

## London School of Theology

### Proofreading Policy

Process of ratification:	Academic Board
Executive Team Member Responsible:	Academic Dean
Individual Responsible:	Clare Miller, David Hilborn
Date Last Approved:	November 2024
To be Reviewed:	Every 36 months
Review consultation:	Programme Leaders, Faculty, Student Support Team
Date of Next Review:	November 2027

#### 1. Purpose and scope

- 1.1. The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for students and staff on the appropriate use of proofreading support in academic work to ensure integrity, clarity, and quality in submitted assignments and assessments.
- 1.2. This policy applies to all students enrolled in undergraduate and postgraduate courses, as well as academic and support staff engaged in proofreading-related activities.

#### 2. Definition

- 2.1. Proofreading is defined as the review and correction of text to improve readability, clarity, and coherence. Proofreading involves identifying and amending errors in spelling, grammar, punctuation, syntax, and formatting, without altering the author's original ideas, argument structure, or critical analysis.

#### 3. Acceptable Proofreading Practices

- 3.1. Students may seek assistance with proofreading from:
  - 3.1.1. Approved academic support services provided or recommended by LST;
  - 3.1.2. Peer reviewers, such as classmates or study groups;
  - 3.1.3. Friends and family members;
  - 3.1.4. Digital tools, such as Grammarly, or other AI tools;
  - 3.1.5. Professional proofreading services.
- 3.2. Proofreading may include the following:
  - 3.2.1. Correction of typographical errors and basic language mechanics (spelling, punctuation, grammar);
  - 3.2.2. Suggestions on sentence structure for improved readability;
  - 3.2.3. Adjustments to formatting in line with referencing guidelines;
  - 3.2.4. Guidance on clarity, conciseness, and cohesion of text.
- 3.3. Proofreaders should not:
  - 3.3.1. Rewrite or rephrase sections of text to alter meaning or improve arguments;
  - 3.3.2. Add new content or make substantive changes to the ideas or structure of the text;
  - 3.3.3. Alter subject-specific terminology, theories, or the analytical framework of the work;
  - 3.3.4. Translate or transform academic work into another language or format without specific permission from the module leader.

- 3.4. Any assistance that goes beyond correcting surface-level errors may be considered academic misconduct or collusion.
4. Student and Staff Responsibilities
    - 4.1. Students are responsible for:
      - 4.1.1. Ensuring that any proofreading adheres to this policy;
      - 4.1.2. Acknowledging any proofreading assistance in the final submission;
      - 4.1.3. Submitting work that reflects their original analysis, synthesis, and critical thought.
    - 4.2. If students choose to use digital tools or external proofreading services:
      - 4.2.1. They must ensure that any proofreading adheres to this policy's scope and limits;
      - 4.2.2. They should review any changes to verify that their own ideas and arguments remain intact;
      - 4.2.3. Unauthorised assistance that alters academic work may result in disciplinary action.
    - 4.3. Students should include a statement of acknowledgment where proofreading has been used, outlining the nature of the assistance received, to ensure transparency.
    - 4.4. Staff providing proofreading support should:
      - 4.4.1. Adhere to acceptable proofreading practices as outlined in this policy.
      - 4.4.2. Avoid giving assistance that could compromise the academic integrity of student work.
      - 4.4.3. Educate students on the ethical and proper use of proofreading in academic work.
5. Policy Violations:
    - 5.1. Failure to comply with this policy may be treated as academic misconduct and could lead to penalties as outlined in the Academic Misconduct Policy.