**WHO CAN EDIT YOUR THESIS—AND HOW CAN YOU ORGANIZE THIS PROCEDURE?**

**by Simon Moss**

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| **1 Introduction** |

Before you submit, you might want other people to help you edit your thesis—to improve the writing, to enhance the formatting, and to correct errors, for example. This document clarifies who is permitted to edit your thesis and to what extent these individuals can assist. This document also clarifies whether or not you can seek financial assistance to employ a professional editor.

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| **2 Roles** |

Several individuals can help you edit your thesis. The first column in the following table outlines who could help you—such as your supervisors, friends, and professional editors. The second column specifies which responsibilities they can fulfill. The third column specifies activities they should not undertake. These recommendations are partly derived from guidelines that were developed by the Institute of Professional Editors and endorsed by the Australian Council of Graduate Research.

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| Role | These individuals can | These individuals should not |
| Supervisors who are the principal or primary contact | * Help you develop your skills in organizing your arguments cohesively, expressing your arguments effectively, and preventing errors * Present specific suggestions on how to organize and to express your arguments better * To achieve these goals, read all your chapters or materials at least once | * Read particular sections, chapters, or materials more than a few times * Attempt to prevent every error—such as every spelling, grammatical, or formatting error |
| Other research supervisors | * See the row above, except these individuals may read only the chapters that align to their expertise | * See the row above |
| ALLSP: Academic Language and Learning Success Program | * Help you develop your skills in organizing your arguments cohesively, expressing your arguments effectively, and preventing errors * Present specific suggestions on how to organize and to express your arguments better | * Read more than a few sections—bur only enough to identify and address recurring problems or errors * Use track changes to correct your work |
| Friends or relatives who are specialists in the field or have developed advanced skills in editing | * See the row above | * See the row above |
| Other friends or relatives | * Present specific suggestions on how to organize your arguments more cohesively, how to express your arguments better, and how to prevent errors—such as spelling, grammatical, or formatting errors | * Use track changes to correct your work |
| Professional editors | * Present specific suggestions on how to express your arguments better * Correct errors—such as spelling, grammatical, or formatting errors * Help you develop your skills in organizing your arguments effectively | * Provide too many suggestions on how to organize your arguments better—just enough examples to impart this skill |

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| **3 How to utilize the services of a professional editor** |

If you would like to utilize the services of a professional editor, you should first seek advice and approval from your primary supervisor on whether you should engage a professional editor. If your supervisor approves, you need to identify a suitable editor. Besides seeking advice from your HDR convenor or research office—or Googling something like “professional editor PhD NT”—you could

* visit <http://iped-editors.org>
* click *find an editor* and then *search the directory*
* to help you answer the search fields, you can use the following table

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Field | Response |
| IPEd accredited and distinguished editor | Yes |
| Product or medium | Academic thesis or journal article |
| Service | Proofreading |
| Subject area | Specify the relevant subject area |
| State | Choose all. You can send your thesis to anyone in Australia |

Once you identify potential editors,

* decide which of these editors you prefer; use their website to organize this service
* send these editors a hard copy of your thesis: Editors cannot use track changes
* utilize the feedback of this editor to correct your thesis
* refer to this assistance in your acknowledgement section. For example, you might write

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| I would also like to thank Acme Editorial Services for their proofreading and editing of this thesis. |

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| **4 Who should pay to engage a professional editor?** |

Professional editing may cost several thousand dollars. For example, Captstone editing charges $1613 for a 50,000-word thesis and $3613 for a 100,000-word thesis—and slightly more if you want the thesis to be edited in fewer than 14 days. To help you pay this fee

* you could utilize your RTP or research allowance
* in specific circumstances, you might receive funding from the Office of Research and Innovation

The Office of Research and Innovation can pay some or all the costs of professional editing, but only if

* you have depleted all your RTP allocation
* English is not your preferred language
* you have met several times with ALLSP or other English tuition services
* you have embraced the feedback your supervisors delivered on your drafts

To organize this funding, contact [Research.Degrees@cdu.edu.au](mailto:Research.Degrees@cdu.edu.au). In this email,

* write something like “I would like to seek some funding to engage a professional editor to proofread my thesis”
* include a quote or invoice if possible
* specify your first or preferred language
* provide evidence that you received writing tuition and responded to the feedback of supervisors. You might forward emails that outline your appointments with ALLSP, for example, as well as attach a chapter before and after the feedback you received