

# **Improving your academic writing**

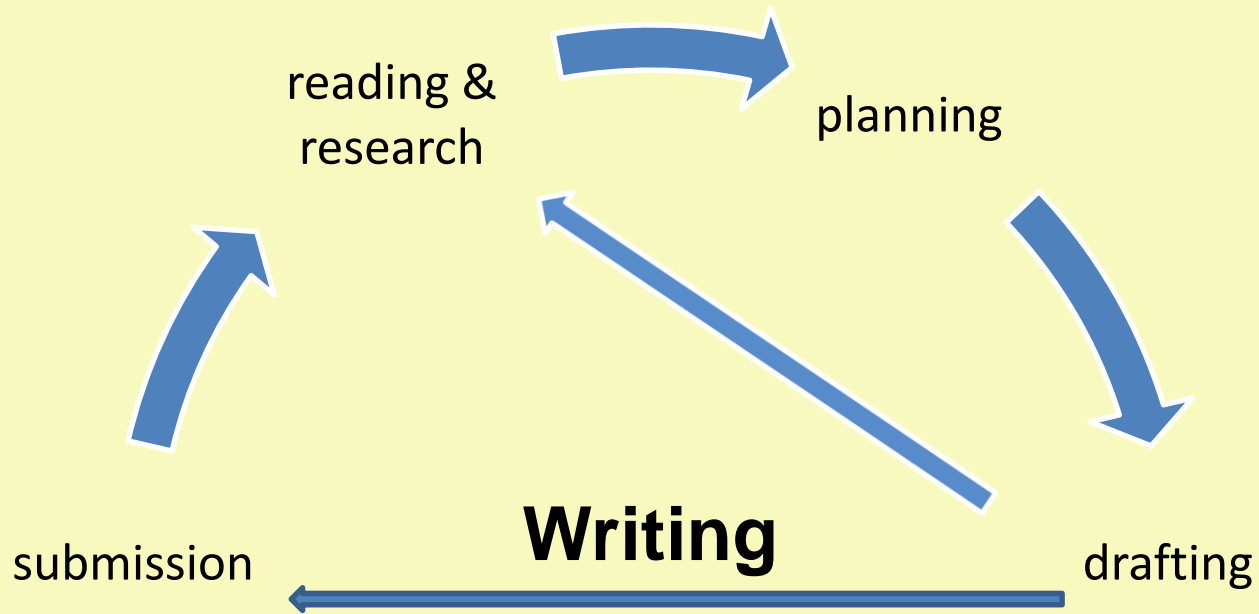
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**Student Support Service**

# Your experiences

- What do 'revising' and 'proofreading' mean to you? Are they different things?
- Do you revise and proofread your work?
- If so, how? What does it involve?
- What questions or concerns do you have?



Giving yourself time to review your work before submission can help to improve your marks

“What is a good method for checking, as reading it through over and over makes it hard to spot things?”

**presentation  
&  
checking**

**revising**

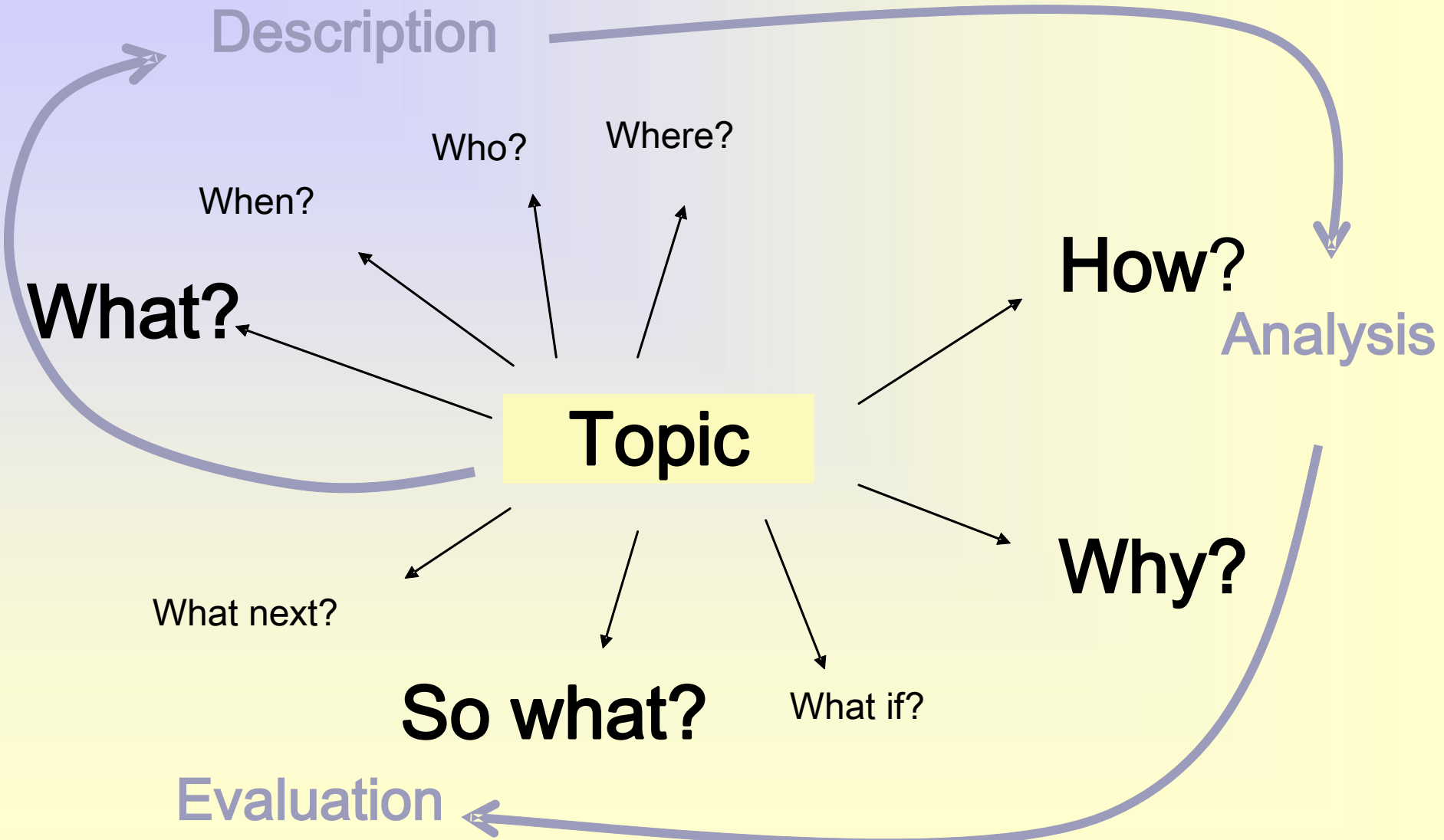
“It’s hard to edit when you have read and re-read your work so much... nothing goes in!”

‘Very few writers really know what they are doing until they've done it.’

Lamott, A. (1995) *Bird by Bird* pp 25-6



# Model to Generate Critical Thinking



# What about paragraphs?

- **Paragraphs are important!**
- You should aim to achieve **unity within** a paragraph and **diversity between** paragraphs.
- Paragraphs usually need a **topic sentence**.
- Paragraph length is meaningful!

Adapted from 'Explorations of Style: a blog about academic writing'

<http://explorationsofstyle.com/2011/02/16/paragraphs/> (16.02.2011)

# Outlining paragraphs

- Turn each paragraph into a bullet point that captures (in a few words or a sentence) what the paragraph covers.
- Look at your list of bullet points: do any of these cover too many things? Do any of them need to be split up?
- Can you drop any (is there any repetition)?
- Are they in the right order?
- Now review the structure of each paragraph (eg using PEEL).



# Structuring paragraphs

- **P**oint                      topic +claim
- **E**vidence                      show me
- **E**valuation                      tell me
- **L**ink                      to paragraph/  
argument

# Playing Cards

## *Re-drafting your writing*

- Edit different aspects of your text (eg structure, argument, language).
- Take different perspectives (eg macro and micro).
- Address one aspect at a time.

# Summary

## *Revising and proofreading your work ...*

- Involves turning a draft into a finished text
- Requires distance and different perspectives
- Is most effective if done in 'bite-size' chunks i.e. focus on one thing at a time
- Involves being critical i.e. asking questions of your work

# Summary (continued)

- Remind yourself of the **reader**
- Leave **time** between writing and editing
- If you can't leave much time, do something **different**
- Remind yourself of **the purpose of the piece**
- **'Hear'** what you have written, sound the words out in your head or read out loud

**Any questions?**

# Learning Enhancement Team



Develop strategies to improve your:

- **study skills**
- **mathematics and statistics**
- **academic writing**
- **use of English**

## Resources

Study guides, videos, webcasts and worksheets on our website

## Workshops

Group sessions, delivered centrally or embedded in degree programmes

## Tutorials

Expert tuition to help you study more effectively and improve your work

# What we offer

- **Drop-ins**            Mon-Thurs, 4-5pm (10 minutes)
- **Tutorials**            Available by appointment (50 minutes)
- **Workshops**        In Schools or centrally organised
- **Resources**
  - **Website** <https://portal.uea.ac.uk/student-support-service/learning-enhancement>  
(Study guides, webcasts, links to other resources)
  - **Blackboard:** 'Learn' tab -> 'Learning Enhancement Team'

# How can you contact us?

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*....or come to the Student Support Centre.*

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