

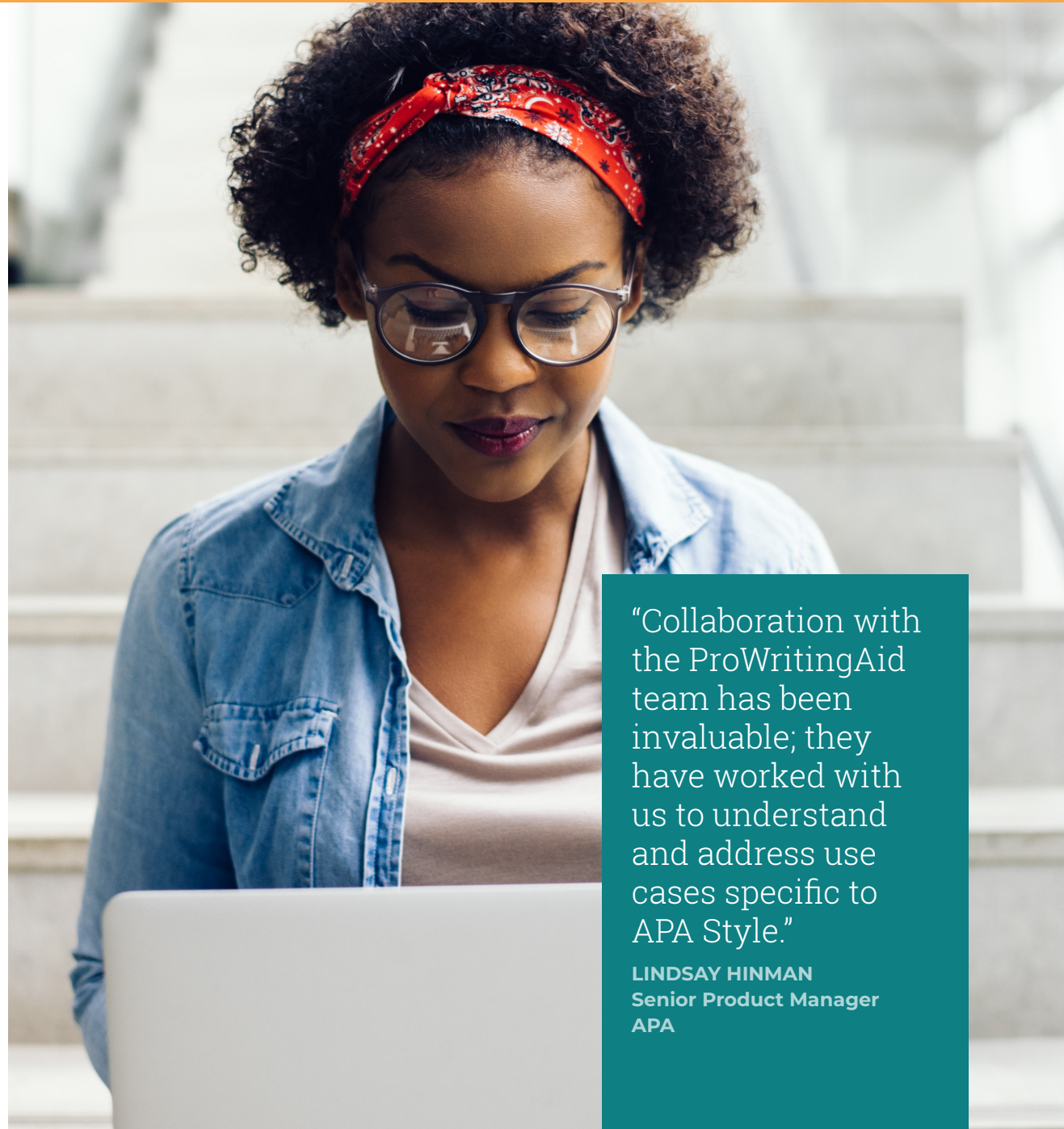
# Conquering the Challenge of **Academic Writing**

Find out how **ProWritingAid** is helping students become better writers by working with the **American Psychological Association (APA)** to automate their style guide within APA's **Academic Writer™** platform.

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We're sure you'll remember those agonizing late nights spent tweaking your college paper, those lost hours spent trying to remember seemingly arbitrary formatting guidelines, and finally those last minutes spent begging your friends to proofread your essay.

Academic Writer helps students perfect their academic papers. Academic Writer is a digital resource designed to help students write papers, create reference lists, and develop their knowledge of APA Style® and scholarly writing skills.



“Collaboration with the ProWritingAid team has been invaluable; they have worked with us to understand and address use cases specific to APA Style.”

**LINDSAY HINMAN**  
Senior Product Manager  
APA



APA Style is the definitive academic writing style used by students in psychology, social sciences, education, nursing, and many other majors. The authoritative resource for APA Style is the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). It is used by hundreds of scientific journals and textbooks.

APA Style guidelines span many areas and take time and practice to learn. Academic Writer was missing a key feature: automated grammar checking for both common mistakes and errors specific to APA Style. APA needed a sophisticated rule engine to be applied. Grammar checking is an expected feature of modern writing environments but is hugely complex and expensive to develop from scratch.

APA approached us at ProWritingAid to provide this missing piece. Because our style and grammar checking had already been incorporated into products used by hundreds of thousands of users, APA benefitted from our years of experience backed by a rock-solid infrastructure. We could also provide a plugin for APA's text editor that they could integrate seamlessly and quickly into Academic Writer.



"ProWritingAid's style guide tool gives us the flexibility to add our own custom rules; this specificity is very helpful to students as they learn and apply APA Style guidelines."

LINDSAY HINMAN  
Senior Product Manager  
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## The Advantage of Using ProWritingAid's Style Guide

In 2019, we released our **style guide tool**, which allows users to create custom style rules. This tool offered the solution to the challenge of helping users correct APA Style errors.

Hundreds of corporate and education clients now use our style guide tool to customize ProWritingAid and highlight any style

inconsistencies within their written documents. APA's style experts, working with our in-house Natural Language Processing (NLP) team, used the tool to automate APA Style guidelines for grammar and writing and integrate them within Academic Writer. As a result, students can see highlights indicating

APA Style mistakes in their papers as well as suggestions for general grammar and spelling improvements.

The difference from other style guide tools comes in the sophistication of the rules that can be created with our style guide tool.



## How Does the Style Guide Tool Work?

Let's walk through an example.

APA Style guidelines state that Latin abbreviations are acceptable within parentheses but not in the narrative text. For instance, "etc." is acceptable within parentheses, but the full term "and so forth" should be used in the narrative.

- ✓ We considered the school subjects of chemistry, math, and so forth.
- ✓ We considered the school subjects (chemistry, math, etc.).
- ✗ We considered the school subjects of chemistry, math, etc.

With ProWritingAid's style guide tool, APA could automate this rule by creating two commands. The first identifies all uses of "etc." in a document. A popup in Academic Writer provides a one-click option to change "etc." to "and so forth" and is accompanied by an explanation for the user.

A second command then creates an exception so that any correct uses of "etc." (within parentheses) aren't flagged.



## Seamless Integration

By creating rules and exceptions in this way, APA has been able to incorporate their specific style guidelines into Academic Writer using ProWritingAid's style guide tool. Users can now check for grammar, spelling, and style mistakes while in the flow of writing and without having to leave Academic Writer.

**The challenge of writing a great academic paper just got a whole lot easier.**

