

How to REVISE your ROUGH DRAFT

Writing a rough draft helps you clarify your ideas for yourself. Revising a rough draft clarifies your ideas for others.

Step 1: Make sure that the essay **topic is focused and specific**.

Step 2: **Review the thesis statement**. Is it clear and precise? Does it firmly establish the aim of the essay?

Step 3: Look at the individual paragraphs of the essay. Make sure the topic of **each paragraph is clear** and the paragraph's goal is accomplished. Give adequate examples, quotations and explanations to reinforce arguments.

Step 4: Ask yourself whether each **paragraph is effective**. If it is not, figure out why. If the paragraph is too short, perhaps it should be omitted from the essay. If it's too long, maybe it needs to be reworked or split into more than one paragraph.

Step 5: Number the paragraphs in order from **the weakest to the strongest argument**. The essay should build toward its conclusion and end strongly.

Step 6: Ask yourself whether the **general purpose of the essay has been accomplished** by the time you reach the end.

Step 7: **Go back and look at the smaller, basic elements of the essay**, such as grammar, style and syntax. Check for run-on sentences, sentence fragments and errors in grammar and spelling.

Step 8: Make sure **paragraphs and sentences flow** well. The transition from one paragraph to the next should be clear, yet fluid. Combine or shorten sentences when necessary.

Step 9: Find an alternate way of expressing any word or phrase that is overused. **Use a thesaurus**.

TIPS and WARNINGS

- Write your revisions and corrections in a colour that stands out, such as red or green.
- After revising the body of the essay, consider rewriting the opening and closing paragraphs so that they better reflect the content of the essay.