

## Editing services: Libelous or liberating?

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**Abstract:**

Third party editing of student work has received largely negative responses from writing centre theory and practice, with some universities even explicitly prohibiting the use of an editor. Nevertheless, editing remains both a necessary and common practice for most writers, and one that will be done with or without the sanction of the university, the supervisor, or the writing centre. It is at this nexus that the discussion of editing intersects with issues of academic integrity.

A recent article discussing editing concludes that “providing targeted plurilingual EAL research writing support is an urgent, ethical imperative” (Corcoran, Gagne, and McIntosh, 2018). In so far as it is an ethical issue, editing connects with academic integrity. I have been providing such a service through our writing centre for 8 years, and yet only recently have I noted this ethical move to question the overriding view of editing as anathema and somehow counter to principles of academic integrity.

I will argue that an editing service properly set-up and run, in contrast to contravening academic integrity policies or encouraging plagiarism, has the possibility to serve as a transparent, corrective, and informative practice that is both pedagogic and progressive. I will use the impetus for, the structure of, and the response to our editing service to make a case that, not only are such services helpful, but actually necessary in our efforts to foster academic integrity and transparency.

**Keywords:** Editing, integrity, plagiarism.