of the phrase or word–i.e. WHO)	
	– have I avoided contractions	
	– have I removed slang and jargon	
	• Have I made the best /precise word choice	
	• Have I used an active voice	
	• Have I used my profession's / discipline-specific language as needed / appropriate	
	• Have I used non-discriminatory language (ethnicity, gender, age, disability)	
	• Have I taken out the unnecessary words	
	• Have I used heurisms (I think, I feel, I believe) to express an opinion **(only used in reflective writing)**	
	• Are each of my sentences a complete thought and contain a subject and a verb	
	• Do my subjects and verbs agree (singular subject–singular verb; plural subject–plural verb)	
	• Am I using the appropriate verb tense in my text	
	• Am I using the correct sequence of tenses within the sentence	

5. Ask for guidance	• Have I asked for a fresh pair of eyes to read my text:	
	– have I asked my parent/partner/friend to read what I've written (if they ask 'what do you mean....?' or 'I don't understand', then this is a hint you need to revise your writing for clarity or additional information)	
	– have I asked an elderly relative or friend for feedback (an older person's insight is invaluable–grammar was explicitly taught at school a number of years ago)	
	• Have I asked for clarification of my assignment (direct questions as needed to tutorial leader/lecturer/PASS leader)	
	• Have I asked my peer/colleague for feedback	
	• Have I asked a Peer Advisor for feedback	
	• Do I need to meet with a Learning Advisor	

Useful links:

- Link to the Learning Centre:
  https://www.jcu.edu.au/students/learning-centre/develop-your-english

  (From here, download the Editing, and Proofreading pdfs.)

Other links:

- The University of Glasgow [ARIES- *Assisted revision in English Style*]:
  http://www.arts.gla.ac.uk/STELLA/briantest/web/aries/
- The University of Toronto [Hit Parade of Errors in Grammar Punctuation and Style]:
  http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/style-and-editing/hit-parade-of-errors
- The University of Sussex [Critical thinking Checklist]:
  http://www.sussex.ac.uk/s3/?id=91