A style guide is a set of standards for writing. It is a record of the accepted spelling, punctuation, voice etc to be used in publications and webpages across an organisation. Following a style guide ensures consistency in language and a unified textual style, giving a suite of publications a polished and professional finish. The following is the accepted style at Macquarie University. Apply it across publications, printed materials, advertising, webpages and social media presences.

Where a term is not covered specifically in this style guide, refer to the resources in Appendix 5.

Abbreviations

Keep abbreviations clean and simple; do not use full stops. Some common abbreviations are:

- Dr
- eg
- etc
- GPA (in admission requirements use ‘with a GPA of X.X’)
- ie
- PhD
- USA

Keep the audience in mind when using abbreviations and acronyms. Where you use an acronym the audience would be unfamiliar with, spell out the full term on first reference:

- Australian Research Council (ARC) on first reference, ARC thereafter
- ARC National Key Centre for Geochemical Evolution and Metallogeny of Continents (GEMOC) on first reference, GEMOC thereafter
- Graduate Medical School Admission Test (GAMSAT) on first reference, GAMSAT thereafter
- National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) on first reference, NHMRC thereafter

(note: You only need to include the acronym in parentheses if you use the acronym later in the publication – but try to keep it simple for the reader.)

- EXCEPTION: MUSE (Macquarie University Spatial Experience) on first reference, MUSE thereafter
- EXCEPTION: PACE (Professional and Community Engagement) on first reference, PACE thereafter

State names should not be abbreviated in body copy:

- Macquarie University is located in New South Wales
- EXCEPTION: when 'NSW' is part of an official name (eg NSW Department of Education)
- EXCEPTION: when writing an official address (see ‘addresses’)

Always refer to the University in the following ways:

- Macquarie University
- Macquarie (after first reference)
- the University

Never use the following abbreviations for any reason:

- MU
- MQU
- MUH
- MUSAC
- MUSCC
Capitalises

Keep capitals to a minimum. They should only be used at the start of a sentence and for proper nouns.

Institutional names should be capitalised when referring to specific bodies:
- Macquarie University or the University
- Faculty of Business and Economics
- Department of Ancient History
- Macquarie University Sydney City Campus
- Office of the Vice-Chancellor

However, when referring to these institutions in general use lower case:
- universities/attending university
- faculties/the faculty
- departments/the department
- offices/the office

Event names

Official events should appear with initial capitals on each major word:
- Open Day
- Info Day
- Careers Advisers and Teachers Day
- Postgraduate Information Evening
- TEDxMacquarieUniversity (note: this is all one word)

(see Appendix 1 for more)

For lectures or longer event names, particularly including punctuation, follow this format:
- Free Korean language classes
- Chemistry in industry
- Women’s literature: Writing from the heart
- Movies at Macquarie – Wall Street: Money Never Sleeps

Macquarie-specific terms

Capitalise the names of specific courses, majors and units:
- Bachelor of Science
- Master of Arts
- Spatial Information Science, Writing (note: these are the names of majors)
- Human Rights and Moral Dilemmas, Supervised Internship II (note: these are the names of units)
- People units, Planet units and PACE units (the three Ps)

Any term used generally should be lower case:
- areas of study – eg business, health and medical sciences
- subjects – eg geography, biology
- major – eg We offer more than 50 majors in the Bachelor of Arts.
- non-award
- bachelor – eg He has a bachelor degree.
- masters – eg She has a masters degree.
- domestic students
- international students
- students

(note: Retain lower case for ‘what you can study’ lists in course guides and similar publications even when some subjects happen to be unit names. These are treated as general lists.)
Research priorities
Capitalise the names of these:
- Healthy People, Resilient Societies, Prosperous Economies, Secure Planet, Innovative Technologies

Learning and teaching priorities
- Connected Learning Community, Connected Learning Experience, Connected Curriculum, Connected People

Other terms
- seasons should appear in lower case unless part of a proper name – eg Summer School, MALS Winter Week, this winter has been mild, keep safe this summer

Captions
Unless used in a purely decorative sense, all images should have captions explaining the content and context, and reinforcing the message of the text. This applies in print and online.

Follow this format for three different styles of caption:
- Short label (to be used when only a person or place needs to be identified):
  PhD candidate Susan Smith
  Campus Hub
  Macquarie University train station
  (note: no full stop as these are not full sentences)
- Long label (to be used to identify a group of people):
  (L-R) Professor S Bruce Downton, Vice-Chancellor, Macquarie University; Peter Pettigrew, CEO, Disney; and Sarah Silverman, Human Resources Director, Microsoft
  (note: no full stop as this is not a full sentence; semicolons are used here because commas are used between names and titles – see Appendix 2)
- Explainer (to be used to give context to the image):
  World-leading researcher Professor Rob Harcourt is applying pioneering technology to the conservation of critically endangered species.
  (note: Where possible, explain the significance of what is going on in the photograph.)

Contact details
Keep formatting of contact details neat and tidy; use the following formats as they make contact details easy to read.

(For local publications)
T: (02) 9850 XXXX
F: (02) 9850 XXXX
E: firstname.surname@mq.edu.au
samplewebaddress.mq.edu.au

(For international publications)
T: +61 (2) 9850 XXXX
F: +61 (2) 9850 XXXX
E: firstname.surname@mq.edu.au
samplewebaddress.mq.edu.au

(note: Only include fax numbers where someone might actually need it.)

When referring to contact details simply state the method rather than using 'please':
- contact
- call
- visit

Coursework-specific terms
It is vital to be consistent when referring to coursework terms. The following are the accepted conventions.

Codes (majors, programs, units)
XXXX1111 (hard up, no spaces)

Corequisites
Should appear in the following formats:
- ABEC123
- ABEC123 and ABEC124
- ABEC123 or ABEC154 or ABEC157
- 4cp from ABEC100–120, ABEC250–299 (note: Use an en dash as this is a range.)
- ABEC123 or (ABEC100 and ABEC101)

Credit points
There are two accepted ways of referring to credit points:
- 6cp
- 6 credit points

Level
There are two accepted ways of referring to level of study:
- 200-level XXX units (note: Use a hyphen as this is a compound modifier.)
- XXX units at 200 level

Not to Count for Credit With (NCCW)
NCCW entries in the handbook and coursework information should be separated by commas – eg ABC123, BCA224

Prerequisites
Should appear in the following formats:
- ATAR of 98.80 (note: Always use two decimal places when presenting ATARs.)
- Admission to BBA
- a GPA of 3.0 (note: Always use one decimal place when presenting GPAs.)
- ABEC123
- ABEC123(P) – pass in unit required
- ABEC123(Cr) – credit in unit required
- 3cp in ABEC units at 200 level
- Permission of Executive Dean of Faculty
- OPTO221 and OPTO222 and OPTO321
- Admission to BBA and 15cp and BUS201
- Admission to BBA or (18cp and a GPA of 2.5)

Costs
Format admission fees to events as:
- Cost: $20, $15 concession

When presenting international fees:
- AU$27,000
- AUD in table headers
CRICOS codes

The University's Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS) provider number should be used in all communications presenting Macquarie as an educational institution that have the potential to reach international students. The number should be presented as: CRICOS Provider 00002J (note: These are zeros, not capital Os.) The University is also issued with a CRICOS code for each degree that is available to international students. For compliance with Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) legislation, the course code should be included when promoting a specific degree. The code should be formatted as: CRICOS Code XXXXXX (note: Never use 'CRICOS Provider No 00002J' or 'CRICOS Provider Number 00002J'.)

Specifications from the ESOS framework

These materials require the CRICOS provider number to be included:
- information about courses for overseas students including course outlines if used to market courses and recruit students – both online and offline
- information about living in Australia if it is used as a tool to market to and recruit students and if it has been produced for or by the provider for the purpose of marketing to and recruiting students
- an advertisement for courses for international students in an Australian or foreign newspaper
- materials that promote and advertise courses with a provider (including cards which may be considered more advertisements than conventional business cards)
- a letterhead, signature block or footer used in letters making offers to students, promoting courses or for other marketing purposes
- emails that are sent to students offering enrolment or informing students of courses.

These materials would not generally require the CRICOS provider number to be included:
- envelopes
- conventional business cards that give provider contact details only
- job advertisements unless they are used to promote studying with a provider
- student handbooks that are distributed after the student has enrolled with a provider
- general information that is relevant to domestic students only
- any other information that does not market courses to overseas students.


Where to include the CRICOS provider number and other codes

Include the CRICOS provider number in small print in a subtle area. For print publications, this is usually on the back cover, inside back cover or pages 2 or 3. If the publication also requires a job code, such as from an agency or freelance designer, ensure this is separated from the CRICOS provider number to avoid confusion – eg if CRICOS Provider 00002J is in the lower left corner of the back cover, include the job code on the lower right corner.

Degree names

Spell out in full:
- Bachelor of Arts – Psychology (note: Use an en dash here, not a hyphen.)
- Bachelor of Business
- Bachelor of Engineering (Honours)
- Bachelor of Actuarial Studies with Bachelor of Laws (note: Never use ‘with the degree of’; no need to specify ‘double degree’.)
- Bachelor of Arts majoring in Ancient History – Ancient Languages (note: Never use ‘Bachelor of Arts in Ancient History – Ancient Languages’ or ‘with a major in’.)
- Bachelor of Arts majoring in Linguistics; and Media, Culture and Communication (note: List double majors alphabetically; a semicolon is used here because ‘Media, Culture and Communication’ already has a comma in it.)
- Master of Commerce specialising in Accounting
- Bachelor degree
- Bachelor of degree
- Bachelor of degree

Distance

Spell out in full where possible in body copy. Tables and social media uses can abbreviate:
- the train station is 500 metres away (500m in tables and social media)
- Macquarie’s North Ryde campus is 15 kilometres from the Sydney CBD (15km in tables and social media)
Lists

There are three acceptable forms of list: individual items, run-on sentences and full sentences. In each instance, entries or terms should appear in alphabetical order unless there is a clear market need otherwise, or they are steps in an ordered process.

When listing single items without a sentence, no punctuation is necessary after the colon:

• books
• pens
• paper

When using run-on sentences, remember to:

• start each line with lower case
• not put a comma or semicolon at the end of each line
• check that each entry completes the sentence
• end with a full stop.

However, sometimes using full sentences is the best option, as when each bullet point could stand alone as its own sentence:

• Use an initial capital at the start of each bullet point.
• Use a full stop at the end of each bullet point.

(see Appendix 5 for information about short URLs)

Online with hyperlinks:

• Visit the Macquarie University Sydney City Campus website for more information.
• Email the Brand Compliance team for more information.

(see also Websites and special cases for the web)

Names and titles

Use titles, along with the first name, the first time a name is referenced but only where that person is a Dr, Professor, ChiefJustice etc. Do not use Mr, Mrs, Ms etc. Subsequent references should be surname only for staff, and first name only for students:

• Professor Bob Brown at first use, then Brown
• Dr Brian Boitano at first use, then Boitano
• The Hon Michael Egan AO at first use, then Egan
• Jane Smith at first use, then Jane (note: Jane is a student.)

The only exception to this rule is with regard to the Vice-Chancellor:

• Professor S Bruce Dowton, Vice-Chancellor, at first use, then Professor Dowton

Where someone uses an English name or nickname in place of their formal given name, include the non-formal name in parentheses only if they’ve requested it:

• Xiaomin (Charlie) Li

Refer to staff or alumni by the first name only in casual publications (such as This Week at Macquarie University) or social media, and when referring to patrons.
Within body copy, use the following format for professional titles:
• Professor S Bruce Dowton, Vice-Chancellor, Macquarie University, invites you to ...
• Professor Mark Gabhott, Executive Dean, Faculty of Business and Economics
• Professor Sakkie Pretorius, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)
• Professor Sherman Young, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching)
   (note: Follow the above format for all DVC and PVC positions with brackets around the designation. Do not use extra commas or en dashes.)
   (note: For those in a position temporarily, include ‘Acting’ or ‘Interim’ before the title or ‘Pro Tem’ after the title – eg Acting Executive Dean, Interim Chief Marketing Officer, Deputy Vice-Chancellor Pro Tem)
   (note: Do not abbreviate position titles or descriptions except in social media, where characters are limited. Accepted abbreviations in this case include ‘Assoc Dean’, ‘Assoc Prof’ and ‘Exec Dean’)

When listing multiple people and their titles, separate them with semicolons. (See Appendix 2.)
• Pip Marlow, Managing Director, Microsoft Australia; Associate Professor Ian Solomonides, Director, Learning and Teaching Centre; and David Wilkinson, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Corporate Engagement and Advancement), attended a conference.

Names and titles in pull-out quotes
(see Quotes)

Names of publications
(see Titles)

Numbers
Numbers are used frequently. Be sure to use the following formats:
• one through nine (except in tables, headings and design elements such as infographics)
  The room can accommodate one to 12 people. See page 5–15.
• 10 through 999,999
• 3000, 30,000 and 300,000 (use the comma as a separator only in five-digit numbers and above)
• 10 million (except in tables or scientific references: 10,000,000)
• one billion (except in tables or scientific references: 1,000,000,000)
• five kilometres in text, or 5km in tables or social
• six kilograms in text, or 6kg in tables or social
• 18th century, 4th–6th century
• 44 BC, 250–750 AD
• 6th century BC
• c 1000 BC
• 10 years
• Session 1, Session 2, Session 3; Session 1, 2016
• Year 6 (as in school years, or Year 2 of the Master of Research)
• 6cp, 6 credit points
• one per cent, 1.7 per cent (see Per cent)
• $20 (for domestic audiences), AU$20,000 (for international audiences)
• Level 3
• two-thirds
• $2 million
• $75.14 million
• first year of study (in all cases except design elements such as infographics)
• Where possible, avoid starting a sentence with a number. Twenty-five people donated 25 books. 2014 was a good year for Macquarie. (Or rewrite the sentence.)

Per cent
Use the following formatting for percentages in body copy:
• one per cent
• 1.7 per cent
• 10 per cent, a 10 per cent discount (no hyphens)
Use 1%, 1.7%, 10% in tables, social media and headings. (note: To avoid repeating the percentage sign throughout a table, include it in the column heading as a parenthetical.)

Phone numbers
(see Contact details)

Photo credits
In most cases, every photo should get a credit. Follow these formats for different media:
• In a brochure or publication longer than 2 pages, include the following blanket statement:
  PHOTOS: All photos by Chris Stacey unless otherwise noted.
All other photos should include a photo credit on the photo itself (National Light, size 6, all caps):
  PHOTO: ROB HARCOURT or PHOTO: SUPPLIED
  (note: When using stock images, follow the credit specified in the terms and conditions.)
• In a one-page flyer or ad, no photo credit is required unless specified in the terms and conditions.
• Online, include a caption under the photo in italics:
  Photo: Chris Stacey or Photo: Supplied
  (note: If the system won’t let you add a caption, at least include it in the image alt text.)

Quotes
Always use present tense references to speakers:
• she says
• Jones explains
• Smith adds
Past tense is acceptable when quoting someone from a press conference or other specific event (see Appendix 4: Writing for media).

Quotation marks
• Always use smart quotes “” ‘’ (with heads and tails) in print (ensure ‘smart quote’ is enabled in Word settings).
• Always use double quotation marks for direct speech.
• Use single quotation marks within quotes where necessary.
• Use single quotation marks when talking about a word or phrase – eg the letter ‘n’.
• Use single quotation marks for article and other short publication titles – eg ‘The 16 hottest emerging jobs for 2015’ (see Titles).
Pull-out quotes

Pull-out quotes – also known as block quotes, lift-out quotes or pull quotes – are used (sparingly) in print and online publications to draw attention to a key quotation or excerpt and entice the audience to read on. Most often they are excerpts from the piece in question, but they could also be extra information that could not fit in an article, or testimonials to add human credence to brochure copy. Every pull-out quote needs an attribution. Use the following format as a guide, and be consistent within a publication as to how much information you include. (*note: The quote is set in italics but the attribution is not. Do not use an en dash or any other punctuation before the attribution.*)

(current student, for domestic publications and online)
• “Macquarie helped me become the best version of myself.”
  Susan Smith
  Second-year student
  Bachelor of Commerce
  Indigenous Incentive Scholarship recipient

(alumni, for domestic publications and online)
• “Macquarie taught me everything I know.”
  Sam Peters
  Master of Future Journalism, 2012
  Director of Content, MTV Australia
  (*note: If the degree an alumni graduated with no longer exists, list it as it was when they graduated, not a current equivalent.*)

(Vice-Chancellor, for domestic publications and online)
• “Macquarie will give you the grounding you need for a rewarding career.”
  Professor S Bruce Dowton
  Vice-Chancellor, Macquarie University (*note: Omit ‘Macquarie University’ if it’s clear from the context – eg in publications where other divisions or external sources have not been quoted.*)

(corporate partner, for domestic and international publications and online)
• “We deeply value our partnership with Macquarie.”
  Gavin Fox-Smith
  Managing Director ANZ, Johnson & Johnson Medical
  (*note: When the full title won’t fit on one line, a line break suffices in the place of a comma.*)

(current student, for international publications and online)
• “Macquarie helped me become the best version of myself.”
  Xiaomin (Charlie) Li
  Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) student from China
  *(alumni, for international publications)*
• “I don’t know where I’d be without Macquarie.”
  James Jones
  Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) graduate from Nepal
  Associate Engineer, Boeing
  Vice-Chancellor’s International Scholarship recipient

(Vice-Chancellor, for international publications)
• “Macquarie will give you the grounding you need for a rewarding career.”
  Professor S Bruce Dowton
  Vice-Chancellor and President, Macquarie University
  (*note: omit ‘Macquarie University’ if it’s clear from the context – eg in publications where other divisions or external sources have not been quoted.*)

Session

Always ‘session’ not ‘semester’ – eg Session 2 not Semester 2 or second semester; Session 1, 2016

Spelling conventions

Always use Australian spelling. If the word is not listed in the list of commonly used words and phrases (see Appendix 1), use the first listed spelling in the Macquarie Dictionary.

*EXCEPTION: In titles where American or British spelling has been used, retain the original:*
  • United Nations Development Programme
  • World Health Organization

Time

The accepted formats for times are:
  • 10pm
  • 11.45am
  • 24 February, 10am – 11am (but in body copy: The session will be held on 24 February and will run from 10am to 11am.)
  • 11.30am – 2pm (but in body copy: Lunch is from 11.30am to 2pm.)
  • 12pm (OK to use ‘noon’ in body copy but not ‘midday’ as it is not as precise)
  • 12am (OK to use ‘midnight’ in body copy)

Use spaces when the range includes two different measurements (eg 28 February – 3 March) and with time ranges, but close up the spaces when it’s a range within the same measurements (eg 2–15 March).

Titles

Names of long-form publications such as books, PhD theses, strategic frameworks, magazines, journals, films, radio and television programs, and plays should be italicised.
  • The Catcher in the Rye
  • The Matrix
  • Our University: A Framing of Futures
  • Romeo and Juliet
  • This Week at Macquarie University
  • World-leading research; world-changing impact

Names of short-form publications such as articles, songs and poems should appear in single quotes.
  • ‘The 16 hottest emerging jobs for 2015’
  • ‘Never Gonna Give You Up’

Professional titles

(see Names and titles)

Voice

Use active voice wherever possible:
  • The committee will provide free beer (not free beer will be provided by the committee)
Websites and special cases for the web

mq.edu.au not http://www.mq.edu.au or www.mq.edu.au
• visit mq.edu.au (not go to mq.edu.au)
• EXCEPTION: If the link won’t work when you drop the http://www. you may include it. Be sure to test it on several browsers and machines before making the call.
  *(Note: Avoid allowing a URL to break over two lines in print publications. If you need to break a URL, do so at the slash, never the hyphen, as the reader may not know whether the hyphen is actually part of the URL or is there because it’s broken across lines.)*

Attachments

When linking to an attachment, specify the file type and size (in KB or MB) to set the reader’s expectations:
• Our University: A Framing of Futures [PDF 211KB]
• Publication brief template [DOC 56KB]

Link text

Hyperlink text should include meaningful, helpful words about the link destination. Register now for Open Day. Never ‘click here’.

Navigation

Use sentence case (only the first word is capitalised) for headings and navigation wherever possible.

Photo credits

It is important to credit all images in all formats. If this is not possible the credit can be listed in the metadata for reference (see Photo credits).

Short URLs

Use short URLs wherever possible in publications or in situations where hyperlinks are not possible. Use words that are meaningful (not abbreviations), with hyphens as separators (not underscores).
• mq.edu.au/campus-wellbeing
  *(see Appendix 5 for a guide to short URLs)*

Appendix 1: Commonly used words and phrases

Often there is more than one correct spelling of a word. However, to ensure consistency across (and within) publications, it is important to use only one of the spellings. The following is a list of accepted spellings of common words. Use the first listed spelling in the Macquarie Dictionary if a word is not listed below.

A
• A Level
• adviser (not advisor)
• ageing (not aging)
• alumna (for a female graduate); alumnus (for a male graduate); alumni (for all general uses; don’t confuse the audience by using ‘alumnus/a’)
  *(EXCEPTION: In Twitter or other character-sensitive media, ‘R’ is acceptable. Do not use ‘+’)*
• antisocial
• Asia-Pacific (in Asia-Pacific or in the Asia-Pacific region; not in the Asia-Pacific or Asia Pacific)
• Associate Professor (never A/Prof or Ass Prof)
  *(EXCEPTION: In Twitter or other character-sensitive media, ‘Assoc Prof’ is acceptable.)*
• artefacts

B
• bachelor degree
• barbecue (do not use barbeque or b-b-q or bar-b-q)
  *(EXCEPTION: BBQ is acceptable in social media where characters are limited)*
• biomedicine

C
• -ce (follow the American spelling for words such as licence, practice for both noun and verb)
• café
• careers advisers
• Careers Advisers Day
• case study
• childcare
• civilise
• co-located
• comprise
• cooperative
• coordinator
• corequisite
• convenor
• counselling
• counter terrorism
• course (a course is the program of study; a degree is the piece of paper you receive at the end)
• coursework
• cross-cultural (cross-cultural experience and the experience was cross cultural)
• cutting-edge (cutting-edge research and the research was cutting edge)
• cyber security
D
day-to-day (day-to-day activities, the day-to-day and from day to day)
decision-making (decision-making skills and this unit covers practical decision making)
degree (not degree program)
dependent (n and adj)
domestic students
E
ebook
e-business (unless part of a formal title, in which case default to their usage)
e-commerce
eg
e-learning (unless part of a formal title, in which case default to their usage)
email
enewsletter
enquire/enquiry (reserve inquiry for legal proceedings)
enrol, enrolment, enrolled, enrolling
eStudent
ever-changing (ever-changing environment and the weather is ever changing)
ever-present (ever-present risk and she was ever present in their minds)
F
Facebook
face-to-face (face-to-face conversation and we talked face to face)
FEE-HELP
field trip
fieldwork
filmmaker
first-class (first-class research and she was assigned a seat in first class)
first-hand (first-hand account and we heard the story first hand)
focused (not focussed), focusing (not focussing)
full-time (full-time course load and she worked full time)
G
getting into university (not getting in to university)
globalisation
go-ahead (we gave him the go-ahead and go ahead and do it)
government (lowercase if used generally – the government – but Australian Government)
grade point average (GPA)
green paper
groundbreaking
group work
H
half-year (half-year program and in the first half-year of your course)
hands-on (hands-on experience and the unit is hands on)
healthcare
HECS-HELP
high-quality (high-quality education and the material is high quality)
Macquarie Centre shopping complex (not Macquarie Shopping Centre)
Macquarie University (Macquarie on second reference, MQ in online navigations and in social media with space constraints)
Macquarie University Art Gallery (Art Gallery on second reference)
Macquarie University Graduate School of Management (MGSM on second reference)
Main Round (UAC)
masters degree
mentors@macquarie (Mentors@macquarie at the start of a sentence)
mid-session
mid-term
mid-year (mid-year applications now open and she joined the course mid year)
modelling
more than (preferable to ‘over’ – we have more than 156,000 alumni in more than 140 countries)
multicultural
multidimensional
multidisciplinary
multifaceted
multimedia
multi-million-dollar (multi-million-dollar production hub; don’t forget the second hyphen)
multinational
MUSE (Macquarie University Spatial Experience) – use this form on first reference in every publication, MUSE thereafter
non-award (non-award unit)
nonlinear
Northeast Asia
not-for-profit (not-for-profit organisation and the activity was not for profit; do not use non-profit)
number one (our University is number one for student experience)
O
O Level
Orientation Week/O Week (but orientation activities)
off-campus (off-campus seminar and the seminar will be conducted off campus)
offer letter (always lower case)
offshore
on-campus (on-campus workshops and attend a workshop on campus)
onshore
on-site (on-site registration and the event will take place on site)
one-off (one-off change and that was a one-off)
ongoing
online
Open Day
open-minded (open-minded student and the student is open minded)
organise (apply the -ise spelling for related words such as civilise and legalise)
over (only use literally – the ball went over her head but we awarded more than $2 million)
P
PACE (Professional and Community Engagement) – use this form on first reference in every publication, PACE thereafter
part-time (part-time course and he studies part time)
Peer Assisted Learning (PAL), PAL on second reference (used generally, peer-assisted mentoring and the course is peer assisted)
per cent
practice (not practise, for both noun and verb)
program
problem-solving (problem-solving skills and explore problem solving)
podcast
postdoctoral
postgraduate (PG is acceptable in titles and social media but not postgrad)
pre-assessed
prehistoric
pre-existing
prerequisite
principal (the principal sponsor)
principle (we believe in the principles of service and engagement)
Professor (never Prof, except in social media where characters are limited)
re-admission
real-world (real-world examples and this was his introduction to the real world)
re-apply
record keeping
re-engineering
re-evaluation
résumé
self-designed (self-designed course and your learning is self designed)
self-directed (self-directed study and your studies are self directed)
self-help
self-regulation
Session 1, Session 2, Session 3 (not semester, or Session One)
short-listed (short-listed preferences and the students are short listed)
short-term (short-term project and his presidency was short term)
sign in – use ‘log in’ instead
skill set (two words)
so-called
socioeconomic
Southeast Asia
Southern Hemisphere
specialty (not speciality)
step-by-step (a step-by-step guide, and we’ll take you through step by step)
student-centred
T

targeted
targeted their/them/they (acceptable as gender-neutral third-person pronouns)
trade-off (it was a trade-off between efficiency and effectiveness)
t-shirt
Twitter (note: tweet as a verb appears lower case)
two-dimensional (two-dimensional character and the drawing was two dimensional)

U

undergraduate (UG is acceptable in titles and social media but not undergrad)
uniTEST
up-front (up-front payment and to pay up front)
up-to-date (up-to-date information and stay up to date)

V

vis-a-vis

W

webcam
webpage
website
wellbeing
white paper
wide-ranging (wide-ranging belief and the practice was wide ranging)
wi-fi
workforce
workplace
work-in-progress (work-in-progress meetings and it was a work in progress)
work-life balance (not work/life balance or work–life balance)
work-readiness skills
world-class (world-class research and his signing was world class)
world views
worldwide

Y

YouTube

Macquarie University events and groups

In general, use lower case unless talking about an official name or registered trademark.

(in person events)
Careers Advisers and Teachers Day
Careers Advisers Day
Discovery Day
Info Day
Open Day
O Week
Parent Information Evening
Postgraduate Information Evening
TEDxMacquarieUniversity (note: This is all one word.)
eg Thanks for registering for Info Day on Saturday 12 September.

(online events)
Business and economics programs and admissions online chat
Master of Engineering online chat
Master of Environment online chat
Master of Information Technology online chat
Non-school applicant online chat
Postgraduate admissions online chat
eg Thanks for registering for the non-school applicant online chat on Thursday 27 August.
eg Thanks for attending the Master of Environment online chat.

(sport groups and events)
Bodystep
bubble soccer
football
group fitness
health club
MacAlpine
Macquarie University Sport and Aquatic Centre (not Sport & Aquatic Centre or MUSAC)
martial arts
Mini Mac Kidz Club
OzTag
Pilates
Social Sessions
Social Sport Competition
sport clubs
squash, squash courts
student groups
tai chi
Ultimate Frisbee
Unixames
Weight Loss Warriors (and the Weight Loss Warriors program)
yoga (but iyengar yoga, Vinyasa yoga, Yin yoga)
Appendix 2: Punctuation

Apostrophes

Do not use in plurals such as CDs, apples, 1990s and FAQs.

If a word or name ends in 's' do not repeat the 's' after the apostrophe:
- The Smiths' car is nice.
- The Joneses' car is better.
- Chris’ car is my favourite.

Note the difference between contractions and possessives:
- it's = it is, while its = possessive. Its' is never acceptable.
- you're = you are, while your = possessive.
- they're = they are, while their = possessive, and there = statement of place.

note: Contractions are preferred when communicating to domestic students. Consider the audience and tone – in particularly formal pieces or when communicating with international students and their parents whose English may not be strong, it may be more appropriate not to use contractions.

Colons

Use a colon to introduce the part of a sentence that explains, completes or elaborates on the words that precede it. Capitalise the word that follows only if it forms a complete sentence or in a heading:
- She packed her bag with everything she would need: books, pens and paper.
- You have a chance to help: Log in to make a donation today.
- Getting to know you: A team bonding experience (note: This is a heading)

Use a colon when quoting a complete sentence, but not when quoting only part of the sentence:
- He asked: “Have you packed your bag?”
- She replied that she had everything “including books, pens and paper.”

Use a colon when introducing a list:
- You are considered a domestic student if you are any of the following:
  - a citizen of Australia
  - a citizen of New Zealand
  - a dual citizen of Australia and any other country
  - a permanent resident of Australia.

Do not use a colon at the end of subheadings or to introduce figures and tables.

Commas

When using commas to separate items in lists, do not use a final serial comma (aka Oxford comma) before ‘and’ unless there is a likelihood of ambiguity, such as in sentences with more than one ‘and’:
- She packed her bag with books, pens and paper.
- Her favourite areas of study were business, health and medical sciences, and environment.

In quotes, the comma and the full stop come before the final quotation mark:
- “I will arrive tomorrow,” he said. “But I will leave the next day.”

With single quotes, the comma and the full stop come outside the final quotation mark:
- My favourite songs are ‘Layla’, ‘Bad to the Bone’ and ‘Tubthumping’.

Use commas with long introductory clauses (usually more than five words) where a pause makes sense:
- When you join us at Macquarie, you’ll get to study with the best.
- Yesterday we had cake.

Use commas around nonrestrictive or non-essential clauses (if you remove that part of the sentence, it would still make sense):
- Her husband, Dennis, helped her cut the cake. (note: She has only one husband.)
- Her son Josh helped blow out the candles. (note: She has more than one son.)

Use commas with ‘and’ and ‘but’ when the subject or verb of the sentence changes:
- She tasted the cake, and it was good.
- There’s no need for the comma if your sentence is long but retains the same subject.

‘However’ and ‘therefore’ follow some special rules with punctuation:
- One cup of tea is usually enough; however, you could have two or more if needed.
- Her shirt was on inside-out; therefore, she went to the bathroom to change.
  (note: A full stop would also be acceptable in place of the semicolon in the above two examples.)
- When you’re in the middle of a sentence, however, you’ll just use commas.

Avoid comma splices, where a comma is used in place of a semicolon or full stop:
- Wrong: It’s cold in here; I’m going to put on a jumper.
- Better: It’s cold in here. I’m going to put on a jumper.
- Better: It’s cold in here. I’m going to put on a jumper.

Dashes

En dashes, also known as the en rule, are the length of the letter ‘N’ – and are longer than the hyphen. On a PC, you can create them by holding down the alt key while you press 0150 on the number pad on your keyboard. On the Mac, hold down the option key while you press the hyphen key. Word will sometimes autocorrect hyphens with spaces around them to en dashes, but don’t count on it.

Use en dashes in ranges, and in sentences such as:
- Public holiday – Anzac Day
- Uni speak – terms you need to know
- Our law program covers all major areas of law – public, private and international – as well as theoretical and ethical reflection on legal institutions
- 15–16 (but spell out ‘to’ within body copy)
- 10.30am – 12pm (but spell out ‘to’ within body copy)
- 2.30pm – 3pm (but spell out ‘to’ within body copy)
- Thursday – Saturday (but spell out ‘to’ within body copy)
- 15 days – 3 weeks (but spell out ‘to’ within body copy)

(note: In some online environments the en dash will be replaced with a hyphen automatically. In these cases a hyphen is acceptable.)

Use spaces when the range includes two different measurements (eg 28 February – 3 March) and with time ranges, but close up the spaces when it’s a range within the same measurements (eg 2–15 March).

Em dashes, also known as the em rule, are the length of the letter ‘M’ — and are longer than en dashes. We do not use em dashes.

Ellipses

Use ellipses only to signify missing words in a quote where it’s absolutely essential to show that words have been left out, such as in pure journalism (otherwise just rephrase the quote). Don’t use to show a break in a sentence – use an en dash instead.

When you do use ellipses, format with spaces as shown:
- This research and teaching nexus is central to Macquarie's core values and strategic ambitions. ... Over the coming decade, Macquarie University also aims to increase its emphasis on cross-disciplinary and applied research.
Exclamation marks
Overuse of exclamation marks only serves to deaden the impact of the piece. Use exclamation marks very sparingly; rely instead on good writing to get your point across. When an exclamation mark is necessary to end a quote, observe the following punctuation:
- “Macquarie has been the best experience of my life!” he says. “I can’t wait to see what next year will bring.” (note: No need for a comma after the exclamation mark, and no need to specify ‘he exclaims’ – we can tell.)

Forward slash
When you use a forward slash, do not include spaces:
- autumn/winter

Hyphens
Try to keep hyphens to a minimum. General rules are listed below, but common instances are included in the list of commonly used words and phrases.
Use a hyphen when a word contains a prefix with a double vowel except for common words, or where the prefix ends with ‘o’:
- pre-eminent
- re-admission
- coordinate (EXCEPTION: co-located)
- macroeconomic
Be careful with words that have different meanings with and without hyphens, such as:
- recover and re-cover
- relay and re-lay
- resign and re-sign
Suffixes are generally not hyphenated, except:
- 300-fold
- 50-odd
Compounds where an adverb ending with ‘ly’ precedes an adjective should not be hyphenated:
- highly regarded research
- globally focused degree
Where compound adjectives precede a noun they should be hyphenated; when they follow the noun they should not.
- In this unit students develop decision-making skills.
- In this unit students participate in exercises involving practical decision making.
A few exceptions to these rules exist (see Appendix 1).

Semicolons
Use semicolons to provide clarity in a complicated list that already includes commas:
- Macquarie’s areas of study are business; education; engineering and IT; environment; health and medical sciences; law, security and intelligence; media, creative arts and communication; science; and society, history and languages.
  (note: always use a final serial semicolon before the final item.)
Use a semicolon to make a break in a sentence that’s stronger than a comma but not as absolute as a full stop:
- I can’t foresee a resolution to this sticky situation; we’ve reached a stalemate.

Appendix 3: Other grammar rules

‘And’ or ‘but’ to start a sentence
Feel free to begin a sentence with the word ‘and’ or ‘but’ where these terms form a logical link between sentences. But use them sparingly to increase impact.
- I’ll have a try. But I’ll need your help.

Dangling/misplaced/unattached modifiers/participles
These cause ambiguity as to what is being said and result in lost confidence from the reader:
- Wrong: As a valued member of the Macquarie community, we invite you to apply.
  Better: As a valued member of the Macquarie community, you can apply.
- Better: Because you’re a valued member of the Macquarie community, we invite you to apply.
The modifier is the first part of the sentence – as a valued member of the Macquarie community – which refers to you, not us. Think about who or what the first part of the sentence refers to.
Be particularly careful with -ing words starting the sentence:
- Wrong: Being in a dilapidated condition, Patricia bought the house for a good price.
  Better: Because the house was in a dilapidated condition, Patricia bought it for a good price.

False ranges
Unless there is a specific sequence at work, do not use false ranges:
- Wrong: We offer everything you’d want to study from business to environment to science.
  Better: We offer everything you’d want to study, including business, environment and science.
- OK: We cover everything from birth to preschool to secondary school.
- OK: We cover everything from simple addition to calculus equations.

Parallel construction
We often encounter long and complex lists or sentences in our courseware – particularly when detailing learning outcomes. Be consistent with your constructions, whether in sentence form or dot points:
- Wrong: Ashley likes to ski, to swim and jumping.
  Alternative: Ashley likes to ski, swim and jump.
  Better: Ashley likes skiing, swimming and jumping.
- Wrong: Melbourne trams are complicated, expensive and get in the way.
  Alternative: Melbourne trams get in the way, and they’re complicated and expensive.
  Better: Melbourne trams get in the way, and they’re complicated and expensive.
- Wrong: Because the house was in a dilapidated condition, Patricia bought it for a good price.
  Better: Because the house was in a dilapidated condition, Patricia bought it for a good price.
- Wrong: Because you’re a valued member of the Macquarie community, we invite you to apply.
  Better: As a valued member of the Macquarie community, you can apply.
  Better: Because the house was in a dilapidated condition, Patricia bought it for a good price.

Prepositions ending a sentence
Prepositions are words or phrases that indicate the relationship between a noun and the rest of the sentence, including ‘in’, ‘from’, ‘with’, ‘by’ and ‘at’. A long-standing rule of grammar pedants was that a preposition should never be the last word in a sentence, but this rule is outdated. Use the language according to the audience you’re communicating with.

Split infinitives
“Grammarians have long agreed that there is nothing wrong with the concept of splitting an infinitive: ‘to boldly go’, for example.” Style Manual, 6th edn, p. 76.
Appendix 4: Writing for specific audiences

Writing for print

For the most part, print publications will take the Core tone (see Brand language – Tones of voice in the Macquarie University Brand Identity Guidelines).

Less is more when it comes to print. Use a maximum of 400 words per article/page. Use the minimum number of words to get the point across and then point to the website (using short URLs – see Websites and special cases for the web) for details.

• Avoid ending a sentence with a short URL since we do not use punctuation after them. Instead, structure the sentence as ‘Visit mq.edu.au/campus-wellbeing for more information’. Or simply list the URL in question after the relevant paragraph:
  Your cost of living will vary depending on your lifestyle. mq.edu.au/cost-of-living

In general, use first and second person when writing copy for brochures and flyers:

• Macquarie helped me develop my talents ... (from the perspective of a student – in a quote or longer-form story)
• At Macquarie, we believe in learning beyond the lecture theatre (we, not it)
• When you join Macquarie, you can study ... (not ‘Students at Macquarie can study’)

If a piece requires integrating two different people’s perspectives, use a journalistic style, reporting in the third person with quotes wherever possible (see Writing for media).

Keep in mind the aesthetics of printed materials, avoiding widows and orphans (one word or line on its own, away from the rest of a paragraph) or hyphens and en dashes at the end or beginning of a line.

Writing for the web

For the most part, online writing will be a blend between Core and Casual tones (see Brand language – Tones of voice in the Macquarie University Brand Identity Guidelines).

When writing online content, it’s important to make it sharp and snappy. Simple and direct content is easier to read and navigate.

Search engines and what they do are a little harder to describe. But sticking to the principles of writing clear and easy-to-navigate content will go a long way to creating engaging online content.

When linking to related content, use in-text hyperlinks with relevant words (never ‘click here’) to point readers to more information. Some examples of good hyperlink text include:

• Register now for Careers Advisers Day.
• Check out our day planner to make the most of Open Day.

Follow the correct hierarchy for headings:

• Use sentence case (only the first word is capitalised) for all headings.
• Heading one (or H1) should only be used for the main heading on the page.
• Use all other headings in decreasing importance (H2, H3, H4 etc).
• Don’t apply a style or random heading style just because you think it looks good.

Important accessibility information

All web pages must conform to the World Wide Web Consortium’s Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 (WCAG 2.0) to ensure people with visual, auditory, physical, speech, cognitive, language, learning, neurological and other disabilities can access our content. More detail will come with the Web Guidelines once approved. In the meantime, resources to consult include:

• w3.org/TR/WCAG20
• www.dtol.gov.au/standard
• mediaaccess.org.au/practical-web-accessibility/media

Writing for the media

Writing for the media – for example, a media release or an article for the Macquarie Newsroom – has a specific purpose: to generate media interest in Macquarie. Therefore, a specific ‘news’ (or ‘journalistic’) writing style is adopted, as detailed below.

Media releases are written in succinct, factual and clear business language, using the third person – no ‘I’ or ‘we’ (with the exception of ‘we’ in quotes):

• A Macquarie research team led by Associate Professor Ian Blair has received a $6.37 million grant for dementia research from the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), Minister for Health Sussan Ley announced today.

They are generally written in the past tense:

• A research team led by Dr Martin Whiting from the Department of Biological Sciences recently discovered a beautifully coloured new species of flat lizard, which they named Platysaurus attenboroughi, after Sir David Attenborough.

Include new information in the first paragraph in what’s called an ‘inverted pyramid’. Think about why are you sharing this story and what will interest the audience the most. Background information is generally included towards the end of the release.

A media release also follows a standard format:

• a headline containing a brief attention-grabbing statement summarising the news story
• an introductory paragraph that generally addresses the five Ws and occasionally H: who, what, when, where, why and how
• the body, providing further details of the story including quotes, relevant background information and/or statistics or data.
Appendix 5: Short URLs

Short URLs are preferable in print and in online environments where hyperlinking isn’t possible because they:

• are easy to read
• are easy to share on social media and other applications with defined character limits
• are easier to accommodate on marketing materials, advertising etc
• are easier for the reader to type into their browsers
• make the content seem important, not secondary.

Creating a mq.edu.au short URL

All short URLs created for an event or campaign should follow a standard format and require the approval of the Marketing Unit.

Before raising a short URL request, be sure to review the list of current URL redirects at mq.edu.au/short-URLs to see if a suitable one already exists.

To request a new URL if one doesn’t already exist, submit a OneHelp ticket.

When proposing short URLs, keep the best practice tips outlined below in mind.

Short URL best practice tips

1. Make the URL readable by human beings. While the URL doesn’t need to be absolutely perfect, you should use normal language and avoid acronyms whenever possible. Our audience should find the URL easy to understand, compelling and relevant.

2. Use keywords in the URL. Keywords show up in search results, and research has shown that the URL is one of the most prominent elements searchers consider when selecting which site to click.

3. Match URLs to titles when you can.

4. Including ‘stop’ words isn’t necessary (and, or, but, of, the, a etc) if it makes the URL too long.

5. The only punctuation in your URL should be hyphens in between key words. Examples include:
   • mq.edu.au/campus-wellbeing
   • mq.edu.au/college-how-to-apply

This list is adapted from ‘15 SEO Best Practices for Structuring URLs’ by Moz co-founder Rand Fishkin. See moz.com/blog/15-seo-best-practices-for-structuring-urls for the full list and more tips.

A quick guide to goto.mq.edu.au

Goto.mq.edu.au is a tool for use by University staff and students who need a short web address created in real time. The web address must already exist at an approved domain for the tool to work.

The links created by the tool do not include the mq.edu.au domain, as shown in the following example:

http://www.mq.edu.au/alumni_and_supporters/alumni/alumni_benefits
becomes
goto.mq/benefits

The links generated by the goto.mq tool do not adhere to all best practice and usability guidelines, and the overuse of bespoke URLs can result in a lack of consistency in the way content is presented to our audience. Because of these facts, use caution when using the tool.

Before creating a new short URL, check the list at goto.mq.edu.au to see if one already exists.

When to use goto.mq.edu.au

As a guide, use the goto.mq tool to generate URLs in the following instances:

• to promote an internal event with a limited life cycle that is not associated with a paid marketing campaign
• to promote a short-term event or item on social media, or whenever character limits are an issue
• for use in SMS messages.

Do not use the tool in the following instances:

• for URLs related to an ongoing paid campaign. In this instance, the URL should include the mq.edu.au domain and should adhere to brand guidelines (see above)
• when tracking and SEO are considerations, as in the case of campaign activity
• to create URLs for personal use.

Appendix 6: References and resources

The following resources were used to help compile this style guide and can provide more guidance if needed:

(for grammar and spelling)

• The Cambridge Guide to Australian English Usage by Pam Peters
• The Elements of Style, 4th edn., by William Strunk Jr and EB White (aka Strunk and White)
• Macquarie Dictionary online edition: macquariedictionary.com.au
• Purdue University’s Online Writing Lab: owlenglish.purdue.edu/owl
• various articles by Grammar Girl: quickanddirtytips.com/education/grammar

(for online writing and best practices)

• Content Marketing Institute: contentmarketinginstitute.com/blog
• Econsultancy’s Digital Marketing Blog: econsultancy.com/blog
• HubSpot’s Inbound blogs: blog.hubspot.com
• King Content’s content marketing blog: kingcontent.com.au/blog
• Media Survival: mediasurvival.com/articles
• The Moz Blog: moz.com/blog
• Seth Godin’s blog: sethgodin.typepad.com
• Usability guidelines from the US Government: usability.gov
• World Wide Web Consortium: w3.org/TR/WCAG20

Questions? Email marketing@mq.edu.au to reach someone who can help.