

PUBLICATIONS WRITING STYLE GUIDE

A guide for Department of Education staff when preparing and drafting material for publications, documents and the website.

It also includes a photograph checklist.

This guide does not cover correspondence. For correspondence please refer to the Correspondence Style Guide.

WRITTEN STYLE	4
Audience	4
Font	4
Headings	4
Plain English	4
References to Department of Education	6
References to schools.....	6
References to TAFE, training providers and registered training organisations.....	6
Spacing	Error! Bookmark not defined.
CONVENTIONS	7
Abbreviations and contractions	7
Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders	7
Acronyms	8
Ampersands	
Apostrophes	8
Brackets	9
Capital letters	9
Commas.....	10
Commonly confused/misused words	10
Conferences, awards and events titles.....	11
Contact details	12
Dashes	12
Dates	13
Dot points	13
Hyphens	13
‘Ise’ or ‘ize’?	14
Numbers.....	15
Points of the compass.....	16
Qualifications.....	16
Quotes – direct.....	16
Quotes – indirect	17
Quote marks.....	17
Referring to books, journals, legislation, newspapers and policies.....	18
Books and reports	18
Journals, periodicals and newspapers	18
Legislation	18
Plays, poems, musical compositions, films, videos and television programs	18
Policies, programs and agreements	18
Song titles and episodes of radio and television services	18
Websites.....	18
Schools and district education offices	18
Spelling	19
Students with special educational needs	19
Tab stops	19
Telephone numbers	19
Website call to action	20
Western Australia	20
WRITING CHECKLIST	21
GUIDELINES FOR PHOTOGRAPHY	22
APPENDIX 1: CATALOGUING IN PUBLICATION	223
Barcode.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
ISBNs	23
ISSNs	23
Metadata	23
APPENDIX 2: GUIDELINES FOR EFFECTIVE ADVERTISEMENTS	24
APPENDIX 3: AUSTRALIAN, COMMONWEALTH OR FEDERAL GOVERNMENT?	25
Reference to ‘Australian Government’	25

Department Names	25
Use of the term 'Commonwealth'	25
Enquiries	25

WRITTEN STYLE

Audience

The most important consideration when writing material for public is the AUDIENCE. Specifying the audience as much as possible will ensure that the information is relevant and meaningful.

Try to give draft text to the target audience for feedback.

When writing for parents, remember that they have 'children' and not 'students' whereas teachers have 'students' in their classrooms.

People with disability should be able to receive information in alternative formats and the availability of these formats should be promoted wherever possible.

Font

Please use the following when drafting material for publication which will then be typeset or put on the website:

- Arial
- 11 point.

Headings

It is preferred for headings to be in sentence case for ease of reading. For example:

- Public schools
- What do I need to know?
- Further information and contact details

Plain English

All text for publication MUST be written:

- in plain language – using active voice where possible
- clearly and concisely
- for the target audience
- to promote key objectives/messages.

Plain English also means using words and phrases normally used in conversation rather than those used in legal documents.

Examples:

Avoid	Use
Accommodation	Where you live, home
Accompanying	With
Acquire	Buy, get
Advise	Tell, say
Align	Line up, in line
Allocate	Give
Along the lines of	Like
Amendment	Change
Anticipate	Expect
Apparent	Clear, obvious
Applicant	You

Avoid	Use
Application	Use
As a consequence of	Because
As of the date of	From
As regards	About
Assist	Help
At the moment	Now
Commence	Start
Complete	Finish
Completion	End
Consequently	So
Constitute	Make up
Correspond	Write
Currently	Now
Delete	Cross out
Disclose	Show, tell
Discontinue	Stop, end
Enable	Allow
Endeavour	Try
Ensure	Make sure
Establish	Show, set up
Evaluate	Test, check out
Facilitate	Help
Following	After
In case of	if
In conjunction with	And, with
In order that	So that
In order to	To
In relation to	About
In the near future	Soon
In the provision of	Provide
Initiate	Start
Irrespective of	Despite, even if
Intend to	Will
Locate	Find, put
(It is) mandatory	(you) must
Nevertheless	But
Numerous	Many
Over (when referring to numbers)	More than
Per annum	Year
Personnel	People, staff
Persons	People, anyone
Possess	Have, own
Provision of	Provide
Purchase	Buy
Represent	Show, stand for
Report	Tell
Request	Ask
Reside	Live
Restriction	Limit
Requirements	Needs, rules
Submit	Send, give
Sufficient	Enough
Terminate	End, stop
Thus	So
Utilise	Use
Whereas	But
Whilst	While

References to Department of Education

The first reference is to the 'Department of Education'. Thereafter, the correct reference is to 'the Department'. When referring to the Department a capital 'D' must be used. If the publication is lengthy, it may be appropriate to use the Department of Education at the beginning of each section and thereafter refer to the Department.

Do NOT use an acronym (DOE / DoE / doe / doE). The only exception is for some forms or similar where a reference is needed. In this case the approved acronym is DOE (eg DOE 239).

References to schools

When referring to public schools, the term 'public' is to be used and not the term 'government' or 'state' or 'State'.

When referring to private schools, the term 'private' is to be used and not the term 'non-government'. If the reference is specifically to a sector within the private school sectors then the correct terminology is 'Catholic school(s)' and 'independent school(s)'.

When referring to a particular school, the full name of the school should be used in all public documents. An abbreviated name of the school may be used in internal Department documents only.

For example:

Public arena	Department only
Kelmscott Senior High School	Kelmscott SHS
Shenton College	Shenton College
Kalgoorlie Primary School	Kalgoorlie PS

References to TAFE, training providers and registered training organisations

When referring to TAFE colleges and/or public/private training providers use the term 'registered training organisations'.

Spacing

One spacebar space must be used between sentences when material is going to be typeset.

Two 'enter' spaces must be used at the end of a paragraph.

CONVENTIONS

Abbreviations and contractions

An abbreviation is a shortened form of a word (or words) that consists of the initial letter alone, or the initial letter followed by letters other than the final one.

The abbreviations etc, eg and ie do not end with a full stop. Etc is preceded or followed by a comma only when the sentence structure demands it: ie and eg are both preceded by a comma but there is no comma after them or dots after the letters. Similarly et al, viz, qv, non seq and so on.

A contraction is a shortened form of a word (or words) that ends in the same letter as the word itself:

- Mr
- Dr
- Pty Ltd

Contractions are not followed by a full stop unless they end a sentence.

Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders

The preferred terms are:

- Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders
- Aboriginal people (if you are also referring to Torres Strait Islanders reference needs to be made in the document that the term is inclusive of this group of people).

Other group terms that are also acceptable are:

- Aboriginal people
- Aboriginal Australians
- Torres Strait Islanders.

When referring to individuals use the noun:

- Aboriginal person
- Torres Strait Islander.

These words are also recommended as the preferred adjectives. Do not use the term Aborigine.

Terms such as 'Indigenous', 'Islander(s)', 'ATSI', 'TSIs' and 'TIs' must not be used.

Note that the accepted spelling of the Aboriginal language group of the south west of Western Australia is Noongar.

Always use capital A for Aboriginal.

Acronyms

The full name must be used for the first reference, followed by the acronym or initials in brackets. For example:

- Tertiary Entrance Rank (TER)
- Tertiary Entrance Score (TES).

Avoid using acronyms in headings where possible as it unnecessarily clutters the page.

Ampersands

Do NOT use ampersands except in very specific circumstances like P&C Association or P&C and where an ampersand is part of the name of a particular organisation.

Apostrophes

Apostrophes have two main uses:

- (i) to indicate the omission of letters, for example: she'll, he'd, can't
- (ii) to indicate possession in nouns.

Omission of letters in the examples above should not be used in publications, eg she will, he did, cannot.

When indicating possession, the placement of the apostrophe depends on whether the noun that shows possession is singular or plural. If the noun is singular, the apostrophe goes before the 's', eg the student's books. If the noun is plural, the apostrophe goes after the 's', eg the students' books. If the plural of the word does not take an 's', the apostrophe comes before the 's', eg Susan entered the women's room with an armload of children's clothing.

Apostrophes must not be used for simple plurals or when abbreviating expressions such as:

- equivalent full teaching areas (EFTAs)
- full-time equivalents (FTEs)
- CDs
- DVDs
- RTOs

or when referring to a number of years, for example:

- ...during the 1980s, schools became——.

If the above is used in a possessive sense, an apostrophe must be used. For example:

- ...the 1980s' major events were——.

Other examples of the use of apostrophes include:

- States and Territories', eg the States and Territories' school entry ages.
- Parents and Citizens' Association – this must be used regardless of any correspondent's letterhead.

Apostrophes for multiples include:

- The girls' bikes are on the verge.
- The boys' bags need to go outside.

Brackets

Use round brackets within a sentence. It is undesirable to use brackets within brackets but, if unavoidable, use square brackets [].

The full stop is placed within the brackets if the sentence within the brackets is complete. If the text inside the brackets is incomplete, the full stop is placed outside the closing bracket.

Capital letters

Capital letters must be used for proper nouns and acronyms, for example:

- (i) When referring to Aboriginal people the word 'Aboriginal' must always have a capital letter, for example:
 - Aboriginal pre-schools
 - non-Aboriginal students
 - Aboriginal trainers and teachers.
- (ii) When referring to a specific state or territory of Australia, capital letters must be used, for example:
 - This State is committed to education reform (referring to the State of Western Australia).
- (iii) When referring to a specific government, capital letters must be used for the title:
 - the Western Australian Government
 - the Australian Government (see appendix)
 - the State Government
 - the Government.
- (iv) When the word is used in a non-specific sense or as an adjective, lower case must be used. For example:
 - the role of any government is to...
 - government agencies
 - non-government organisations.
- (v) Lower case must be used for nouns used in a non-specific sense. For example:
 - district education office
 - central office
 - principal
 - head of department
 - deputy principal.

Capital letters must always be used for names that identify nationalities, races, tribes, inhabitants of a particular area of a country, adherents of particular religions, languages and language groups. For example:

- American
- Buddhist.

- (vi) Capital letters must also be used in reference to:
- a particular school term, eg Term 3
 - the Department
 - a particular school semester, eg Semester 2, but second semester (lower case)
 - a particular year level of students, eg Year 7, Year 11 students
 - Tertiary Entrance Examination, Tertiary Entrance Rank and Tertiary Entrance Score
 - the title of a position when it is used in conjunction with the person's name, eg
Mr Jones, Principal
Ms Brown, Director, Schools.

Commas

Sentence example:

- (i) "It should be stressed, however, that the Department will...."
- (ii) "It was very distressing, however the child was not to blame."

Commonly confused/misused words

Ones or one's: The genitive of the pronoun *one* always uses an apostrophe. For example: One should always wash *one's* feet. The only situation in which *ones* can be used is as the plural of the number 1.

Practice or practise: Practice is always a noun except in the United States. Practicing and practiced are therefore spelling errors in non-US English. The correct spellings are practising and practised. For example: John needed more *practice* playing the flute so he went to music lessons to *practise*. The following words work in the same way (the noun is spelled with a 'c' and the verb is spelled with a 's'): licence and license, advice and advise, device and devise.

Accept or except: Except is a preposition that means 'apart from'; it is also used as a verb meaning to leave out. Accept is a verb that means 'agree with', 'take in' or 'receive'. For example: We accept all major credit cards, except American Express.

Affect or effect: Affect is a verb meaning 'to influence something'. As a noun affect has a technical meaning in psychology 'an emotion or subjectively experienced feeling'. For example: This poem *affected* me so much that I cried. Effect is a noun meaning 'the result of'; effect can also be used as a formal verb meaning 'to cause [something] to be'. For example: Temperature has an *effect* on reaction spontaneity.

Comprise: To comprise means 'to consist of' or 'to include'. Redundant uses can sometimes be found with 'to comprise of' and 'to be comprised of'. These may be confused with the correct forms 'to consist of' and 'to be composed of'. For example: The *Courses and careers guide* comprises training course information.

Discreet or discrete: Discreet means 'circumspect'. Discrete means 'having separate parts'.

Diffuse or defuse: Diffusion refers to the dispersal of fluid or solid waste into a medium. Defuse means to disengage an electromagnetic field.

Exacerbate or exasperate: Exacerbate means 'to make worse'. Exasperate means 'to exhaust' (usually someone's patience).

Hoard or horde: A hoard is a store or accumulation of things. For example: He has a *hoard* of discontinued rare cards. A horde is a large group of people. For example: A *horde* of shoppers lined up to be the first to buy the new gadget.

It's or its: It's is a contraction that replaces it is or it has. For example: *It's* time to eat. Its is the possessive pronoun corresponding to it (like *his* corresponds to *he*). For example: My mobile phone has poor reception because *its* antenna is broken.

Lay (lay, laid, laying) or lie (lie, lay, lain, lying): Lay and lie are often used synonymously. The distinction between these related verbs is further blurred by the fact that the past tense of *lie* is *lay*. A quick test is to see if the word in question could be replaced with recline; if it can, Standard English requires *lie*. Lay means to place something. Lie means to recline. For example: You should not *lie* down right after eating a large meal. Yesterday I *lay* on my bed for half an hour after dinner. My wife saw me *lying* there and made me get up; she told me that if I had waited for a couple of hours I could have *lain* down in perfect comfort.

Levee or levy: A levee is a structure built along a river to raise the height of its banks (like a dike). For example: The Netherlands is well known for its elaborate system of *levees*. To levy is to impose a tax or a military draft; levy, as a noun, is an assessment or army thus gathered. For example: This statute allows the State to *levy* a 3% tax.

Loathe, loth or loath: Loathe is used only as a verb in Standard English; it is often used for *loth* or *loath* in phrases such as 'she was loathe to accept'.

Myself: Myself should only be used when both the subject and object of the verb are the speaker, or as an emphatic pronoun (intensifier). For example (intensifier): I *myself* have seen instances of that type. For example (reflexive): I hurt *myself*. I did it to *myself*.

Sight, site or cite: Sight is something seen. For example: You're a *sight* for sore eyes. A site is a place. For example: I was looking at a tourist *site* for Rome. To cite is to quote or list as a source. For example: Please *cite* the sources you used in your essay.

Than or then: Than is a grammatical particle and preposition associated with comparatives. For example: I like pizza more *than* lasagne. Then is an adverb and a noun. For example: We ate dinner and *then* went to the movies.

There, their or they're: There refers to the location of something. Their means 'belonging to them'. They're is a contraction of 'they are'. For example: Since *they're* all coming to the restaurant for *their* dinner, we'll meet them *there*.

You're or your: You're is a contraction of 'you are'. For example: If *you're* going out, please be home for dinner. Your is a possessive pronoun meaning 'belonging to you'. For example: When driving, always wear *your* seatbelt.

Won't or wont: Won't is a contraction of 'will not'. For example: He *won't* let me drive his car. Wont is an adjective meaning 'accustomed or inclined to'. For example: He spent the morning reading, as he was *wont* to do.

Conferences, awards and events titles

Use initial capitals in title headings and lower case when referring to 'the events', 'the awards' or 'the conference' later in the text. For example:

- 'WA Education Awards' in the first instance and 'the awards' thereafter
- 'Young Originals Exhibition' in the first instance and 'the exhibition' thereafter
- 'ASLA XXI Biennial Conference' in the first instance and 'the conference' thereafter.

Contact details

Use the following format for contact details on brochures and other marketing material:

Find out more:

W: Teaching WA at det.wa.edu.au

E: teachingwa@det.wa.edu.au

T: 9264 5774 or 1800 645 461

F: 9264 4571

When directing people to a contact person or number, use the general term 'contact' when a number of contact options are given, for example:

To find out more about the study options in Years 11 and 12, contact your local school on telephone 9222 2222, email susan.smith@det.wa.edu.au or visit det.wa.edu.au.

Do not use the term 'contact' when a specific contact option is given, for example:

To find out more about the study options in Years 11 and 12, telephone Susan Smith on 9222 2222. To apply for a place at the school email registrar@det.wa.edu.au.

Dashes

There are two main types of dashes:

- the en dash (–)
- the em dash (—).

The en dash is preferred and must be used in all publications. When using the en dash in text, include a space either side of the en dash, for example:

To assist you with class preparation, time during school hours is scheduled into your week – this is known as DOTT time (Duties Other Than Teaching).

In the instance of numbers there are no spaces either side of the dash, for example:

- 14–17 January 2004
- pages 31–35
- 15–18 kilometres.

The hyphen (-) is sometimes referred to as a dash. It is treated separately on pages 14 and 15.

Do not use the en dash:

- as a substitute for 'and' with the word 'between', eg the period between 1975 and 1999
- with the word 'from', eg from 1975 to 1999.

Dates

The following formats must be used for dates:

- (i) Where just the date and year are used:
19 August 2009
- (ii) Where it is appropriate to include the day and the date:
Wednesday 19 August 2009
- (iii) Where reference is made to a period of days, the following format is preferred:
15 to 19 August 2009

However in publications where there are lots of dates, the following may be appropriate:

15–19 August 2009 (en dash with no space either side)

- (iv) Where reference is made to a period of years, including a financial year, the following format must be used: 2008–09 NOT 2008–2009
- (v) Where it is necessary to use a numeric date, eg in a table, the following format must be used: 21.03.09 not 21/3/09

Dot points

If all of the dot points in a sentence are full sentences in themselves, each starts with a capital letter and ends with a full stop (see the first example below). If each dot point consists of a sentence fragment, no initial capital is used and there is no semi-colon or full stop at the end of each. The last dot point ends with a full stop.

Examples:

Full sentences

The committee came to two important conclusions:

- Officers from the Department should investigate options for new guidelines.
- Research should be funded in the three priority areas.

Sentence fragments

The three types of assistance available are:

- monetary assistance
- equipment or environmental modifications
- advisory services.

Hyphens

Hyphens must be used in the cases listed below:

Situation	Example
multi-age	multi-age grouping
non-Aboriginal	non-Aboriginal students
non-government	non-government organisations
non-payment	non-payment of charges
post-compulsory	post-compulsory students
pre-primary	pre-primary education
pre-apprenticeship	pre-apprenticeship studies

Two or more adjectives before a noun that act as one idea (one-thought adjectives) are traditionally connected with a hyphen.

Examples:

- This is a low-budget job. (The sense is not: this is a low job and a budget job. The words low and budget are linked into the single concept of 'low-budget'.)
- First-class decisions require clear-headed thinking.
- He has a devil-may-care attitude.

Variations and applications

Hyphenate words prefixed by ex-, self-, or all-, and some words prefixed by cross-.

Examples:

- Ex-wife; self-evident; all-inclusive.

Do not hyphenate words prefixed by un, in, dis, anti, hyper, pre, re, post, out, bi, counter, de, mis, mega, micro, inter, over and under (among others).

- Examples: uninfected, inpatient, disorder, disbar, antismoking, hyperactive, preoperative, prejudice, reoccur, readjust, resubmit, postoperative, outpatient, outmoded, bimonthly, biannual, counterculture, decompress, misinformed, misprint, megabyte, microcircuit, interconnected, interoffice, overemphasise, underestimated.

When the last letter of a single syllable prefix is the same as the first letter in the word that follows, a hyphen should be inserted to prevent misreading. For example:

- de-emphasise not deemphasise
- pre-eminent not preeminent
- re-enter not reenter
- post-traumatic not posttraumatic
- hyper-realism not hyperrealism
- counter-revolutionary not counterrevolutionary
- under-represent not underrepresent.

In some words that are well known, this practice is less crucial and there are some exceptions to the rule above. For example, in the following cases hyphens are no longer used:

- cooperate
- coordinate
- airconditioning
- Statewide.

'Ise' or 'ize'?

The first spelling provided in *The Macquarie Dictionary* must be used, that is:

- realise
- organise
- recognise.

If, however, a body uses the spelling 'Organization' in its title, care must be taken to use that spelling in the address and text of letters sent to it.

Numbers

Numbers nine and under are expressed in words in descriptive or narrative texts and above nine are numbers. Examples:

- There are currently nine schools awaiting upgrades; 35 have been completed.
- There will be 53 people at the official opening.
- The school is 84 years old.

Numbers that start a sentence must be expressed in words even when other numbers in the same passage are shown in figures. Figures are preferred in works of a mathematical, scientific, technical or statistical nature.

Numbers over 99 are shown in words when the numerical expressions are used to convey an approximation or are used in a casual way:

- A few hundred men, ten million sheep and a thousand dogs.
- I don't know how many – perhaps two hundred or more.

Numbers must be expressed as figures when they accompany a symbol or a unit of measurement in tabulations such as:

sums of money	\$5.08 23c \$4 million, not \$4m or \$4M
time	10.30am 12.00noon 50 minutes 1800 WST
mass	250 t 120 kg 50 g
measures	57 L 26 km 16 mm
degrees of inclination	An angle of 45 degrees or 45°
percentages	9 per cent or 9%, not <i>percent</i> or <i>p.c.</i> but <i>per centum</i> may be appropriate in legal work
ages	Their average age was 16 years. He claimed to be 18 years old when he enrolled.
school/college year	Year 1 K–12 Term 2 Semester 1

Use Roman numerals when referring to certificate level qualifications. For example:

- Certificate I in —
- Certificate II in —
- Certificate III in —
- Certificate IV in —.

Where it is necessary to use figures for numbers rather than words, do not use a comma or space between each set of three digits for numbers between 1000 and 9999. Use space (not a comma) for numbers 10 000 and greater.

When using numbers as bullet points use the number only; there is not a full stop afterwards, eg

- 1 (text here)
- 2 (text here)
- 3 (text here)

Points of the compass

When referring to points of the compass refer to the point in full, eg south-eastern or north-western.

Qualifications

When referring to certificate level qualifications use 'in'. For example:

- Certificate II in Multimedia.
- Certificate II in Hospitality.

When referring to diploma, bachelor and master level qualifications use 'of'. For example:

- Diploma of Community Services Management
- Diploma of Laboratory Technology
- Bachelor of Arts
- Master of Business.

Use capitals only when referring to a specific qualification. Use lower case when referring generally to the qualification.

For example: The masters degree at the university is very competitive.

Quotes – direct

The correct format for a direct quote is to open the quote using quotation marks, write the quote, insert a comma, close the quote using quotation marks and attribute who made the statement.

For subsequent direct quotes open the quote using quotation marks, write the quote and insert a full stop. The correct format for the final direct quote is to open the quote using quotation marks, write the quote, insert a full stop and close the quote using quotation marks. For example:

“There was some incredible competition during the heats and an impressive array of genres including soul, jazz, funk, metal, punk and classic rock,” Ms Harrison said.

“There were bands that had formed only months before and others which were seasoned professionals and had been together for years.

“Yet each band which took to the stage displayed true professionalism and the standard of performance really impressed the judges.”

If a direct quote is needed with a direct quote, use single quote marks for the second quote, eg:

“I am sure that Macbeth said ‘Out damn spot’ in Shakespeare’s play,” said Susan.

Quotes – indirect

When using an indirect quote for the first time, state the name of the Department followed by the person's title and their name – you don't need to use the person's salutation, eg Mr, Ms, Miss, Doctor, etc.

When you use an indirect quote again, use the person's salutation, followed by their last name. When the person being profiled is under 25 years of age you can use their first name to attribute them.

Example 1:

Department of Education Deputy Director General Schools Margery Evans said the judges had the huge task of choosing this year's semi-finalists because of the quality of nominations.

Ms Evans said the Department received 169 nominations across the six categories for this year's awards and the field has been narrowed down to 35 semi-finalists.

Example 2:

Department of Education Director General Sharyn O'Neill said the building program was the largest undertaken in WA public schools.

Ms O'Neill said the program was a huge undertaking which would benefit every schools in the State.

Quote marks

Use double quote marks ("and") for direct conversation being quoted. See **Quotes – direct** above.

Use single quote marks ('and') when a word or phrase is unusual. For example:

The research indicated that those respondents with 'space-age' computers were more likely to spell correctly.

Ensure the curly quote option is always checked in word processing applications.

Referring to books, journals, legislation, newspapers and policies

Books and reports

The titles of books and reports are always in italics and minimal capitalisation is recommended – eg The Minister tabled the *Department of Education annual report to Parliament* in October.

Journals, periodicals and newspapers

The titles of journals are always in Italics with maximal capitalisation – eg Have you read the latest edition of the *Quarterly Review of Science Teaching* which was previewed in *The Australian*?

If a publication contains frequent references to newspaper material, it may be best to abbreviate the newspaper titles: *SMH*, for example, could replace *Sydney Morning Herald*. The abbreviation, like the full title, is italicised.

Legislation

The titles of acts, ordinances and legal cases are always in italics with maximal capitalisation, and include the date – eg *School Education Act 1999*.

Plays, poems, musical compositions, films, videos and television programs

The titles of these are always in italics with minimal capitalisation – eg Have you seen *The man from Snowy River*?

Policies, programs and agreements

The titles of policies, programs and agreements are always in roman type and maximal capitalisation – eg The Department has updated its Curriculum Assessment and Reporting policy and has included details in the Smarter Schools National Partnership Agreement.

Song titles and episodes of radio and television series

The titles of songs and episodes of radio and television series are always in roman type within quotation marks and minimal capitalisation – eg ‘The hero of the day’ is due to run on *Four corners* next week.

Websites

Web addresses can be given directly in the text. For example:

- Details of the program are available from the Department’s website at det.wa.edu.au.
- The Department of Education website at det.wa.edu.au provides details of the program.

Schools and district education offices

When referring to schools or district education offices in general, lower case must be used. For example:

- ... district high schools throughout Western Australia
- ... all district education offices.

Correct nomenclature for the district is as follows:

- Each district is known as an education district which has an administrative centre that is known as the district education office.

Only use capitals when referring to a specific office or district, eg the Swan Education District; the Pilbara District Education Office.

Spelling

The following must be used:

- cannot, not can not;
- thank you, not thankyou
- advisor not adviser, as in careers advisor
- focused not focussed
- benefited not benefitted.

Consult *The Macquarie Dictionary* if there is any doubt about the correct spelling of a word.

Students with special educational needs

The term 'students with special educational needs' is to be used in documentation when referring to students requiring teaching and learning adjustments. Do not use acronyms.

Tab stops

Tab stops are used to line up text and numbers to the left, right, centre or to a decimal character or bar character. In Microsoft Word, automatic tabs are set across the page. When formatting documents for publication, these automatic tabs should NOT be used. Specific tabs should be set up for the document.

Example of what NOT to do:

Introduction to the website (tab) (tab) (tab) (tab) Page 3
How to access other website (tab) (tab) (tab) (tab) Page 6

Example of what TO DO:

Introduction to the website (tab) Page 3
How to access other website (tab) Page 6

Telephone numbers

The following styles are used for telephone and fax numbers:

- 9222 2222
- 1800 222 222
- 1300 222 222
- 13 22 22

When the publication is for use in Western Australia, do not include the area code, eg:
T: 9222 2222.

When the publication is for use across Australia, the area code is within brackets, eg:
T: (08) 9222 2222.

When the publication is for use outside Australia, the international code is used, eg:
T: +618 9222 2222.

Website call to action

The term 'visit' should be used when referring people to a website for more information. If the target audience is young people, the term 'check out' is preferred.

Examples:

- To find out more about parents and resources visit det.wa.edu.au.
- Visit Teaching WA at det.wa.edu.au.

Where possible, do not use www or http before the website address. Many websites can be accessed without using www in the address. Always test the website address before placing it in any publication.

Western Australia

When referring to Western Australia, use Western Australia NOT West Australia; likewise Western Australians and not West Australians.

Use Statewide NOT state-wide or State-wide.

WRITING CHECKLIST

- Are the objectives clear and accurate?
- Have you written the document for the target audience?
- Does the document meet the requirements of this style guide?
- Do the words flow easily?
- Is the structure clear and allows readers to find things easily?
- Avoid too many type and font styles which make the document harder to read.
- Use headings, boxes, tables, diagrams, captions, breakout quotes and illustrations to make the pages easier to read.
- Make sure the type and other visual elements are clear and sharp.
- Has the document been proofread for spelling and grammar?
- Have you obtained the necessary approvals?
- Does a draft of the document need to go to the Director General or the Minister's Office?
- Have forewords been approved by the person in whose name they are written?
- Is an acknowledgement page required?
- Does the publication require an ISBN/ISSN/SCIS? See Appendix 1.
- Is copyright clearance required? If so has it been obtained?
- Once the publication is produced, have the Legal Deposit requirements been met?

GUIDELINES FOR PHOTOGRAPHY

Photographs are a powerful visual image which can support publications and marketing activities. They can be an asset for a number of years if they are of high quality and set up appropriately to reflect public education.

Guidelines for students

- Clean, full school uniform must be worn.
- No hats to be worn for indoor photographs.
- Hats must be worn for outdoor photographs (for primary schools).
- No makeup, nail varnish, necklaces, bracelets, rings or facial piercings.
- Earrings should be small and unobtrusive.
- No writing on students' hands;
- If safety clothing (eg lab goggles) is normally worn in lessons, everyone in the photograph must be wearing the appropriate clothing.
- Only badges directly associated with the school should be worn.
- Hair should be combed/brushed and/or tied back. It must be tidy and out of the students' face and eyes.
- It is useful to have a box of tissues available, especially when photographs are being taken of younger students.
- Every student must have a talent release (permission) form completed and signed by their parent/carer.

Guidelines for teachers appearing in photographs

- No clothing with slogans or brands.
- Wear professional clothing you would usually wear to teach, avoiding loud patterns, stripes or checks as these don't usually photograph well.
- No hats to be worn for indoor photographs.
- Avoid wearing glasses with transition lenses as they look like sunglasses in photographs.
- If safety clothing such goggles or gloves are required for a particular class, they must be worn for the photographs.
- Every teacher must complete a talent release form allowing the Department to use the image.
- Teachers in photographs, and those setting up photographs, need to be aware of and adhere to the Department's Staff Conduct policy and guidelines regarding physical contact with students.

APPENDIX 1: CATALOGUING IN PUBLICATION

Curriculum Materials Information Systems (CMIS) Cataloguers provide catalogue records for all new publications produced by the Department of Education including books, videos and CD ROMs. This includes the provision of **ISBNs** and **ISSNs**. CMIS also assigns **metadata** to new Department of Education websites.

Barcode

The barcode is an ISBN in machine readable form. CMIS gives a barcode when an ISBN is assigned.

ISBN

The ISBN (International Standard Book Number) is a unique number assigned to a book title by its publisher for tracking and ordering purposes. Publishers, retailers, libraries, agencies and readers use the ISBN as a way to specify a particular book without confusion. CMIS holds the ISBN file for the Department of Education.

ISSN

The ISSN (International Standard Serial Number) is the standardised international code which allows the identification of any serial publication independently of its country of publication, its language or alphabet, or its frequency, medium, etc. As the ISSN file is held by an external agency, allocation of ISSNs will take longer than the allocation of ISBNs.

Metadata

Metadata is indexing information about the resource which is placed in the coding of the website. It is invisible to the user however it can be used by search facilities to make searching more precise. It is similar to a catalogue record for a physical resource.

T: Curriculum Materials Information Services – Cataloguing section on 9264 4927

APPENDIX 2: GUIDELINES FOR EFFECTIVE ADVERTISEMENTS

- The key to a good advertisement is being clear about who the audience is and what influences their decisions. For example, the parents of prospective students want to know about the quality of the teaching and programs at the school.
- Every advertisement needs a headline or caption. This is the first thing readers look at in your advertisement and should explain to your audience what it is that you are advertising.
- The text should be clear and concise, and not include jargon, get others to read your text to check for clarity and sense. Keep it simple.
- You should always have a call to action. What should the reader do to take the next step? Telephone numbers and addresses (including website) should appear as further contact details.
- Avoid using more than one font style. The font should be clean and easy to read. Font size should never be less than 8 point as anything less becomes very difficult to read in a newspaper.
- Avoid using any shading as this can make your advertisement appear dirty and cluttered.
- Pictures and images are only useful if they are relevant and of the highest quality and your advertisement is big enough for the picture to be meaningful. Newspaper reproduction is very different to photocopying and needs to follow certain quality controls. One good image is better than three bad ones.

APPENDIX 3: AUSTRALIAN, COMMONWEALTH OR FEDERAL GOVERNMENT?

In July 2003 Mr Peter Shergold, Secretary of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, wrote to all Department secretaries and indicated that departments and agencies would be required to use the term 'Australian Government' in all branding and replace all individual logos with the coat of arms as soon as possible.

Reference to 'Australian Government'

All references to 'Commonwealth' or 'Federal' Government should be to 'Australian Government' in all cases, on all products and in all websites.

Department names

When making reference to itself in the text of a document, it should be 'the Australian Government Department of XYZ'.

Use of the term 'Commonwealth'

The 'Commonwealth of Australia' is the legal entity established by the Constitution. It is sometimes referred to simply as 'the Commonwealth'. Where the term 'Commonwealth Government' is used, it will normally be appropriate to replace that term with 'Australian Government'. However, care will need to be taken not to replace references to the 'Commonwealth of Australia' or 'the Commonwealth', where that term is used to describe the entity established by the Constitution or in a geographic sense, with references to the Australian Government.

Enquiries

Awards and Culture Branch
Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
PO Box 6500
CANBERRA ACT 2600
T: 02 6271 5601
F: 02 6271 5662
E: governmentbranding@pmc.gov.au

Source: Australian Government Branding Design Guidelines. Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet. 2003. p.12.

http://www.dpmc.gov.au/guidelines/docs/design_guidelines_PMC.rtf

Current at: 1 November 2009

Supplied by Rob Lundie
Senior Researcher
Parliamentary Library
Department of Parliamentary Services
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
T: 02 6277 266
F: 02 6277 2532
E: rob.lundie@aph.gov.au