# Ten Writing Priorities

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thesis</th>
<th>Does the paper have a message? Is the message worth conveying? Is the message clear to the reader by the end of the paper? Does every aspect of the paper relate to the main message? Does the paper have a purpose? Does the paper avoid leaving the reader asking so what?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audience</td>
<td>Are the point of view, format, word choice, tone, and style consistent with the needs and expectations of the audience?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genre</td>
<td>Does the paper satisfy the conventions of its genre? Does it adhere to the unique qualities of a term paper, summary, review, research report, lab report, etc.? Does the paper satisfy all of the requirements of the assignment—length, subject, use of sources, etc.?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support</td>
<td>Does the paper make clear distinctions between assertion, evidence, and analysis? Is there sufficient evidence? Is there a sufficient variety of support from categories such as facts, statistics, examples, anecdotes, quotations, illustrations, interviews, polls, etc.? Is the evidence persuasive? Is the evidence properly cited?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Is there an introduction, body, and conclusion? Are paragraphs cohesive? Do they have topic sentences? Are paragraphs ordered logically? Do transitions signal relationships between ideas? Are all paragraphs important? Does the paper avoid redundancy?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syntax</td>
<td>Do the sentences maintain correct grammatical structure, word order, and verb agreement? Are the paper’s sentence structures varied?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diction</td>
<td>Is the word choice appropriate for the audience, purpose, message, assignment, and rhetorical stance? Do the words convey meaning accurately and effectively? Is the style clear, authentic, and interesting?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Usage</td>
<td>Does the paper use the correct word or phrase at the correct time? i.e., Is the correct homophone used? Does the language achieve a level of formality appropriate to the paper’s genre and audience?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling &amp; Punctuation</td>
<td>Has the paper been carefully and successfully proofread for proper spelling and punctuation? Is the paper free from errors and typos?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>Is the paper neatly typed and printed in easy-to-read black ink? Does it feature proper page numbering, margins, and font? Is it presented cleanly and attractively?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from the Azusa Pacific University Writing Center, Dr. Diana Glyer, and Nold & Bracy in *Writing in the Arts and Sciences*, Maimon, et al. (1981)  
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Revising, Editing, and Proofreading: What’s the Difference?

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Many people think revising, editing, and proofreading are synonyms, but they are actually pretty different and occur in different stages in the rewriting process.

Revising
Think of revising as “re-visioning.” It looks at the way the paper works as a whole. You’ll want to see if all your ideas are developed and you have clearly shown how each idea relates to the others and the main argument. During the revision process, you will make the most changes to your paper. You can add, take away, or rewrite sentences, paragraphs, sections, or the entire paper. This is sometimes referred to as creating a second draft.

During the revision process, take a look at the first 5 writing priorities (located on the opposite side) and make sure your paper covers these sufficiently.

1. Thesis
2. Audience
3. Genre
4. Support
5. Organization

Make any changes until you’ve sufficiently covered these main content aspects of your paper.

Editing
Editing is different from revising because it focuses more on the details rather than the big picture. Editing involves more stylistic choices, and mainly involves sentence level and major grammatical changes. To get a better sense of what the editing stage looks like, make sure to go over the next 2 writing priorities.

6. Syntax
7. Diction

This is where you get to let your voice shine. Once you’ve considered these stylistic choices, you can move onto the final stage of writing your paper.

Proofreading
Proofreading is a last check of your paper to catch any errors. At the end of this stage, you will be ready to turn in your paper. Consider the last 3 writing priorities:

8. Standard Usage
9. Spelling & Punctuation
10. Presentation

When working a paper, you’ll want to go through all three stages of the rewriting process. Doing more than just proofreading will help you turn in a better product and become a better writer in the process. If you find this process challenging, take a look at the Incorporating Your Learning Styles Handout on different methods of revising, editing, and proofreading tailored to your preferences.