

Academic language revision checklist

Use this checklist on one paragraph at a time. First, check the argument and evidence. Then, revise the sentences for clarity and precision.

Check the argument

☐ The paragraph has a clear purpose

Identify its main point. Check that each sentence explains, supports or qualifies that point.

Ask: What does this paragraph contribute to the overall argument?

Action: Move unrelated material to another paragraph or remove it.

☐ The paragraph explains the evidence

After a quotation, statistic or paraphrase, explain its relevance to the argument.

Useful prompts:

- "This finding supports the argument that ... because ..."
- "This example illustrates ..."
- "However, the study's scope limits ..."

Action: Complete the explanation with specific reasoning. Avoid a vague statement such as "This is important." Check that each source supports the claim and that the citation identifies the source accurately.

☐ Conclusions match the evidence

Check words such as "proves," "all," "always" and "causes." Consider the sample, method and limitations.

Before: "The interviews prove that all students prefer recordings."



After: "The interview participants expressed a preference for recordings."
Action: Limit the claim to the people and circumstances that the evidence covers.

Check the sentences

☐ The wording is specific and precise

Look for vague expressions such as "many people," "recently," "a big impact" and "various factors."

Before: "The policy had a big impact on students."

After: "The policy reduced tuition fees for part-time students."

Action: Specify the group, period, change or outcome where the evidence permits. Never add details that the source does not provide.

☐ Subjects and verbs make actions clear

Replace abstract noun phrases with direct verbs where the meaning stays the same.

Before: "The researchers conducted an examination of the responses."

After: "The researchers examined the responses."

Useful replacements:

- Provides an explanation of → Explains
- Makes a comparison between → Compares
- Conducts an analysis of → Analyses

☐ Transitions express the correct relationship

Check the connection between sentences before adding a transition.

Addition: Furthermore

Contrast: However

Example: For example

Consequence: Therefore



Before: "Recordings offer flexibility. Therefore, some students prefer live lectures."

After: "Recordings offer flexibility. However, some students prefer live lectures."

Action: Read the sentences without the transition. If their relationship remains unclear, revise the reasoning.

☐ Every word contributes to the meaning

Remove repetition, empty introductions and unnecessary qualifications.

Before: "It is important to note that the findings may possibly suggest a potential difference."

After: "The findings suggest a difference."

Useful replacements:

- In order to → To
- Due to the fact that → Because
- At this point in time → Now

Action: Retain qualifications that express meaningful uncertainty.

☐ Terms and tone remain consistent

Use the same term for the same concept. Define specialist vocabulary where readers need an explanation and follow disciplinary expectations.

Check:

- Do key terms retain the same meaning throughout?
- Does each pronoun refer to an identifiable person, idea or thing?
- Does the text avoid slang and exaggerated language?
- Does first-person usage follow the assignment's conventions?



Paragraph review worksheet

Main claim or purpose

Evidence and source

How the evidence supports the claim

Relevant limitation or alternative explanation

Sentence that needs revision

Revised sentence

