

What is proofreading?

To read printer's proofs, other written or printed material or web content and mark-up any errors. Typically this is the last opportunity and therefore quality check of text prior to publishing and may be done against a specific style guide. Proofreaders use their skill and experience to check for consistency in usage and presentation, accuracy of text, tables, images and layout. This can be accomplished on paper or on screen.

At this stage of the process any text will have normally been edited already and therefore the proofreader is not expected to make major changes. Good communication with author/editor is essential if there are major queries, as large changes could be both costly and time-consuming.

What can I do for you?

- Compare the material to be proofread line by line.
- Check page numbers and page headings are present where required.
- Check the table of contents against chapter titles, page numbers, appendices, index, etc. for correctness.
- Ensure consistency and correctness of grammar, style and spellings.
- Highlight omissions and inconsistencies in typography, layout and content.
- Flag-up necessary/suggested changes using British Standards Institution (BSI) marks on paper or another agreed method such as onscreen using Track Changes in Microsoft Word.
- Eliminate inelegant or confusing word, column and page breaks including 'widows' and 'orphans' – short last or first lines of a paragraph at the top or the bottom of a page, respectively.
- Ensure that illustrations, captions and labels correspond with each other and with the text.
- Check that content looks right and is logically arranged.
- Liaise with the author(s) to resolve queries or advise the client.
- Collate the author's changes with others, including their own, rationalising or querying conflicting instructions.

