

Writing Consultants: What they can and cannot do

Consultants can help you at all points in your writing.

You can talk to a consultant about a writing assignment before you even begin to write it.

You can show consultants notes, idea lists, and other explorations.

You can bring in a rough draft for help on how to revise it so that it is focused and makes sense to a reader

You can bring in almost-finished papers for help with polishing.

Consultants can help you with organization and development.

You can ask for help in figuring out what you have to say.

You can talk to a consultant about developing more ideas to write about.

You can bring in a paper that has all of your ideas and ask for advice on reorganizing so the paper has a better flow.

You can meet with a consultant about using transitions to tie your ideas together.

Consultants can help you with style and mechanics.

You can ask about improving sentence length and variation.

You can get help in shaping your argument.

You can seek advice on the piece's tone, diction, and voice.

You can see a consultant for help in writing proper bibliographies.

You can talk to a consultant about evaluating and incorporating outside sources.

You can meet a consultant for help on formatting papers.

Consultants can help you with grammar and punctuation.

You can ask for help on how to proofread and copy-edit.

You can go to a consultant for explanations of handbook terms.

You can ask a consultant to look over specific corrections you have made.

Consultants cannot do the work for you.

You cannot drop off your paper for the consultant to fix.

You cannot avoid the work of writing, revising, or editing by working with a consultant.

But you *can* expect the consultant to help you learn to write more effectively yourself. You can expect your consultant to be knowledgeable about writing issues that may be different for you. And you can expect your consultant to be an attentive, respectful, and helpful outside reader of your work.