

15.2 Proofing Techniques

Syllabus 2026 - 2028

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

- Perform visual verification and proofread
- Identify and correct data entry errors: transposed numbers, incorrect spelling, inconsistent character spacing, inconsistent case
- Identify and correct layout errors: inconsistent line spacing, blank pages/slides, widows/orphans, inconsistent styles, split tables and lists
- The importance, characteristics and uses of verification: visual checking and double data entry
- The need for validation as well as verification

Proofreading

Proofreading is carefully reading a document to find and correct errors before it is used or published. It should be done by a **person**, because software cannot judge meaning.

Figure 77: Common data entry and proofreading errors

	Error	Correct
Transposed numbers	1432	1342
Incorrect spelling	recieve	receive
Inconsistent spacing	Name :John	Name: John
Inconsistent case	mR sMITH	Mr Smith
Inconsistent styles	Arial / Times mix	one font style

Proofreading

- Read slowly
- Read aloud
- Compare with the original document
- Check one type of error at a time

- **Transposed numbers:** digits in the wrong order, for example 1342 typed as 1432
- **Incorrect spelling:** words spelt wrongly, or a real word in the wrong place
- **Inconsistent character spacing:** extra or missing spaces, such as double spaces
- **Inconsistent case:** capital and small letters used differently, for example 'mR sMITH'

Layout and style errors

Figure 78: Layout problems to find and correct

Orphan first line alone at bottom of a page	Widow last line alone at top of a page	Split table table broken across two pages	Blank page an empty page to remove
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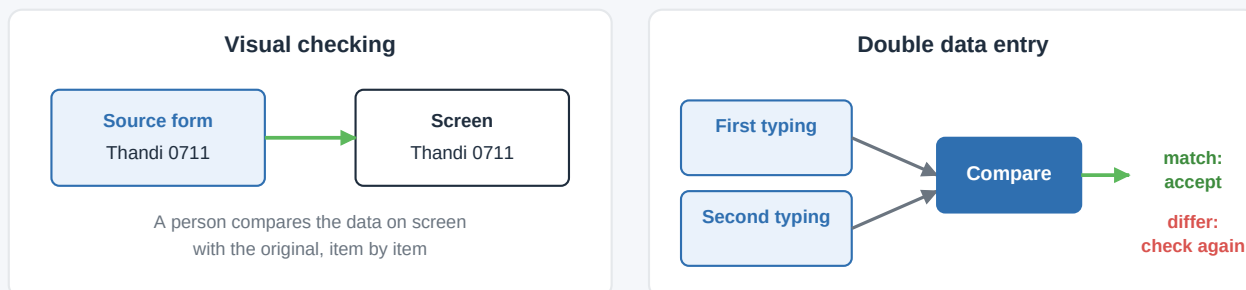
- **Inconsistent line spacing and styles** applied wrongly or not at all, for example fonts or heading sizes that do not match
- **Blank pages or slides:** delete them and remove unused page breaks

- **Widows and orphans:** a single line separated from the rest of its paragraph; fix with keep-together settings or a page break
- **Tables and lists split** across columns or pages or slides: keep each one together on a single page

Verification

Verification checks that data has been **copied or entered accurately** from the source.

Figure 79: Verification methods



Method	How it works	Limitation
Visual check	Compare the data on screen with the original document and correct any differences	Slow; a tired person may miss errors
Double data entry	Two people (or the same person twice) enter the same data and the system compares the two	Takes twice as long and costs more

Why both validation and verification are needed

	Validation	Verification
Checks	That data is reasonable and allowed	That data matches the source
Done by	The computer, automatically	A person (or two data entries compared)
Can miss	Wrong data that follows the rules, such as 15 instead of 14	Mistakes if people overlook differences

Used **together**, they catch more errors: validation rejects impossible data, and verification finds typing mistakes that are still possible values.

EXAM TIP

Remember that **validation** is done by the computer and checks if data is **reasonable**. **Verification** checks it is **the same as the source**. Neither proves that data is 100% correct, which is why both are used.

Key terms

Term	Meaning
Proofreading	Reading carefully to find and correct errors.
Verification	Checking data has been entered accurately from the source.
Visual check	Comparing entered data with the original by eye.
Double data entry	Entering data twice and comparing the two.
Transposition	Digits or letters swapped in order.
Widow	A last line of a paragraph alone at the top of a page.
Orphan	A first line of a paragraph alone at the bottom of a page.
Consistency	Using the same style and format throughout.

Practice questions

Answer each question in full sentences. Command words used: State (give a short answer), Describe (say what it is like), Explain (give reasons), Analyse (break it down and examine it), Suggest (apply your knowledge to a situation), Compare and contrast (similarities and differences), Evaluate (weigh up and reach a judgement).

No.	Question	Marks
1	State the meaning of the term 'verification'.	[1]
2	State two examples of data entry errors.	[2]
3	Describe how double data entry is used to check data.	[3]
4	Describe what is meant by widows and orphans, and how they can be corrected.	[4]
5	Explain why a document should be proofread even after a spell check.	[3]
6	Suggest four things to check when proofreading a school newsletter before it is printed.	[4]
7	Compare and contrast validation with verification.	[4]
8	Analyse why both validation and verification are needed when entering data.	[4]
9	Evaluate the use of visual checking compared with double data entry.	[5]

Total: 30 marks