Modern Language Association (MLA) Paper Checklist for College Writers

The *MLA Handbook, 9th Edition* provides guidelines for formatting papers in English, Literature, Humanities, as well as other disciplines. This self-editing checklist can be used by students to ensure that their papers meet MLA standards. This checklist can also serve as a guide for proofreading and editing MLA formatted papers, which will ultimately facilitate the development of students' future writing, proofreading, and editing skills.

Basic Formatting

☐ Have you used the font Times New Roman or a similar font for the entire paper? NOTE: If you are unsure of the font guideline for the assignment, it is recommended that you review the assignment guidelines or contact your instructor.

☐ Is your font size set at 12 point for the whole document, including the title and Work Cited page?

☐ Are the margins one inch on the sides, top, and bottom of the paper?

☐ Has your line spacing been set to double spacing (2.0)?

☐ Did you check to ensure that there is only <u>one</u> double space between the title and the introductory paragraph and only <u>one</u> double space between each of the following paragraphs?

☐ Has the space after the paragraph been removed from the entire document? (See the Academic Center for Excellence's handouts *MLA Formatting in Word*, *MLA Formatting in Word for Macs*, and *Formatting an Academic Paper in Google Docs* for additional information on formatting line spacing)

Header

☐ Are your last name and the page number included in the header?

☐ Are your last name and the page number aligned to the right?

☐ Have you inserted the page number?

☐ Has the font of your last name and the page number been changed to the font required by your instructor? NOTE: Microsoft Word uses the default font Calibri in the header unless the default setting has been adjusted by the user.

☐ Has the font size of your last name and the page number been adjusted to 12 point? NOTE: Microsoft Word uses the default font size 11 point unless the default setting has been adjusted by the user.

First Page Heading

☐ Do your name, the instructor's name, the course title, and the date appear at the top left of the first page?

☐ Is your date in the correct MLA format? EXAMPLE: 23 Oct. 2021

Title and Body

☐ Is your title centered below the first page heading and above the introductory paragraph, with no unnecessary bolding or underlining?

☐ Is the first line of each of the paragraphs in your paper indented half an inch?

In-text Citations

☐ Are you using parenthetical citations? For examples, see the Academic Center for Excellence's handout *MLA Format*.

☐ Are all quotes and paraphrases from external sources properly cited in-text?

☐ Are citations correctly formatted in MLA style? To view examples, refer to the Academic Center for Excellence's handout *MLA Format*.

☐ Do your citations occur after the quotation marks and before the period?

Block Quotations

☐ Have you used a quote that is more than four lines or longer in the paper? (If YES, continue with this section. If NO, proceed to the Works Cited section.)

☐ Did you begin on a new line before starting the text of the block quote?

□ Are all the lines in the block quote indented half an inch?

□ Did you omit the quotation marks from your block quote?

□ Does the citation for the block quote come **after** the period?

□ Is there a double space between the end of the block quote and the next line of text?

Works Cited

□ Does the Works Cited page begin on a new page?

□ Is the title "Works Cited" centered at the top of the page?

□ Are all of the sources used in your paper included on the Works Cited page?

□ Are all of the citations in alphabetical order?

□ Do all of the citations include a hanging indent?

□ Is each citation double spaced?

□ Is there a double space between each citation?

□ Is each citation correctly formatted in MLA style according to the type of source cited? (See Academic Center for Excellence's handout *MLA Format* for more information on formatting sources.)

□ Are the dates for each citation correctly formatted? EXAMPLE: 23 May 2021

For further information about the MLA style, take a look at the Academic Center for Excellence's handouts *MLA Format*, *MLA Formatting in Word*, *MLA Formatting in Word for Macs*, *MLA Sample Paper*, and *Formatting an Academic Paper in Google Docs*.

There are also numerous MLA online resources available in the Germanna Academic Center for Excellence's website's Writing Center section.

Additionally, Academic Center for Excellence offers MLA information in on-campus workshops, online workshops, and online webinars. Contact Academic Center for Excellence's Locust Grove center at **(540) 423-9148**, the Fredericksburg center at **(540) 891-3017,** or the Barbara J. Fried Center at **(540) 834-1993** for further information about on-campus workshop and webinar scheduling, or check out the on-campus workshop schedule on the Academic Center for Excellence's website to view the dates and times for scheduled on-campus workshops.