The Macquarie University Style Guide is a quick reference tool that answers your style-related questions and helps you follow our preferred style. This is your go-to guide to writing clear and consistent communication in print and online. We refer to the Macquarie Dictionary for the spelling and meaning of ordinary words and for other words that are not included in this guide.

The online style guide is an evergreen document that will be updated and expanded as needed. We hope that it not only helps you with your writing but also contributes to building a strong and consistent Macquarie brand identity.

The style guide includes a series of guides, including:

- A-Z guide
- Grammar guide
- Hyphenation guide
- Inclusive and respectful language guide
- Punctuation guide
- Short URLs guide
- Writing for specific audiences guide.

Click on each guide to be taken directly to it.

Click on the header at the top left of each page to be taken back to this page.

We welcome your feedback on items that you think are unclear or on style elements that are missing.
Submit your feedback to Fiona Crawford, Content Editor, Group Marketing, at fiona.crawford@mq.edu.au
staff.mq.edu.au/style-guide

Updated February 2023
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ATAR

a, an (indefinite article)
Use ‘a’ when it’s followed by a word beginning with a consonant:
• Macquarie is a public research university.
Use ‘an’ when it’s followed by a word beginning with a vowel (a, e, i, o, u):
• The quality of research at an institution should be high.

TIP
Be guided by the word’s pronunciation for words beginning with ‘h’ or ‘u’ that require an indefinite article. Use ‘a’ if the word begins with a consonant sound (eg a hospital, a university). Use ‘an’ if the word begins with a vowel sound (eg an hour).
See also: the (definite article)

abbreviations
Abbreviations are truncated words consisting of the first letter of a word, usually some other letters, but not the last letter.
Don’t use full stops or commas:
• eg
• ie
• PhD
• Dr
• Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat, Sun (Use these abbreviations only when space is limited.)
Don’t use ‘MQ’ as an abbreviation for Macquarie University except where ‘MQ’ is part of a name (eg MQ Health) or in social media where characters are limited.
See also: acronyms, initialisms, Macquarie University
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

Take great care when referring to First Nations people. Australia is home to two groups of Indigenous peoples: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Within each group are many nations with different languages, terms and preferences.

Capitalise ‘Aboriginal’, ‘Torres Strait Islander’ and ‘Indigenous’.

Don’t use acronyms (eg ATSI peoples) to refer to people.

Don’t make assumptions about someone’s identity or ancestry.

Don’t use italics for names or words from First Nations languages, as they are Australian languages.

Capitalise ‘Welcome to Country’ and ‘Acknowledgement of Country’. Be aware that a Welcome to Country is not the same as an Acknowledgement of Country. Both are distinct practices with different requirements and meanings.

TIP

Seek guidance from Walanga Muru on preferred style for words and terms that are used in a cultural context when writing for or about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Also read Walanga Muru’s Aboriginal Cultural Protocols – a guide on appropriate word usage in a cultural context.

See also: capitals

ABN

Use this format (eg spaces between digits) for ABNs relating to Macquarie University and its entities:

90 952 801 237

accents

Use accents when they are a feature of a foreign word (eg café) or a person’s name (eg Annie Möllington).

Consult the Macquarie Dictionary for any other word.

accept, except

Use the correct word.

‘Accept’ means to say yes to, whereas ‘except’ means not including:

• I accept all event invitations, except for events that fall on a Sunday.

accessible

Don’t overuse.

Think about what you mean to say. These examples are more engaging and targeted:

• We reach out to our students beyond Sydney.
• We create a safe and comfortable space at Macquarie.
• We make our diverse art collection available to the community.

acknowledgement

Use ‘acknowledgement’, not ‘acknowledgment’.

Acknowledgement of Country

An Acknowledgement of Country is a statement that shows awareness of and respect for Traditional Custodians of the land you’re on. Unlike a Welcome to Country, it can be delivered by a First Nations person or non-Indigenous person.

acronyms, initialisms

Acronyms are pronounced as words (eg PACE). Initialisms are pronounced as letters, not words, (eg NSW).

Write acronyms in full the first time it is mentioned in the text, followed by the acronym in brackets. Then use the acronym in subsequent mentions. If an organisation is mentioned only once, it’s not necessary to give its acronym. Some acronyms and initialisms are so well known that they don’t need defining (eg ABC, Anzac, MRI, Qantas, QR code, URL).

Don’t use full stops or spaces within acronyms or initialisms.

Examples

• ‘Australian Research Council (ARC)’ on first mention, ‘ARC’ on further mentions
• ‘National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC)’ on first mention, ‘NHMRC’ on further mentions

Exceptions

• ‘Macquarie University Art Gallery’ on first mention, ‘Art Gallery’ on further mentions
• ‘PACE (Professional and Community Engagement) program’ on first mention, ‘PACE’ on further mentions

TIP

Choose the option that will least confuse the reader. For example, if an acronym or initialism is used only a few times over a medium to large document, it may be better to use the full name (without the acronym or initialism in brackets) on all mentions.

See also: abbreviations
active voice, passive voice
Be personal and active rather than passive.

Example of the active voice:

- Macquarie researchers have discovered a new treatment that may reverse the effects of memory loss.

Example of the passive voice:

- A new treatment that may reverse the effects of memory loss has been discovered by Macquarie researchers.

TIP
Context is important. The passive voice has its place when the doer of the action is indefinite, unimportant or unknown. But generally the active voice is more engaging for your readers.

Acts of Parliament

For Acts
Use italics and title case (maximal capitalisation) for the full title of an Act, including the year.
Use roman type for the responsible jurisdiction.

After the first mention of the full title, a short title without the year can be used. Use roman type, not italics, for the short title:

- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth) (on first mention)
- Disability Discrimination Act (on further mentions)
- Macquarie University Act 1989 (NSW) (on first mention)
- Macquarie University Act (on further mentions)

For regulations and by-laws (subordinate legislation)
Use roman type:

- Macquarie University By-law 2005

See also: italics

addresses at Macquarie

Domestic communications promoting on-campus services, buildings or initiatives:

Dr Henry Lawson
HR Manager
Faculty of Science and Engineering
Room 60, 12 Wally’s Walk
Macquarie University
Wallumattagal Campus
Macquarie Park NSW 2109

Communications directing the audience to the general location of the campus:

Wallumattagal Campus
Macquarie University
Balaclava Road
Macquarie Park NSW 2109

International communications:

Macquarie University
NSW 2109 Australia

Spell out street types in full (eg Road not Rd, Street not St).
Use the accepted abbreviations for states in addresses (eg NSW, ACT, Tas, Vic, Qld).

See also: building names, contact information, phone numbers

adverse, averse
Use the correct word.

‘Adverse’ means unfavourable, whereas ‘averse’ means disinclined:

- Sydney experienced adverse weather this winter.
- A risk-averse investor is an investor who prefers lower returns with known risks.
**advice, advise**
Use the correct word.
‘Advice’ is a noun; ‘advise’ is a verb:
- Annie provides sound advice [noun] about punctuation.
- She can advise [verb] you about the best way to punctuate a sentence.

**adviser**
Use ‘adviser’, not ‘advisor’.

**AEDT, AEST**
Use ‘AEDT’ (Australian eastern daylight time) when daylight saving is in force.
Use ‘AEST’ (Australian eastern standard time) when daylight saving is over.

Express the time zone as:
- 10am AEDT, 10am AEST

See also: **times of day**

**affect, effect**
Use the correct word.
‘Effect’ is a noun; ‘affect’ is almost always a verb:
- The effects [noun] of COVID-19 restrictions are wide-ranging for the University.
- The restrictions affect [verb] the way we deliver our degrees.

**ageing**
Use ‘ageing’, not ‘aging’.

**ages**
Use numbers to express ages:
- the girl is 6 months old; a 6-month-old girl
- the man is 99 years old; a 99-year-old man
- Macquarie will soon celebrate its 60-year history

**TIP**
Spell out the number when a sentence begins with an age or a number. Hyphenate an age phrase when used as an adjective or as a substitute for a noun (eg a 21-year-old student, an 18-year-old). Don’t use apostrophes when describing an age range (eg She is in her 20s).

**alot, a lot**
Don’t use ‘alot’.
Always use two words.

**alternate, alternative**
Use the correct word.
‘Alternate’ is typically an action of switching between states, whereas ‘alternative’ means a choice between two or more possibilities:
- When students start uni, they often alternate between excitement and apprehension.
- Consider part-time study as an alternative to full-time study.

**alumni**
Use the non-gendered plural term: alumni.
See also: **inclusive language guide**

**amid**
Use ‘amid’, not ‘amidst’.

**among**
Use ‘among’, not ‘amongst’.

**ampersand symbol**
Don’t use the ampersand symbol (eg &) unless it’s part of an organisation’s official name (eg Johnson & Johnson).

Exceptions
- Use the symbol in social media where characters are limited.
- Use the symbol in ‘Q&A’ (eg questions and answers).
- Use the symbol in ‘T&Cs’ (eg terms and conditions).

**TIP**
Only use ‘T&Cs’ when you’re short on room.
and
Use the coordinating conjunction ‘and’ to connect two parts of the same kind: two words, two phrases or two clauses. Don’t use it to make things that are not equal seem as if they are equal.

Consider these sentences:
- Macquarie University was founded in 1964 and began as a bold experiment in higher education.
- Founded in 1964, Macquarie University began as a bold experiment in higher education.
The second option is the better option.

and/or
Avoid using ‘and/or’, if possible. It may confuse your readers. Often, using either ‘and’ or ‘or’ is the better option.

Consider this sentence:
- A campus tour has been organised for you and your family and/or friends.

Any of the following are better options:
- A campus tour has been organised for you, your family or your friends.
- A campus tour has been organised for you and your family.
- A campus tour has been organised for you and your friends.

around, about
Use the correct word.
‘Around’ refers to physical proximity or surroundings, whereas ‘about’ means an approximation:
- Students walked around the campus looking for gnomes.
- Your monthly repayment will be about $1200 depending on the interest rate.

See also: at, about

artefact
Use ‘artefact’, not ‘artifact’.
An artefact is an object made by a human, typically of cultural or historical interest. It does not usually include fossils, human remains and so on.

Asia-Pacific
Use ‘Asia-Pacific’ (eg in Asia-Pacific, in the Asia-Pacific region; not in the Asia-Pacific or Asia Pacific).

astronomy
Capitalise the names of planets, individual asteroids, planetary moons and comets.

Only capitalise the sun, moon and earth when mentioned together with other planets or when used in an astronomical context or publication:
- The Sun is closer to Venus than to Earth.
- Students can study earth and planetary sciences.
- Our moods are affected by the phases of the moon.
- The sun rises every morning.
- Sunflowers grow in the earth.

Capitalise ‘earth’ only in cases where it may lead to confusion between the planet and the ground. When referring to Earth, do not precede with ‘the’.

When referring to our galaxy, use ‘the Galaxy’ or ‘the Milky Way’.
Don’t capitalise ‘solar system’.

See also: capitals

at, about
Use ‘at’ if a precise figure is known or ‘about’ if it’s an approximation:
- Macquarie Open Day starts at 10am.
- Registration for the event starts about 10.15am (if a precise time is not known).

Don’t say ‘at about’, as you can’t be precise and imprecise at the same time.

See also: around, about

ATAR
Use this style.
Don’t spell out on first mention or on further mentions.
bachelor degree
barbecue
benefit, benefited, benefiting
biannual, biennial
building names at Macquarie
bulleted lists

bachelor degree
Use ‘bachelor degree’ for the singular form.
Use ‘bachelor degrees’ or ‘double bachelor degrees’ for the plural forms.
Don’t use ‘bachelors degree’ or an apostrophe (eg bachelor’s degree).
Always express double degree names in full and link with ‘and’:
  • Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Laws
Don’t use ampersands in degree names – always spell out ‘and’.
Don’t capitalise unless part of a degree name (eg Bachelor of Arts, bachelor degree in arts).
See also: degree, master degree

barbecue
Use ‘barbecue’, not ‘barbeque’.
Use ‘BBQ’ in social media only where characters are limited.

benefit, benefited, benefiting
Don’t use ‘benefitted’ or ‘benefitting’.

biannual, biennial
Use ‘biannual’ if you mean twice a year.
Avoid using ‘biennial’, which means occurring every two years. Reword to ‘every two years’ so that the meaning is clear.

building names at Macquarie
Capitalise the official names of campus buildings, levels and room designations at Macquarie University.
  • Atrium lower level, 1 Central Courtyard
  • Bug Museum, Room 23, Level 2, 12 Wally’s Walk
  • Forum, 17 Wally’s Walk
  • Library, 16 Macquarie Walk
  • Lotus Theatre, 27 Wally’s Walk
  • Macquarie Theatre, 21 Wally’s Walk
  • Macquarie University Art Gallery, 19 Eastern Road
  • Mason Theatre, 14 Sir Christopher Ondaatje Avenue
  • Price Theatre, 23 Wally’s Walk
Don’t capitalise more general locations (eg foyer, garden or campus) unless it forms part of an official name.

bulleted lists
See: lists
C
café codes (majors, programs, units) contractions
campus colons council, counsel
capitals commas course
captions Commonwealth supported places COVID-19
car park compliment, complement credit points
c-ce compound words CRICOS
century comprise, consists of currency, money
Chancellor contact information for Macquarie
check in, check-in continual, continuous

café
Use this style; don’t use ‘cafe’.

campus
Capitalise ‘campus’:
• Macquarie University Wallumattagal Campus
• Macquarie University City Campus

capitals
Use capitals sparingly and only to show proper nouns.

Macquarie-specific terms
1. Capitalise specific academic periods of time:
   • Session 1
   • Week 1
   • Year 12

2. Capitalise specific academic, executive and professional job titles for people at Macquarie:
   • Chancellor
   • Chief Financial Officer
   • Dr
   • Marketing Coordinator
   • Professor
   • Vice-Chancellor

3. Capitalise the first word of our areas of study when presented as a vertical list:
   • Arts and social sciences
   • Business
   • Education
   • Engineering
   • Information technologies
   • Languages and linguistics
   • Law
   • Media, communications and creative arts
   • Medicine and health
   • Psychology and cognitive science
   • Science
   • Security, intelligence and criminology

4. Don’t capitalise our areas of study when presented as an in-sentence list:
Macquarie has 12 areas of study: arts and social sciences; business; education; engineering; information technologies; languages and linguistics; law; media, communications and creative arts; medicine and health; psychology and cognitive science; science; and security, intelligence and criminology.

5. Capitalise the specific names of campus buildings.
See also: buildings
6. Capitalise the specific names of degrees, majors, specialisations and units:
   • Bachelor of Science (bachelor degree)
   • Master of Clinical Psychology (master degree)
   • Early Childhood Teaching (major)
   • Introduction to Anatomy (unit)

Don’t capitalise the names of disciplines or academic subjects unless they’re proper nouns.

Use lower case for generic terms: bachelor degree, master degree, science degree, studying anatomy.

7. Capitalise the specific names of our departments, faculties and schools:
   • Department of History and Archaeology
   • Faculty of Arts
   • Macquarie Business School
   • Macquarie Law School

Use lower case when these names are shortened: the department, the faculty, the school. There’s a tendency to revert to initial capitals for the shortened names of Macquarie’s schools when ‘School’ comes last (eg the Law School and the Business School). But a consistent style is preferred across the University.

8. Capitalise the specific names of our entities and research centres:
   • Centre for Emotional Health
   • Connect Macquarie Park Innovation District
   • Macquarie University (the University)
   • Macquarie University Centre for Motor Neuron Disease Research
   • Macquarie University Hospital
   • Macquarie University Sport and Aquatic Centre
   • MQ Health

Use lower case when some of these names are shortened: the centre, the hospital.

Exception: Capitalise ‘the University’ when referring to Macquarie University.

9. Capitalise specific Aboriginal names, languages and cultural terms:
   • Acknowledgement of Country
   • Clan (eg Wallumattagal Clan)
   • Community (capitalise when referring to a specific community but use lower case for general reference)
   • Country
   • Dharug Nation
   • Dreaming
   • Dreamtime
   • Elder (capitalise when referring to an individual but use lower case for general reference)
   • First Nations people
   • Nation
   • Traditional Owners/Custodians (capitalise when referring to an individual but use lower case for general reference)
   • Welcome to Country
   • Wallumattagal

Seek guidance from Walanga Muru on preferred style for words and terms that are used in a cultural context when writing for or about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Also read Walanga Muru’s Aboriginal Cultural Protocols – a guide on appropriate word usage in a cultural context.

See also: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

10. Capitalise our learning and teaching priorities:
    • Connected Experiences
    • Connected Curriculum
    • Connected People

11. Capitalise the specific names of our in-person official events:
    • Careers Advisers Day
    • Open Day
    • O Week
    • Parent Information Evening
    • Postgraduate Information Evening

Use lower case when these names are shortened: the day, the evening.
12. Don’t capitalise the specific names of our online official events unless proper nouns have been used.
   • Macquarie Leaders and Achievers Early Entry Scheme webinar
   • Postgraduate webinar series
   • Business and economics programs and admissions online chat
   • Master of Engineering online chat (eg Thanks for attending the Master of Engineering online chat.)
   • Non-school applicant online chat (eg Thanks for registering for the non-school applicant online chat on Thursday 27 August.)

13. Capitalise the specific names of our programs (including the word ‘program’ and ‘scheme’ when it’s part of the name):
   • Global Leadership Program
   • Intensive Program
   • Macquarie Co-operative Education Program (Use ‘Co-op’ as the shortform.)
   • Macquarie Leaders and Achievers Early Entry Scheme
   • Standard Intensive Program

Use lower case when these names are shortened: the program, the scheme.

Use roman type, not italics, for the names of programs.

14. Capitalise the specific names of our publications, policies and procedures:
   • Campus Life LGBTQ+ Sport Inclusion Policy
   • Student Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Policy
   • Student Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Procedure

Use lower case when these names are shortened: the policy, the procedure, the program.

Use roman type, not italics, for the names of policies and procedures.

Use italics for our broad, high-level strategic frameworks (including annual reports).

See also: names and style of publications at Macquarie

15. Capitalise our research priorities and use this order:
   • Healthy People
   • Innovative Technologies
   • Prosperous Economies
   • Resilient Societies
   • Secure Planet

16. Use sentence case (ie only the first word is capitalised and proper nouns) and single quotation marks for the specific names of our research projects and grants:
   • The Department of Biomedical Sciences continued the joint research project ‘Development of a dose-escalatable AAV delivery system for ALS gene therapies’.
   • ‘Logistics optimisation algorithms and software’ is a one-year research project by the Department of Computing.
   • ‘The health of the ageing’ is a three-year Australian Research Council linkage project.

General terms

Capitalise holidays, holy periods and public events (eg Anzac Day, Australia Day, Christmas Day, Easter, Ramadan, Mother’s Day).

Don’t capitalise season names (eg autumn, winter, spring, summer) unless part of a specific name (eg Summer School, Winter Week).

Don’t capitalise the names of diseases (eg motor neurone disease) unless they are named after a person or place (eg Alzheimer’s disease, Parkinson’s disease).

Don’t capitalise the names of sport at Macquarie (eg football, netball, rugby, table tennis, ultimate frisbee). The exception is ‘Pilates’.

Don’t capitalise the following words in general use:
   • careers advisers
   • domestic students
   • international students
   • postgraduate
   • undergraduate.
captions
Use captions, in print and online, for all images to explain the content and context, and to reinforce the message.

Use a short caption when only a person or place needs to be identified:
Susan Smith
PhD candidate
Macquarie University
In this example, full stops are not used, as these are not complete sentences.

Use a long caption to identify a group of people:
• (L–R) Professor John Smith, HR Manager, Macquarie University; Peter Pettigrew, CEO, Disney; and Sarah Silverman, Human Resources Director, Microsoft
In this example, a full stop is not used at the end of the caption, as it’s not a complete sentence. Semicolons are used because the items are further divided by commas.

Use a content caption to explain and give context to an image:
• Professor Tom Jones, a world-leading researcher at Macquarie University, is applying pioneering technology to the conservation of critically endangered species.
In this example, a full stop is used, as it’s a complete sentence.

car park
Use two words.

-ce
Use the -ce spelling for licence and practice for both the noun and the verb.

Chancellor
Capitalise.
Refer to the Chancellor and the Deputy Chancellor of Macquarie as follows:
• Dr Martin Parkinson AC PSM, Chancellor, Macquarie University
• Louise Mason BA LLB (Hons), Deputy Chancellor, Macquarie University

century
Always use numbers for centuries except at the start of a sentence:
• 19th century
• 21st century
• the 1800s to the 1900s

Hyphenate the adjectival form:
• 21st-century television
• 21st-century workforce

Don’t use an apostrophe in adjectival forms:
• an 1840s engine

See also: dates, periods of time

check in, check-in
Use ‘check-in’ as a noun or an adjective:
• He was late for check-in [noun].
• Go to the check-in counter to register for the event [adjective].

Use ‘check in’ as a phrasal verb:
• Go to the registration counter and check in.

codes (majors, programs, units)
Use this format:
XXXX1111

colons
See: punctuation guide

commas
See: punctuation guide
Commonwealth supported places
Use this style.

compliment, complement
Use the correct word.
‘Compliment’ means praise, whereas ‘complement’ means something supplements or completes something else:
• Students were complimented on their presentation skills.
• The theoretical component of our accounting degree is complemented by practical real-world experience.

compound words
A compound word is created by joining two or more words together to form a new word, sometimes using hyphens. Check the Macquarie Dictionary on whether a compound expression is acceptable as separate words, as a joined-up single word or a hyphenated word. If the expression is not in the dictionary, then our hyphenation guide will help you decide.
See: hyphenation guide

comprise, consists of
Don’t write ‘comprise of’. Write ‘the annual report comprises two sections’ or the annual report consists of two sections’.

contact information for Macquarie
Use this format for local publications:
T: (02) 9850 XXXX
E: firstname.surname@mq.edu.au
samplewebaddress.mq.edu.au

Use this format for international publications:
T: +61 (2) 9850 XXXX
E: firstname.surname@mq.edu.au
samplewebaddress.mq.edu.au

State the method when referring to contact details, and don’t use ‘please’:
• call
• contact
• visit
See also: addresses, phone numbers

continual, continuous
Use the correct word.
‘Continual’ means to start and stop, whereas ‘continuous’ means never-ending:
• It was a continual struggle for the student to complete assignments on time.
• The continuous Rabbit Proof Fence was constructed between 1901 and 1907.

contractions
Use common contractions for a conversational tone when communicating with domestic students (eg you’re, it’s, can’t, you’ll, don’t), but avoid clunky contractions (eg should’ve, could’ve, would’ve, mightn’t and mustn’t).
Be mindful when using contractions in your writing for an international audience that uses English as a second language.

council, counsel
Use the correct word.
A ‘council’ is a group of people, whereas ‘counsel’ is advice:
• The council was represented by all jurisdictions.
• Legal counsel was sought from the law society.

course
Use ‘degree’ when referring to our undergraduate and postgraduate offerings:
• Macquarie offers a wide range of undergraduate and postgraduate degrees.

Use ‘course’ when referring to all our offerings:
• Macquarie offers a wide range of courses, including bachelor degrees, master degrees, undergraduate certificates, diplomas, foundation and intensive programs, graduate diplomas and graduate certificates.
See also: bachelor degree, degree, master degree
COVID-19
Use the following style for terms relating to the coronavirus pandemic:
• COVID-19 (Use for the coronavirus disease that was first reported in 2019.)
• COVID-safe event or an event that is COVID safe
• COVIDSafe Guidelines
• elbow bump (eg Avoid handshakes and use elbow bumps [noun] instead.)
• elbow-bump (eg We elbow-bumped [verb] to say goodbye.)
• face mask
• hand sanitiser
• handwashing
• healthcare
• physical distancing (Don't use social distancing.)

TIP
Don’t name the origins of a disease by place (eg Chinese virus) because doing so can lead to disrespect or stigmatisation of a country or village.
Visit the World Health Organization for guidance on best practice for naming diseases.
Visit NSW Health for the latest information and updates on COVID-19.

credit points
Use these formats:
• 30cp (Use in tables and charts.)
• 30 credit points (Use in body copy.)

CRICOS
Macquarie must include its CRICOS code in any written and online material that it disseminates or makes publicly available for:
• providing or offering a course to an overseas student
• inviting an overseas student to undertake or apply for a course
• indicating it’s able or willing to provide a course to overseas students.
Examples of materials that should include the CRICOS code include:
• information about courses for overseas students including course outlines if used to market and recruit students
• the homepage of a provider's website and pages relating to international student services
• information about living in Australia if it’s used as a tool to market to and recruit students
• an advertisement for courses in an Australia or foreign media
• emails that are sent to students offering enrolment.
Always use this format:
• CRICOS Provider 00002J (Use zeros, not capital Os.)

Use the individual CRICOS code when promoting a specific degree:
• CRICOS Code XXXXXXX

Don’t use the CRICOS information in marketing material and communications for the Macquarie University Sport and Aquatic Centre, Ubar or cafés. The following 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
• any other information that does not market courses to overseas students.

currency, money
Use the following symbols and presentation for Australian currency:
• $20 (Use for domestic audiences.)
• A$20 (Use for international audiences when it’s necessary for clarity.)
Use a comma in five-digit numbers and above:
• $3,000
• $30,000
• $300,000
Use numbers and words for large numbers that can be rounded:
• $8 million (Use in body copy.)
• $8m (Use in tables and charts.)
• $3 billion (Use in body copy.)
• $3b (Use in tables and charts.)
dashes, en dashes, em dashes

dates, periods of time

degree

dependent, dependant

Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Vice Chancellor

discreet, discrete

disinterested, uninterested

dashes, en dashes, em dashes
See: punctuation guide

dates, periods of time

Dates

Use an en dash, not a hyphen, for ranges unless the online environment does not support them.

• 10 November 2021
• 19–24 November (Use an unspaced en dash when the range is in the same month.)
• 24 November – 4 December 2021 (Use a spaced en dash when the range is in different months.)
• Tuesday 24 November 2021 (Don’t use a comma after the day.)

Don’t use ordinal suffixes (-th, -nd, -rd) with dates (eg 10th November 2021).

Periods of time

Use these styles:

• early 1990s
• late 1990s
• mid-1990s

Use ‘BCE’ (before common era) and ‘CE’ (common era). Don’t use ‘BC’ (before Christ) and ‘AD’ (anno Domini).

Don’t use apostrophes for plural expressions of time:

• three months time
• two years time
• 12 years experience

Use an apostrophe for single expressions of time:

• a month’s leave
• one year’s experience

Financial years

Use four digits for the first number and two digits for the second number if both numbers are in the same decade. Use the full number on both sides if a decade is crossed. Join them with an unspaced en dash.

• 1998–99
• 1999–2000

Spell out financial years when using ‘from/to’ in body copy:

• from 1998 to 1999
• from 1999 to 2000

Date ranges in publication names

Use this format in publications that include year ranges:

• Strategic Research Framework 2015–2024
• Learning and Teaching Strategic Framework 2015–2020

See also: century
**degree**
Use ‘degree’ when referring to our undergraduate and postgraduate offerings.

Don’t use ‘degree program’.

Don’t use ‘Bachelor of Arts degree’ (eg ‘She studied a Bachelor of Arts’, not ‘She studied a Bachelor of Arts degree’).

Capitalise the full and formal names of specific degrees:
- Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) in Civil Engineering
- Bachelor of Teaching (Early Childhood Education)
- Bachelor of Arts majoring in Anthropology (Don’t use ‘Bachelor of Arts in Anthropology’ or ‘with a major in’.)
- Bachelor of Arts majoring in Geography; and Media, Culture and Communications (List double majors alphabetically; a semicolon is used because ‘Media, Culture and Communications’ contains a comma.)

**Shortened form for presenting majors**
Use a shortened form for presenting majors in tables:
- Bachelor of Arts (Anthropology)

**Double degrees (undergraduate)**
Capitalise the full and formal names of undergraduate double degrees, and present degrees in a set order:
- Bachelor of Arts and Master of Ancient History
  (AQF level: lower-level first, higher-level last)
- Bachelor of Science and Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) in Mechanical Engineering
  (accreditation: non-accredited degree first, accredited last)
- Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Laws
  (ATAR: lower first, higher last)
- Alphabetical order
- Owner is the second degree listed

**Double degrees (postgraduate)**
Capitalise the full and formal names of postgraduate double degrees, and present degrees in a set order:
- Postgraduate degrees are arranged in alphabetical order (eg Master of Management and Master of Marketing).
- Use ‘and’, not ‘with’, to separate the two degrees.
- Only use ‘with the degree of’ in international communications (eg Bachelor of Arts with the degree of Bachelor of Laws).

Generic plurals:
- double bachelor degrees
- double master degrees

See also: bachelor degree, courses, master degree

**dependent, dependant**
Use ‘dependent’ for both the adjective and the noun:
- Long service leave is dependent on length of service. (adjective)
- I have no dependents. (noun)

**Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor**
Capitalise and hyphenate.

**discreet, discrete**
Use the correct word.
‘Discreet’ is to be careful or circumspect, whereas ‘discrete’ means separate or distinct:
- Their work is carried out in a discreet and confidential manner.
- Macquarie has four discrete faculties.

**disinterested, uninterested**
Use the correct word.
‘Disinterested’ means impartial, whereas ‘uninterested’ means bored:
- A financial adviser is under an obligation to give disinterested advice.
- She was vague and uninterested in what I had to say.
**E**

*each, every*  
Use a singular verb, as ‘each’ and ‘every’ can refer to only one item or person:

- Each student is required to attend.
- Every student is required to attend.

*effect, affect*  
Use the correct word.  
‘Effect’ is a noun; ‘affect’ is almost always a verb:

- The effects [noun] of COVID-19 restrictions are wide-ranging for the University.
- They have affected [verb] the way we deliver our courses.

*eg*  
Spell out ‘for example’ in body copy.  
Use the abbreviated form (eg) in brackets or in tables where space is limited.

See also: *for example*

*either or, neither nor*  
When ‘either’ and ‘neither’ are used as conjunctions, we combine them with ‘or’ and ‘nor’.

‘Either/or’ is used to offer a choice between two things:

- You can call me on either the landline or the mobile.

‘Neither/nor’ are paired to say that two or more things are not true or not happening:

- I will neither call you nor send you an email.

*ellipsis*  
See: *punctuation guide*

*en dash, em dash*  
See: *punctuation guide*

*endemic, epidemic, pandemic*  
Use the correct word.  
‘Endemic’ refers to a disease or condition found among particular people or in a certain area, ‘epidemic’ means widespread occurrence of a disease or sudden occurrence of an undesirable behaviour, and ‘pandemic’ means widespread occurrence of a disease over a whole country or the world.

- Parasitic infections are endemic among this population.
- A flu epidemic has hit the area.
- An epidemic of violent crime.
- Scientists have predicted a global pandemic for years.
- COVID-19 is a pandemic.

*enquiry, inquiry*  
Use the correct word.  
‘Enquiry’ is to ask for information, whereas ‘inquiry’ refers to a formal investigation:

- Student enquiries about exams can be directed to the responsible lecturer.
- The authorities are conducting a criminal inquiry.

*etc*  
Avoid using ‘etc’ in body copy.  
Don’t end a restricted list (one prefaced by ‘including’ or ‘such as’) with ‘etc’.
every day, everyday
Use the correct word:
• I try to go for a walk every day.
• On my walk, I look for signs of everyday life.

every one, everyone
Use the correct word:
• Every one of our students is unique.
• The new study spaces appeal to everyone.

eclamation mark
Exclamation marks aren’t part of the Macquarie voice. Don’t use exclamation marks in formal content, such as Macquarie reports or publications.
Use them sparingly in less formal content, such as promotional material and social media posts, to convey excitement.
Be aware that exclamation marks can create a sense of panic or stress.
• Open Day is on today! (The exclamation mark conveys excitement and is appropriate.)
• Your consent is important! (The exclamation mark conveys stress and is not appropriate.)
See: punctuation guide

Executive Group at Macquarie
Capitalise and precede with ‘the’.
See also: names and job titles at Macquarie
Facebook
Use this style.

faculty, department, school
Capitalise the specific names of our departments, faculties and schools (e.g. the Faculty of Science and Engineering, the Department of History and Archaeology, Macquarie Business School).
Don’t use variations of the specific names of our departments, faculties and schools (e.g. Arts faculty or History department).
Use lower case when the specific names are shortened (e.g. the faculty, the department, the school).
See also: capitals

FEE-HELP
Use all capitals and hyphenate.

fewer, less
Use the correct word.
Use ‘fewer’ when describing plural or countable nouns (e.g. fewer students, fewer books).
Use ‘less’ when describing singular or uncountable nouns (e.g. less money, less time).

focus, focused, focusing
Don’t use ‘focussed’ or ‘focussing’.

foreign words or phrases
Use italics for foreign words or phrases only if they are not commonly used in English.
Don’t use italics for names or words from First Nations people’s languages, as they are Australian languages.

for example, eg
Spell out ‘for example’ in body copy.
Use the abbreviated form (e.g.) in brackets or in tables where space is limited.

forward slash
See: punctuation guide

fractions
Hyphenate fractions: one-third, three-quarters, one-and-a-half.
See also: numbers

full stop
See: punctuation guide
gender-neutral language

Make sure content is inclusive of all our students.

Use the singular ‘they’ or ‘their’ (eg A student can bring their parents to the session), but tweak the sentence for a more inclusive option (eg Students can bring their parents to the session).

See also: inclusive language guide

globalisation

Don’t use ‘globalization’.

go-ahead, go ahead

Hyphenate the noun (eg Macquarie was given the go-ahead to build the science lab).

Don’t hyphenate the phrasal verb (The project will go ahead).

Google

Capitalise for the noun.

goggled

Use lower case for the verb.

government

Capitalise the specific names of governments (eg the Australian Government, the NSW Government).

Use lower case when these names are shortened (eg the government).

Examples

• The Australian Government and the NSW Government are partners in the project.
• The governments believed a bipartisan approach is the best option.

Don’t use ‘Federal Government’ or ‘Commonwealth Government’ when you mean ‘Australian Government’.

graduate certificate, graduate diploma

Capitalise specific degrees (eg Macquarie’s Graduate Certificate of Finance).

Use lower case for general use (eg He has a graduate certificate in finance).

See also: capitals, degree

green paper

Use lower case in general context.

Capitalise if ‘green paper’ forms part of an exact title.
Hands on, hands-on

Headings, subheadings

HECS-HELP

Hyphenated words

Hands on, hands-on
Use two words for the noun (eg the unit is hands on). Hyphenate when used as a compound adjective (eg hands-on experience).

Headings, subheadings
Use sentence case (ie only the first word is capitalised) for major headings (print and online):
• New research projects at Macquarie University

Use all capitals for subheadings:
• Shape your future (major heading)
  UNDERGRADUATE DEGREES (subheading)
• Campus map (major heading)
  FIND YOUR WAY (subheading)

Use this style for a two-part heading separated by a colon:
• Getting to know you: A team bonding experience
  (Capitalise the first word after the colon.)

Use this style for a two-part heading separated by a spaced en dash for a two-part heading:
• Find your feet – then break the ground beneath you
  (Don’t use a capital for the element after the en dash.)

See: Macquarie University Brand Identity Guidelines

TIP
Don’t use a full stop at the end of a heading, even if the heading is a complete sentence. If the heading is a question, use a question mark.

HECS-HELP
Use all capitals and hyphenate.

Hyphenated words
Refer to the Macquarie Dictionary for hyphenated words.

See also: hyphenation guide
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ie</td>
<td>The Latin abbreviation ‘ie’ stands for ‘that is’ and is used to restate or clarify something previously said. Spell out ‘that is’ in body copy. Use the abbreviated form (ie) in brackets or in tables where space is limited.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iLearn</td>
<td>Don’t use ‘iLearn’ or ‘ilearn’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>imply, infer</td>
<td>Use the correct word. To ‘imply’ is to suggest, whereas to ‘infer’ is to deduce or conclude: • Both reports imply that two million jobs might be lost. • From these facts, we can infer that crime has been increasing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inclusive language</td>
<td>Be inclusive by using language that includes everyone. Avoid unnecessary references to a person’s gender, age, culture, religion, sexuality, or other personal aspects. There’s always a way to avoid discrimination in language. Think of a replacement word, or recast the sentence to avoid the expression altogether. See also: inclusive language guide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous</td>
<td>Capitalise when referring to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island peoples. See also: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, capitals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>initials</td>
<td>Don’t use full stops between a person’s initials or spaces when two initials are presented: • Professor S Bruce Dowton, Vice-Chancellor • John P Smith • JK Rowling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inquiry, enquiry</td>
<td>See: enquiry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instagram</td>
<td>Capitalise.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>international students</td>
<td>Use lower case.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>internet</td>
<td>Use lower case. Use bold type for URLs in print (eg mq.edu.au). Don’t include ‘http://’ or ‘www’ unless the link doesn’t work without them. See also: website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>into, in to</td>
<td>Use the correct word or phrase: • How to get into university (not ‘How to get in to university). • Tune in to the podcast on Harvard-style referencing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ise, as a suffix</td>
<td>Use Australian spelling for words such as capitalise, empathise, familiarise, initialise, organise.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
italics
Use italics and title case (eg where the first letter of all words is capitalised, except for prepositions, articles and conjunctions) for:
• blogs (eg the Grammar Girl Blog)
• books, reports, periodicals and publications (eg The Catcher in the Rye, The Astronomical Journal, the Macquarie Dictionary)
• films, videos and podcasts (eg The African Queen, the Hidden Brain podcast)
• magazines and newspapers (eg The Australian, the Financial Review)
• Macquarie overarching strategic frameworks (eg Our University: A Framing of Futures, Learning and Teaching Strategic Framework 2015–2020)
• plays (eg Shakespeare's Hamlet)
• ships, aircraft and other vehicles (eg HMAS Hobart)
• scientific names at the genus, species and subspecies levels (eg Telopea speciosissima, known as the waratah)
• primary legislation and legal cases but not for delegated legislation or bills (eg Macquarie University Act 1989)
• television and radio programs (eg The Vicar of Dibley)
• works of art (eg Monet's Haystacks).

TIP
Capitalise and italicise 'the' in the above categories of works if 'the' is part of the title (eg The Catcher in the Rye, The Australian). Don't use italics for:
• chapters in books and articles in newspapers, journals and magazines
• email addresses
• hyperlinks in web and print content
• large blocks of text
• poems
• songs
• the titles of events, programs and initiatives
• the titles of policies, procedures
• the titles of research programs
• the titles of sacred texts, such as the Bible or the Koran
• website addresses.

TIP
Use minimal capitalisation, roman type and single quotation marks for the specific names of chapters in books and articles in newspapers, journals and magazines. For example: The article titled 'Sleep and depression' in The Australian generated significant comments.

its, it’s
Use 'its' to show possession.
Use 'it’s' when you mean 'it is'.
J

January Round

jargon

job titles

judgement

January Round
Capitalise the UAC term.

jargon
Avoid using jargon.
Use plain-English terms wherever possible.

job titles
See: capitals, names and job titles at Macquarie

judgement
Use 'judgement', not 'judgment'.
K
kick off, kick-off
kickstart
kilometre

**kick off, kick-off**
Use the correct word or phrase:

- Session 2 will kick off with a bang (not Session 2 will kick-off with a bang).
- Let’s begin the project with a kick-off meeting.

**kickstart**
Don’t use a hyphen for the verb:

- An undergraduate degree will kickstart [verb] your career.

See also: hyphenation guide

**kilometre**
See: measurement and units
**L**

**label, labelled, labelling**

Don’t use ‘labeled’ and ‘labeling’.

**labour**

Use this spelling when not referring to the political party.

**languages, nationalities**

Capitalise languages and nationalities (eg Australian, Chinese, English, Mandarin, Spanish).

See also: capitals

**last year, past year**

Use ‘last year’ if you mean the last calendar year, for example, 2020 if you are in 2021.

Use ‘past year’ if you mean the 365 days preceding today. For example, if it was 22 November 2021 today, then the past year would mean the time between 23 November 2020 and 22 November 2021.

**Late Round**

Capitalise the UAC term.

**Latin names**

Capitalise the initial letter of the first word and use italics for the Latin names of species (eg Homo sapiens).

See also: capitals

**latitude and longitude**

Capitalise:

- the Equator
- the International Date Line
- the Northern Hemisphere
- the Southern Hemisphere
- the Tropic of Cancer
- the Tropic of Capricorn.

Don’t use a space to express degrees of latitude and longitude:

- 175°E
- 23°S

See also: capitals

**learned, learnt**

Use ‘learned’, not ‘learnt’, for the past tense of ‘learn’.

**legislation**

See: Acts of parliament, italics

**letter of offer**

Always use ‘offer letter’, not ‘letter of offer’.

**licence**

Use the -c spelling for licence for both the noun and the verb.

**LinkedIn**

Use this style.
lists

1. BULLETED LISTS

Structure your list with the user in mind and the type of document you’re writing. At Macquarie, we use sentence lists, fragment lists and standalone lists.

Use minimal punctuation for all vertical lists (bulleted or numbered). Use a logical order for the items in the list (eg a bulleted list for an alphabetical order or a numbered list for items that are listed in a required order).

Don’t write ‘and’ or ‘or’ after list items, including after the second-last item.

Sentence lists

If the listed items are complete sentences, make the lead-in sentence a complete sentence (ie a sentence that can stand on its own and is a complete thought) and use a colon at the end to signal the bullet points to come. Each bullet point should start with a capital letter and end with a full stop.

Example

All our initiatives are underpinned by three stages:
• We help you determine what career is your best fit.
• We work with you to secure a placement.
• We provide real-world experiences.

TIPS FOR SENTENCE LISTS
• Use a colon at the end of the introductory complete sentence.
• Make sure the introductory sentence is a complete sentence and not a sentence fragment (or incomplete sentence).
• Use complete sentences for each bullet point.
• Start each item with a capital letter, and end with a full stop or a question mark.

Fragment lists

If bullets are used to complete a sentence, use a colon at the end of the lead-in text, use lower case for the first word of each bullet point (except for proper nouns) and don’t use punctuation at the end of each list item except for a full stop after the last item of the list.

Example 1

To achieve your study goals, you should:
• write them down and review them each day
• make sure they are realistic
• share them with someone to whom you can be accountable
• take action on each of them every day.

In Example 1, the list is introduced by a sentence fragment that works with the first word of each item to create a grammatical sentence. Each bullet point starts with a verb (eg write, make, share, take) and works with ‘you should’.

Example 2

The Macquarie University Sport and Aquatic Centre has first-class facilities that include:
• a 25-metre heated indoor pool
• a 50-metre heated outdoor pool
• state-of-the-art gym equipment
• court hire (eg squash and badminton)
• a cycle studio
• a café.

In Example 2, the list is introduced by a sentence fragment that ends in a word that introduces examples (eg include). Each bullet point works with ‘include’ to create a grammatical sentence. This list has a similar in structure to the list in Example 1.

Example 3

At Macquarie, we have four faculties:
• Faculty of Arts
• Faculty of Medicine, Health and Human Sciences
• Faculty of Science and Engineering
• Macquarie Business School.

In Example 3, the list is introduced by a complete sentence. But each bullet point is not a complete sentence, so a full stop is used only on the last list item. Proper nouns (eg the names of faculties) have been used for each bullet point.
TIPS FOR FRAGMENT LISTS
- Use a parallel structure for each list item if the first word of each bullet point in the list completes the lead-in phrase to form a grammatical sentence.
- Start each item with lower case except for proper nouns.
- Use a full stop at the end of the last list item.
- ‘Such as’ and ‘including’ offer two ways to mention or introduce examples in writing bulleted or numbered lists.

Standalone lists
A standalone list can follow a heading. Don’t place a colon after the heading or a full stop at the end of the list. Start each item with a capital letter.

Professions
- Climate scientist
- Ecologically sustainable development officer
- Environmental and geotechnical consultant
- Environmental geologist
- Environmental risk analyst
- Environmental scientist
- Land care and catchment manager
- Local council environmental officer
- Meteorologist
- National parks officer and manager
- Researcher
- Resource manager
- River and water manager
- Spatial information officer

TIPS FOR STANDALONE LISTS
- Use a subheading.
- Don’t use a colon after the subheading.
- Use an alphabetical order, if appropriate.
- Start each list item with a capital letter.
- Use nouns or noun phrases, but don’t use complete sentences.
- Don’t use full stops.

2. IN-SENTENCE LISTS
Use commas for in-sentence lists where multiple items are linked with ‘and’. Use an Oxford (or serial) comma only when the last two items need to be separated and the list has more than one ‘and’. Use commas before ‘including’ and ‘such as’ when these words introduce an in-sentence list.

Example

TIP
Capitalise the names of majors.

Use semicolons to separate items in a list in which at least one item has internal commas. Use a final serial semicolon before the last item in all cases to avoid confusion.

Example
- The Bachelor of Arts allows you to study a range of areas, including anthropology; Chinese studies; modern history; media, culture and communication; and writing.

TIP
Don’t capitalise the names of general study areas.

log in, login
Use the correct word or phrase:
- Click here to log in.
- Click the login icon.
Don’t use ‘sign in’.
Macquarie Centre shopping complex
Don’t use ‘Macquarie Shopping Centre’ or other variations.

Macquarie University
Use the full name on first mention.
Use ‘Macquarie’ or ‘the University’ on further mentions.
Don’t use ‘MQ’ as an abbreviation for Macquarie University except where ‘MQ’ is part of a name (eg MQ Health) or in social media where characters are limited. In online constraints, use ‘MQ’ in the following situations only:
- social media (eg Twitter) to save characters
- hashtags (eg #MQOpenDay, #MQOWeek, #MQGrads).
See also: capitals

Main Round
Capitalise the UAC term.

many, much
Use ‘many’ for plurals and things that can be counted.
Use ‘much’ for things that can’t be counted.
- We have many degrees in information technology.
- There is so much choice at Macquarie.

master degree
Use ‘master degree’ for the singular form.
Use ‘master degrees’ for the plural form.
Don’t use ‘masters degree’ or an apostrophe (eg master’s degree).
Don’t capitalise unless part of a degree name (eg Master of Applied Finance, master degree in finance).
See also: bachelor degree, degree

may, might
Use ‘may’ for permission or probability. Use ‘might’ for probability as well. These words are close in meaning – and often interchangeable when they imply possibility/probability. It’s accepted that ‘may’ is used when something is more likely to occur than when ‘might’ is used.
- You may leave the room.
- We may visit next week.
- We might visit next week.

measurement and units
Spell out measurements in body copy:
- The Macquarie University main campus is 15 kilometres from Sydney.
- The 25-metre pool is heated.
- Our 126-hectare campus is next door to Macquarie Park.

TIP
Use a hyphen to form a compound adjective (eg 25-metre pool, 126-hectare campus).
Use unit symbols in tables and where space is limited:
- 18km (No space or full stop.)
- 25m
- 126ha

TIP
Unit symbols never take a plural ‘s’ (eg 18km not 18kms).
microcredential
Don’t use ‘micro-credential’.

modelling
Don’t use ‘modeling’.

more than
Use ‘more than’, not ‘over’, when referring to numbers:
  • We have more than 156,000 alumni in more than 140 countries.

motor neurone disease
Use this spelling for general usage, but not for the entity (eg Macquarie University Centre for Motor Neuron Disease Research).

MQ Health
Use this word order, or similar, when referring to MQ Health:
  • MQ Health is Australia’s first university-led fully integrated academic health sciences centre.

Note: There are no commas between the adjectives.
Use initial capitals for the ‘Macquarie University Hospital’ and ‘Clinics’:
  • MQ Health – our world-class university health sciences centre that integrates clinical care, learning and research to improve lives – brings together the Faculty of Medicine, Health and Human Sciences, and the Macquarie University Hospital and Clinics.

Use italics, the trademark symbol (™) and this style for the approved MQ Health tagline used on all MQ Health collateral.
  • Heal. Learn. Discover.™

Don’t use italics or the trademark symbol when the tagline is used in running text or when the tagline forms part of a two-part heading:
  • Three small but mighty words guide MQ Health: heal, learn, discover.
  • Heal. Learn. Discover: The path ahead for MQ Health
names and job titles at Macquarie

new initiative

New Year’s Day, New Year’s Eve

names and job titles at Macquarie

1. NAMES

Academic staff

Use academic titles (eg Dr, Professor, Associate Professor) with the person’s first name and last name on first mention. Use the surname only on further mentions.

Examples
• ‘Professor Bob Brown’ on first mention, ‘Brown’ thereafter
• ‘Dr Gertrude Guthers’ on first mention, ‘Guthers’ thereafter
• ‘Associate Professor Ann Smith’ on first reference, ‘Smith’ thereafter

TIP
Relax this style for casual publications, such as This Week, or in social media. Use the first name on further mentions.

Exception
Always use this style for the Vice-Chancellor of Macquarie University:
• On first mention: Professor S Bruce Dowton, Vice-Chancellor, Macquarie University
• On further mentions: Professor Dowton

Alumni

Use the same style as recommended for academic staff.

Current students

Use the student’s first name and last name on first mention. Use the first name only on further mentions.

Present personal names in the same order as they would appear in the person’s home country. Where someone uses an English name or a nickname in place of their personal name, include this name in brackets only if they have requested it:
• Xiaomin (Charlie) Li

Don’t use Mr, Mrs, Ms or Miss.

2. JOB TITLES

Don’t abbreviate job titles except in social media or tables where characters are limited (refer to the following table for accepted abbreviations). Don’t abbreviate ‘Chancellor’, ‘Deputy Chancellor’ or ‘Vice-Chancellor and President’ in any circumstances.

Include ‘Acting’ or ‘Interim’ before the job title for temporary arrangements (eg Acting Executive Dean, Interim Chief Marketing Officer).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>JOB TITLE</th>
<th>ABBREVIATION (FOR SOCIAL MEDIA/TABLES ONLY)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chancellor</td>
<td>Do not abbreviate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Chancellor</td>
<td>Do not abbreviate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice-Chancellor and President</td>
<td>Do not abbreviate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)</td>
<td>DVC (R)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)</td>
<td>DVC (A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pro Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous Strategy)</td>
<td>PVC (IS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice-President, Professional Services</td>
<td>VPPS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Dean</td>
<td>Assoc Dean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Professor</td>
<td>Assoc Prof</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Dean</td>
<td>Exec Dean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professor</td>
<td>Prof</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. PUNCTUATION WITH NAMES AND JOB TITLES

Use this style and punctuation for academic and professional titles within body copy:

- Professor S Bruce Dowton, Vice-Chancellor, Macquarie University, invites you to the event.
- Professor Patrick McNeil, Executive Dean, Faculty of Medicine, Health and Human Sciences, invites you to the event.
- Professor Sakkie Pretorius, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research), invites you to the event.

Use semicolons when listing people and their titles:

- Pip Marlow, Managing Director, Microsoft Australia; Nicole Gower, Vice-President, Professional Services; and Dominique Parrish, Pro Vice-Chancellor, Learning and Teaching, attended a conference.

**names and style of publications at Macquarie**

Our broad, high-level strategic frameworks (including annual reports) are set in italics, whereas our policies, plans and procedures are set in roman type.

Use these styles for publications at Macquarie.

Precede the full name and the short name with 'the'.

Use title case for all publications (eg initial capital on each major word). When ‘Macquarie University’ precedes the full name of an internal document, it can be dropped when citing the publication.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Full Name on First Mention</th>
<th>Short Name on Further Mentions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Our University: A Framing of Futures</td>
<td>strategic plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Strategy 2025; World-Leading Research; World-Changing Impact</td>
<td>Research Strategy 2025 or research strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning and Teaching Strategic Framework 2015–2020</td>
<td>Learning and Teaching Strategic Framework or strategic framework or framework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous Strategy 2016–2025</td>
<td>Indigenous Strategy or strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Success Strategic Framework</td>
<td>strategic framework or framework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating Plan 2020–2024</td>
<td>Operating Plan or plan (Although ‘plan’ is in the name of the report, it has a long-term strategic focus.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Report 2021</td>
<td>Annual Report or report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access and Inclusion Plan 2020–2023</td>
<td>Access and Inclusion Plan or plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus Life LGBTQ+ Sport Inclusion Policy</td>
<td>LGBTQ+ Sport Inclusion Policy or policy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TIP

Use italics for the names of Macquarie’s long-term strategic frameworks.

Use roman type for the names of plans, policies and procedures, programs and initiatives.

See: italics

**new initiative**

Avoid using ‘new initiative’, as every initiative is new.

**New Year’s Day, New Year’s Eve**

Use this style and apostrophe placement.

**Northeast Asia**

Use this style.

**not-for-profit**

Always hyphenate.

Don’t use non-profit or other variations.
numbers
Spell out numbers from one to nine.
Use numbers for 10+.
Use the same rule for ordinal numbers (eg first, fifth, 15th).

Examples
• 10 up to 999,999
• 5000, 50,000 and 500,000 (Use a comma in five-digit numbers and above.)
• one million
• 10 million (but not in tables or scientific references: 10,000,000)
• one billion (but not in tables or scientific references: 1,000,000,000)
• five per cent (but not in tables: 5%)
• 12 per cent (but not in tables: 12%)
• first-year students
• first year of study

Exceptions
Always use numbers for:
• academic periods of time (eg Year 12, Week 1, Session 1)
• academic scores (eg 6 credit points)
• addresses (eg 5 Waterloo Road)
• ages (the girl is 6 months old)
• building levels (Level 3)
• centuries (eg 6th century, 15th century)
• currency (eg $5)
• dates (eg 15 October)
• page ranges (eg pp 5–15)
• time (eg 5pm)
• years (eg 1990s).

TIP
• Always use numbers in tables, headings and design elements such as infographics and snapshots.
• Spell out numbers if used at the start of a sentence (eg Twenty-five students donated 25 books). Recast the sentence, if unwieldy, so that the number is repositioned in the sentence.
• Hyphenate fractions when they are spelled out (eg two-thirds of our students).

See also: century, currency, dates, times of day
Always use ‘O Level’; don’t use ‘O-Level’ or other variations.

Always use ‘O Week’; don’t use ‘O-Week’, ‘Orientation Week’ or other variations.

Use double ‘r’ where needed.

Always use ‘offer letter’; don’t use ‘letter of offer’.

Always use this style.

Use the exact spelling and style preferred by organisations:
  - Johnson & Johnson
  - Macquarie University
  - NSW Department of Planning
  - State Library of New South Wales
  - United Nations Development Programme
  - World Health Organization

It’s a grey area on whether or not to include ‘the’ before the full name of an organisation or an abbreviated organisation name. Generally speaking, let the organisation’s preferred style be your guide, make a style choice and be consistent. For example, in body text ‘the’ would precede all the names of the organisations listed above, except ‘Johnson & Johnson’ and ‘Macquarie University’.

It can also be tricky to know when to use ‘the’ before the name of a university. The general practice is that if the name of the university comes before the word ‘university’, don’t use ‘the’ (eg Macquarie University, Flinders University). If the name follows ‘University of’, it will usually need ‘the’, for example:

  - Researchers from Macquarie University, the University of Sydney, the University of Queensland and the University of South Australia met to discuss the partnership proposal.
PACE

parentheses

past year

Peer Assisted Learning

per cent

• The PACE (Professional and Community Engagement) program is the only one of its kind in the Australian tertiary sector.

Use this style on further mentions:

• PACE provides authentic workplace experiences to build on your academic studies.

See also: acronyms, initialisms

parentheses

See: punctuation guide (brackets)

past year

See: last year

Peer Assisted Learning

Spell out and capitalise on first mention for the program, and use initial capitals followed with ‘(PAL)’.

Use ‘PAL’ on further mentions.

per cent

Always spell out in body copy, but use the percentage symbol (eg %) in tables and graphics:

• five per cent (body copy)
• 5% (tables, graphics)
• At Macquarie, 15 per cent of our students are from overseas. (body copy)
• Fifteen per cent of our students are from overseas. (body copy)
• 15% (tables, graphics)

See also: numbers

phone numbers at Macquarie

Use spaces and these formats.

Domestic audience:

(02) 9850 XXXX

International audience:

+61 (2) 9850 XXXX

See also: addresses, contact information

photo credits

Use a photo credit in print publications to identify the photographer or illustrator.

Use the formats in the following examples for a print publication of two pages or more. Place the photo credit on either the inside front cover, contents page, second-to-last page or inside back cover.

Example for one photograph:

• PHOTO: JOANNE STEPHAN

In this example, a full stop is not used, as it’s not a complete sentence.

Example for many photographs by the one photographer (a blanket statement):

• PHOTOS: All photos by Joanne Stephan unless otherwise noted.

In this example, a full stop is used, as it’s a complete sentence.

Use the following format and italics for an online caption for a photograph or illustration:

• Photo: Joanne Stephan
• Photo: Supplied

TIP

Don’t use a photo credit in a one-page flyer or ad unless a requirement is specified in the terms and conditions.
postgraduate
Use one word.
Use ‘PG’ or ‘postgrad’ in social media.

postnominals
Don’t use full stops or spaces within postnominals.
Don’t use commas before or between postnominals.
- Professor S Bruce Dowton MBBS MD FACMG FRACP FAICD FRSN
- Dr Martin Parkinson AC PSM
- Louise Mason BA LLB (Hons)
- Jane Smith BSc PhD MBA AE

practice
Use the -c spelling for practice for both the noun and the verb.

preventive medicine
Use instead of ‘preventative’ medicine.

principal, principle
Use the correct word.
‘Principal’ means first or highest in rank, or a capital sum, whereas ‘principle’ means a fundamental truth or proposition:
- The principal sponsor of the project attended the reception.
- We believe in the principles of service and engagement.

program
Don’t use ‘programme’.

pull-out quotations
Pull-out quotations – also known as lift-out quotes or pull quotes – are short excerpts from the presented text. We use them in our print and online publications to add visual power to someone’s spoken or written words and to highlight rich, important thoughts. Pull-out quotes add human credence to our brochure copy.
Follow this style for pull-out quotes:
- Use italics for the pull-out quote.
- Use roman type for the attribution.
- Don’t use a comma after each line of the attribution.
- Don’t use an en dash or other punctuation mark before the attribution.
Example for the Vice-Chancellor – domestic and international publications and online:
  “Macquarie will give you the grounding you need for a rewarding career.”
  Professor S Bruce Dowton
  Vice-Chancellor, Macquarie University
  Omit ‘Macquarie University’ if it’s clear from the context (eg in publications where other divisions or external sources have not been quoted). Insert ‘President’ (eg ‘Vice-Chancellor and President’) for international publications.
Example for current students – domestic publications and online:
  “Macquarie helped me become the best version of myself.”
  Susan Smith
  Bachelor of Commerce
  Macquarie Leaders and Achievers scholarship recipient
Example for current students – international publications and online:
  “Macquarie helped me become the best version of myself.”
  Xiaomin (Charlie) Li
  Bachelor of Science student from China
Example for alumni – domestic publications and online:
  “Macquarie taught me everything I know.”
  Sam Peters
  Master of Commerce, 2012
  Director of Content, MTV Australia

List the exact name of the degree at the time of graduation and the year of graduation if known. List the current job title and current employer.
Example for alumni – international publications and online:

“I don’t know where I’d be without Macquarie.”
James Jones
Master of Research graduate from Canada
Research Excellence scholarship recipient
Associate Engineer, Boeing

Example for a corporate partner – domestic and international publications and online:

“We deeply value our partnership with Macquarie.”
Gavin Fox-Smith
Managing Director, Johnson & Johnson Medical

List the job title and the partner organisation. Use a line break when the partner organisation won’t fit on one line, and delete the comma.

TIP
Use pull-out quotes sparingly. For student testimonials, use a similar word count for each pull-out quote presented in a publication, if possible. Pull-out quotes are not intended to be too long – no more than two sentences. Don’t use italics for block quotations because it hinders readability.

See: captions, quotations, punctuation guide

punctuation

Use minimal punctuation.

Use brackets, colons, semicolons or en dashes only to make the sentence clearer for the user.

See: punctuation guide
quotations

Take care when you're quoting someone word for word, and reproduce their words accurately if you're quoting direct speech in your writing. Include an attribution tag (eg ‘says’ or ‘said’ or similar) when quoting people.

Use either present tense (eg ‘says’) or past tense (eg ‘said’) to match the context and the timing of events. Past tense is usually more precise and logical for media releases and announcements made by the Vice-Chancellor.

Use ‘says’ when you’re describing an ongoing action such as a researcher talking about their current research or areas of interest:

- Professor Ingrid Piller from Macquarie University is interested in linguistic diversity in Australia and says: “My research explores language barriers.”

Use ‘said’ for media releases and when reporting on events or announcements that have been and gone:

- At the recent Vice-Chancellor's Awards for Excellence, Professor S Bruce Dowton congratulated all finalists and said: “I acknowledge the passion and impact that you and your teams have on other people's lives, and how your commitment, hard work and ingenuity serve and support our students and our local community to the highest standard.”
- “The new campus name reflects Macquarie University’s deep and abiding commitment to reconciliation and our ties with First Nations people,” Professor Dowton said.

See also: pull-out quotations

quote marks

Use double quotation marks for written or spoken words.

See: punctuation guide
rankings and ratings

research projects and grants at Macquarie

résumé

rankings and ratings
Use this format in body copy for the titles of commonly used international university rankings:

• Academic Ranking of World Universities, 2022
• QS Global MBA Rankings, 2023
• QS Business Masters Rankings, 2022
• QS World University Rankings, 2022
• QS World University Rankings by Subject, 2022
• The Economist Which MBA?
• Times Higher Education World University Rankings, 2022
• Times Higher Education World University Rankings by Subject, 2022.

Don’t capitalise the names of subjects or disciplines when citing our rankings:

• In the QS World University Rankings by Subject, 2022, Macquarie ranked in the top 50 in the world for classics and ancient history, linguistics and philosophy – with a total of 11 subjects ranked in the top 100 globally.
• Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) is the Australian Government’s national research evaluation framework, administered by the Australian Research Council (ARC).

Use this format in body copy for ERA ratings:

• In 2018, 100 per cent of our research was rated as performing at or above world standard at the two-digit level (Excellence in Research for Australia, 2018).

TIP
Spell out ‘two-digit’ level in body copy, and don’t use single quotation marks for the ranking (eg ‘at or above world standard’).

Use ‘ranked’ when referring to QS and THE rankings, and ‘rated’ when referring to ERA evaluations.

Make sure you’re using the most recent ranking or rating citation.

research projects and grants at Macquarie
See: capitals, names and style of publications at Macquarie

résumé
Use this style when you mean a brief account of a person’s education, qualifications and experience.
When students and the community hear acronyms or initialisms, it may confuse and alienate them. Even well-intentioned writers and speakers may overestimate an audience’s familiarity with shortened forms. That’s why we try to avoid using acronyms/initialisms in scriptwriting and in speech for Macquarie University, for the names of our departments and schools, and for other terms, for example:

- Don’t use or say ‘MQ’ for Macquarie University unless it forms part of an actual name (eg MQ Health).
- Don’t use or say ‘CAVE’ as a word or pronounce it as individual letters for the Centre for Agency, Values and Ethics.
- Don’t use or say ‘MCCALL’ as a word or pronounce it as individual letters for the Department of Media, Communications, Creative Arts, Language and Literature.
- Don’t use or say ‘PARC’ as a word or pronounce it as individual letters for the Perception in Action Research Centre.

Make sure overlay labelling or captioning in a video adheres to our preferred written style.

If you’re finding it a challenge to come up with other options or workarounds, contact Group Marketing for help.

**TIP**
- Make the first few minutes of your script engaging.
- Create a warm, conversational and friendly tone.
- Keep it simple and use everyday language.
- Avoid chunks of dialogue and rambling sentences.

See also: **acronyms/initialisms and captions**

**seasons**
Use lower case for our four seasons: autumn, winter, spring, summer.

See also: **capitals**

**semicolon**
See: **punctuation guide**

**Session 1, Session 2, Session 3**
Use this style.

Don’t use ‘semester’ or ‘Session One’.
Include a comma when the session is paired with a year (eg Session 1, 2021).
Include a second comma in body copy (eg Session 1, 2021, starts in February).

**shortened forms**
Shortened forms are used to replace long terms, such as the names of organisations and technical terms.

See also: **abbreviations, acronyms, initialisms**

**sign in**
Use ‘log in’ instead.

See also: **log in**

**Southeast Asia**
Use this style.

**Southern Hemisphere**
See: **capitals, latitude and longitude**
**spaces**
Use one space after a full stop, not two.
See also: punctuation guide

**specialty**
Use ‘specialty’ instead of ‘speciality’.

**spelling**
Always use Australian English spelling.
Follow the first-listed spelling in the *Macquarie Dictionary* if not specified in this style guide.

Exception
Use the ‘c’ spelling for ‘licence’ and ‘practice’, for both the noun and the verb.
Use the exact spelling and style preferred by organisations.
See also: organisation names

**sport**
Don’t use the plural form (eg sport groups not sports groups).

**square brackets**
See: punctuation guide

**startup**
Use one word when referring to a new business.

**states of Australia**
Spell out the full name of the state in body copy:
• Australian Capital Territory
• New South Wales
• Victoria

Use abbreviated forms in postal addresses:
• ACT, NSW, NT, Qld, SA, Tas, WA, Vic

**such as, like**
Use the correct word.
Use ‘such as’ to introduce examples. As a guide, use a comma before ‘such as’ when presenting a list of examples and don’t use a comma for one example:
• Our international students come from many countries, such as China, Japan and the United States.
Don’t use ‘like’ to introduce examples.
target, targeted, targeting

Don’t use ‘targeted’ or ‘targetting’.

terms and conditions

Use the full name if possible (eg terms and conditions apply).

Use the short name if short on room (eg T&Cs apply).

that, which

Use ‘that’ when the clause is essential to the meaning (without a comma) and ‘which’ when it’s not essential to the meaning (with a comma):

- The lizard that was discovered yesterday is a new species.
- A new species of lizard, which is cute, was recently discovered by Macquarie biology researchers.

the (definite article)

Don’t use the definite article (eg the) before ‘Macquarie University’ or ‘MQ Health’ in body copy.

Use the definite article before the proper names of faculties, schools and entities of Macquarie in body copy:

- the Academic Senate (the senate)
- the Australian Institute of Health Innovation (the institute)
- the Faculty of Medicine, Health and Human Sciences (the faculty)
- the Macquarie Business School
- the Macquarie University Hospital (the hospital)
- the Macquarie University Sport and Aquatic Centre (the centre).

Use a capital for the definite article when it’s part of an official title (eg The Australian).

See also: organisation names

their, they

Use the singular ‘their’ or ‘they’ if you need to:

- A student should bring their ID to get a discount.

Recast to achieve an inclusive approach:

- You should bring your ID to get a discount.
- Students should bring their IDs to get a discount.

See also: inclusive language guide

times of day

Use these formats for times:

- 10am (not 10.00am)
- 9.30am, 11.45am, 2.30pm
- 12pm, 12 noon
- 12am, 12 midnight.

Use a spaced en dash between two periods of time.

Repeat ‘am’ or ‘pm’ for times in the same half of the day (eg 10am – 11.30am).

Use ‘from’ and ‘to’ in body copy when referring to times (eg The session will be held on 24 February, from 10am to 11.30am).

Use ‘between’ and ‘and’ when referring to periods between times (eg Morning tea will be served between 9am and 10am).

Express the time zone as:

- 10am AEST

See also: AEDT, AEST
titles
See: names and job titles at Macquarie

ton, tonne
Use ‘tonne’ for the metric measure; use ‘ton’ for the expression:
• The boulder weighs about 721.41 metric tonnes of granite.
• Macquarie offers tons of degrees.

toward, towards
Use ‘towards’.

tweet
Use lower case for the verb and the noun:
• Today, make sure you tweet your views. (verb)
• We received 10 tweets on today’s story. (noun)

Twitter
Use this style when referring to the company.
U
Ubar
undergraduate
uniTEST
unique
university

**Ubar**
Use this style.
Watch out you don’t use ‘Uber’ subconsciously.

**undergraduate**
Use one word.
Use ‘UG’ or ‘undergrad’ in social media.

**uniTEST**
Use this style.

**unique**
Don’t use another word to modify ‘unique’ (eg really unique).

**university**
Use the full name on first mention (eg Macquarie University).
Use a capital ‘U’ when referring to ‘the University’ without its full name.
Use lower case when referring to ‘university’ in a general context.
Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellor

vice versa

Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellor
Capitalise and hyphenate.

Refer to the Vice-Chancellor of Macquarie as follows:

• Professor S Bruce Dowton, Vice-Chancellor, Macquarie University

vice versa
Don’t use ‘visa versa’ or hyphenate.
waiver, waver
web style
Welcome to Country
which, that
white paper

waiver, waver
Use the correct word.
'Waiver' is a noun meaning relinquishment, whereas 'waver' is to show doubt or indecision (or to flutter about):
• The letter provided a waiver of all claims for the period.
• We have never wavered on our decision.

web style
URLs
Use 'mq.edu.au' (not http://www.mq.edu.au or www.mq.edu.au).
Include 'http://www.' if the link won’t work without it. Test it on several browsers and PCs before making the call.
Use 'visit mq.edu.au' (not go to mq.edu.au).
Avoid breaking a URL over two lines in print publications. If breaking a URL is unavoidable, break after the slash, not the hyphen.

Web links
Specify the file type and size (in KB or MB) when linking attachments:
• Our University: A Framing of Futures [PDF 211KB]
• Publication brief template [DOC 56KB]
Use lower case for all URLs and email addresses.
Don’t include the 'http://' or 'www.' part of the web address, or the final forward slash at the end of the address (eg 'google.com' not 'http://www.google.com/' or 'www.google.com').
Don’t include hyperlinks in headings.
For web:
• Hyperlink text to a website rather than including the URL in text. View the ITS web content guide for conventions for including links in text.
For print:
• When writing a URL in a sentence, write the sentence so that the URL is at the end of the sentence and don't use a full stop after the URL (eg For more information, visit mq.edu.au).
• If a URL can’t fit on one line, the break should come after the forward slash. If a URL is very long, request a short URL redirect from Group Marketing.
• Always check a URL before shortening it, as some older websites require the 'www' to work properly; if a site requires the 'www' to load, include it.

Welcome to Country
A Welcome to Country occurs at the beginning of a formal event and can take many forms – including singing, dancing, a smoking ceremony and/or a speech. It’s performed by an Aboriginal person, usually an elder, to acknowledge events taking place on their traditional lands.

which, that
See: that

white paper
Use lower case.
Capitalise if 'white paper' forms part of an exact title.
X

Xmas

Xmas
Spell out in full (eg Christmas).
Use this style.
Grammar guide

Writing is an art form, but it's also a technical skill. Grammar and punctuation are your tools as writers and communicators, and help you express your ideas clearly and logically to your readers. You don't need to be a grammar guru to know that a paragraph without punctuation is confusing at least and nonsensical at most.

At Macquarie, we're always communicating and sharing information with each other, our students and broader audiences. We know that great writing is more about being engaging and original than having perfect grammar. But grammar mistakes can create the impression of rushed or sloppy writing – which affects not only your audience's reading experience but also our collective Macquarie brand. On the other hand, consistently correct grammar makes our content more credible and more effective – and that’s our aim, every time.

You may have heard conflicting advice about what things are and aren't grammatically correct. Here, we’ll debunk common grammar myths and show you common grammar errors to avoid in your writing.

COMMON GRAMMAR MYTHS

Starting a sentence with ‘and’ or ‘but’
Feel free to start a sentence with ‘and’ or ‘but’ where there’s a logical link between sentences. But don't overdo it because it can become irritating for your readers.
* I’ll have a try. But I might need your help.

Ending a sentence with a preposition
It’s not a grammatical error to end a sentence with a preposition (eg ‘in,’ ‘from’, ‘with’, ‘by’, ‘for’ and ‘at’), although it’s still frowned upon by traditional grammarians. Go ahead and end your sentence with a preposition if the alternative creates confusion or sounds unnatural.
Consider these sentences:
* On what are you sitting?
* This is the movie about which I told you.
They sound unnatural and from a bygone era, don’t they?
Better:
* What are you sitting on?
* This is the movie I told you about.
These two sentences both end with a preposition.

Splitting an infinitive
Grammarians have long agreed that there is nothing wrong with splitting an infinitive when the alternative results in an awkward sentence. An infinitive is made up of the word ‘to’ + a verb. To split an infinitive is to put a word or words between the infinitive (ie the word ‘to’) and the verb that follows it.
Star Trek fans will know the phrase ‘to boldly go’. The infinitive ‘to go’ is split by the adverb ‘boldly’. Most writers would agree that ‘to go boldly’ is awkward.
As writers, we want to make our reader's job as easy as possible. So it’s important to keep the two parts together if we can because an infinitive expresses a single idea or thought.
Consider this sentence:
* The late students wanted to quickly and quietly enter the lecture room.
In this sentence, the infinitive ‘to enter’ is split.
Better:
* The late students wanted to enter the lecture room quickly and quietly.

TIP
Don’t split an infinitive unless the alternative results in an awkward sentence.

Using ‘ie’ and ‘eg’ to mean the same thing
These Latin abbreviations have different meanings. The abbreviation ‘ie’ (id est) means ‘that is’, ‘in other words’ or ‘on the other hand’. The abbreviation ‘eg’ (exempli gratia) means ‘for example’ and is used to signal that you’re providing one or more examples.
Consider these sentences:
* The lecturer was delighted to receive a special gift from her mentee – that is, a grateful student.
* The lecturer was delighted to receive a special gift from her mentee (ie a grateful student).
* Healthy exercise – for example, riding a bike or walking – may help you live longer.
* Healthy exercise (eg riding a bike or walking) may help you live longer.

TIP
Spell out these abbreviations in body copy. Use the abbreviated forms in brackets.
Using a hyphen and an en dash the same way

The hyphen (−) and the en dash (–) are different punctuation marks. These two are sometimes confused because they look similar, but they're used differently. A hyphen joins two or more words together, whereas the en dash links words or numbers together. Hyphens are never separated by spaces. At Macquarie, en dashes are sometimes separated by spaces and sometimes not.

TIP
See our Punctuation Guide for examples of usage between a hyphen and an en dash.

COMMON GRAMMAR ERRORS

Avoiding ambiguous modifiers
(also known as dangling participles or dangling modifiers, or misplaced modifiers)

An ambiguous modifier is an element that could be misinterpreted as being associated with a word other than the one intended or is separated from the element it modifies or describes. Sentences with this grammatical error are often confusing or illogical.

Example of a dangling participle:

• **Being in a dilapidated condition**, Patricia bought the house for a good price.

A dangling participle starts generally with an -ing word. In this example, the dangling participle is the first part of the sentence (in bold). This element is modifying the noun 'Patricia'. One way to correct a dangling participle is to insert a subject into the first part of the sentence.

• Because the house was in a dilapidated condition, Patricia bought it for a good price.

Example of a dangling modifier:

• **As a valued member of the Macquarie community**, we invite you to apply.

The dangling modifier is the first part of the sentence (in bold). This element is illogically modifying the pronoun 'we'. To correct this modifier, think about who or what the first part of the sentence refers to.

Better:

• As a valued member of the Macquarie community, you can apply.

Even better:

• Because you're a valued member of the Macquarie community, we invite you to apply.

Example of a misplaced modifier:

• The torn student's book lay on the desk.

The adjective 'torn' is misplaced. In this sentence it modifies 'student's', not 'book'. To correct this misplaced modifier, relocate the adjective to before the noun it modifies.

• The student's torn book lay on the desk.

Be careful where you place the adverb 'only' in a sentence. It is often misplaced, causing an unintended meaning. In these sentences, there are subtle differences in meaning depending on the placement of 'only'.

• The budget can only be balanced if our spending was reduced.
• The budget can be balanced only if our spending was reduced.
• Bears hibernate in winter, only waking occasionally to eat and drink.
• Bears hibernate in winter, waking only occasionally to eat and drink.
• The cricket team only scored two runs in the first innings.
• The cricket team scored only two runs in the first innings.

Avoiding false ranges

The combination 'ranging from ... to' is often used to express a range. A true range requires a set of objects (or topics or attributes) in a limited and comparable set. For example using our areas of study as a comparable set:

• At Macquarie, we offer high-quality degrees across our areas of study, ranging from arts to security.

A false range links things so unlike that there is no basis for comparison. For example:

• At Macquarie, we offer high-quality degrees across our areas of study, ranging from arts to electronics.

A false range is especially jarring when it contains more than two items. For example:

• At Macquarie, we offer high-quality degrees across our areas of study, ranging from arts to electronics to childhood education.
Using a parallel construction

We often use long and complex lists in our courseware, especially for learning outcomes. Be consistent with your constructions in lists (both in-sentence lists and vertical lists, such as bulleted points). Items in a list should be grammatically parallel, meaning that each item appears in the same form as the others.

Not parallel:
- Getting to Macquarie is easy – consider walking, cycling or drive.

Parallel:
- Getting to Macquarie is easy – consider walking, cycling or driving.
  (Each item in the list has the same form – that is, all -ing words.)

Not parallel:
- Macquarie has a well-earned reputation for academic excellence and being progressive.

Parallel:
- Macquarie has a well-earned reputation for academic excellence and progressive thinking.
  (‘Academic excellence’ and ‘progressive thinking’ are both noun phrases).

Not parallel:
- You’ll learn how to lead people, work collaboratively, adaptation to changing circumstances, create innovative solutions to business problems, clear and effective communication, and manage diversity and inclusive practice.

Parallel
- You’ll learn how to lead people, work collaboratively, adapt to changing circumstances, create innovative solutions to business problems, communicate clearly and effectively, and manage diversity and inclusive practice.
  (Each item in the list begins with a verb: lead, adapt, create, communicate, manage.)

Not parallel:
- Don’t forget to bring a notepad, pen and your water bottle.

Parallel:
- Don’t forget to bring a notepad, a pen and your water bottle.
- Don’t forget to bring a notepad and pen, and your water bottle.

Avoiding a run-on sentence or comma splice

A run-on sentence is a sentence that joins two independent clauses without punctuation or the appropriate conjunction. A comma splice is like a run-on sentence, but it uses a comma to join two clauses that have no appropriate conjunction. Fixing a run-on sentence or a comma splice is easy.

Example of a comma splice:
- Sally is a valuable team member, she’s also an excellent writer.

Solutions to fix a comma splice.
- Sally is a valuable team member. She’s also an excellent writer.
- Sally is a valuable team member; she’s also an excellent writer.
- Sally is a valuable team member, and she’s also an excellent writer.
- Sally is a valuable team member and an excellent writer.

Forming sentences with subject–verb agreement

Confusion over subject–verb agreement can be the source of many grammatical errors. A sentence must have subjects and verbs that agree in number. If the subject is singular, the verb must be singular. If the subject is plural, the verb must be plural. But it’s not always easy to draw a clear-cut distinction.

Straightforward examples:
- CMPID is Sydney’s largest innovation hotspot. (singular subject, singular verb)
- Our faculties work together on joint projects. (plural subject, plural verb)

Examples with collective singular nouns:
- The news is good. (singular subject, singular verb)
- Maths is my favourite subject. (singular subject, singular verb)
- Physics confuses me. (singular subject, singular verb)

Examples with singular pronouns:
- None of the employees has agreed to the changes. (singular subject, singular verb)
- Neither of those chairs is safe to sit on. (singular subject, singular verb)
TIP
Other pronouns that are always singular include ‘anyone’, ‘everyone’, ‘each’ and ‘neither’.

Examples with collective singular or plural nouns:

Collective nouns include ‘class’, ‘committee’, ‘audience’ and ‘team’. A collective noun can be singular or plural depending on whether the noun is functioning as a single unit or as individual people.

Consider these sentences:
• The team requires more funding for research. (The members of the team are functioning as a single unit, so a singular verb is used.)
• The team have different but complementary specialisations. (The members of the team are considered as individuals, so a plural verb is used.)

Mixing up spellings
Some words sound the same but have different spellings and meanings (eg there, their and they’re; two, to and two; whether and weather; your and you're). It can be easy to use the wrong spelling in your first draft, but a careful proofread should spot them.

Want to learn more?
The internet is replete with websites and resources offering excellent advice on English language grammar. Here are some of our favourites:
• The online Macquarie Dictionary also has grammar and punctuation resources.
• Mignon Fogarty from the Grammar Girl website provides an abundance of easy-to-understand advice on grammar and style. Keep in mind that the focus is on US English, which has variations in style to Australian English.
• The Online Writing Lab (OWL) at Purdue University provides writing resources and instructional material on grammar.
• The online Australian Government Style Manual is the preferred style guide for writing and editing content for the Australian Government.
• Grammarly has a no-fuss guide to basic grammar rules.
Hyphenation guide

The main purpose of hyphens is to glue words together so that they act as a single concept, or a compound expression, that describes a noun. We use hyphens to avoid ambiguity.

Check the Macquarie Dictionary on whether a compound expression is acceptable as separate words, as a joined-up single word or as a hyphenated word. If the expression is not in the dictionary, then you need to decide whether to add a hyphen for clarity, for example, 'a little used office' and 'a little-used office' have different meanings.

There are complex grammar rules about using hyphens. This guide provides some common compound expressions that are used at Macquarie.

1. HYPHENATE THESE COMPOUND EXPRESSIONS ONLY WHEN THE PHRASE COMES BEFORE A NOUN IN THE SENTENCE. DON’T HYPHENATE WHEN THE PHRASE COMES AFTER THE NOUN IN THE SENTENCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>case study</th>
<th>case-study interviews</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cutting edge</td>
<td>cutting-edge research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>day to day</td>
<td>day-to-day activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>evidence based</td>
<td>evidence-based research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ever changing</td>
<td>ever-changing environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ever present</td>
<td>ever-present challenges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fastest growing</td>
<td>fastest-growing university</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>first class</td>
<td>first-class facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>half year</td>
<td>half-year program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hands on</td>
<td>hands-on experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>high quality</td>
<td>high-quality research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>highest ranking</td>
<td>highest-ranking researchers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in depth</td>
<td>in-depth interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>longest running</td>
<td>longest-running peer-support program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>long term</td>
<td>long-term commitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>much needed</td>
<td>much-needed funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>off campus</td>
<td>off-campus seminar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on campus</td>
<td>on-campus facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on site</td>
<td>on-site registration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>peer assisted</td>
<td>peer-assisted mentoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>peer support</td>
<td>peer-support program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>real world</td>
<td>real-world experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>short term</td>
<td>short-term project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>step by step</td>
<td>step-by-step guide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>up front</td>
<td>up-front payment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>up to date</td>
<td>up-to-date information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>well</td>
<td>well-researched paper, well-deserved award, well-timed exit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wide ranging</td>
<td>wide-ranging belief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>work in progress</td>
<td>work-in-progress report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>world class</td>
<td>world-class graduates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>year end</td>
<td>year-end profits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>year round</td>
<td>year-round use</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. **ALWAYS HYPHENATE THESE COMPOUND WORDS**
- cross-cultural
- decision-making
- fast-track (as a verb and an adjective)
- fractions (eg one-third, two-thirds, three-quarters)
- full-time, part-time
- future-focused
- job-ready
- know-how
- night-time
- not-for-profit
- one-off
- open-minded
- problem-solve, problem-solving
- short-list, short-listed
- so-called
- student-centred
- t-shirt
- wi-fi
- work-life balance (not ‘work/life balance’ or ‘work–life balance’)
- work-ready
- year-on-year

3. **ALWAYS USE ONE WORD AND NO HYPHEN**
- birthrate
- childcare
- coursework
- daytime
- ebook
- ebusiness
- email
- enewsletter
- fieldwork
- filmmaker
- firsthand
- groundbreaking
- hashtag
- kickstart (as a verb)
- healthcare
- keynote speaker
- longstanding
- offshore
- ongoing
- online
- onshore
- roundtable
- socioeconomic
- teamwork
- wellbeing
- workforce
- workplace
- worldwide
- yearlong

4. **DON’T HYPHENATE SET PHRASES, EVEN WHEN THEY COME BEFORE A NOUN, AS THEY ARE CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD**
- best practice
- early career researcher
- field trip
- higher degree research
- high school
- keynote speaker
- senior school student
- skill set
- think tank

### 5. WORDS FORMED WITH PREFIXES
Words formed with prefixes are either closed or hyphenated, whether they are nouns, verbs, adjectives or adverbs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prefix</th>
<th>Formed Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>anti</td>
<td>anti-antisocial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bi</td>
<td>biannual, biennial, bimonthly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bio</td>
<td>biofoundry, biomedicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>co</td>
<td>co-create, co-design, co-locate, cooperate, cooperative, coordinate, coordinator, corequisite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>counter</td>
<td>counterterrorism, counterintelligence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cyber</td>
<td>cybersecurity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inter</td>
<td>intercultural, interdisciplinary, interrelated, interstate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>life</td>
<td>life cycle, lifelong, life span, lifestyle, lifetime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>macro</td>
<td>macro-economics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>meta</td>
<td>meta-analysis, metacognition, metadata, metanarrative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>micro</td>
<td>microcredential, micro-economics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mid</td>
<td>mid-1990s, mid-June, mid-session, mid-term, mid-year. But don’t hyphenate ‘early’ and ‘late’ when used in the same way (e.g., early 1990s, late June).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>multi</td>
<td>multi-award-winning program, multicultural, multidimensional, multidisciplinary, multifaceted, multifactor, multimedia, multi-million-dollar (when used as a compound adjective (e.g., multi-million-dollar production hub), multimode, multinational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>non</td>
<td>non-award, non-essential, nonlinear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>post</td>
<td>postgraduate, postdoctoral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pre</td>
<td>pre-assessed, pre-existing, prehistoric, prerequisite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>re</td>
<td>re-admit, re-admission, reapply, re-evaluate, re-evaluation re-engineer, re-engineering, re-examine, re-enter, re-cover (meaning ‘cover again’), recover (meaning ‘get better in health’)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>self</td>
<td>self-designed, self-directed, self-help, self-regulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sub</td>
<td>subclinical, subcommittee, subspecialty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>under</td>
<td>underway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>web</td>
<td>webcam, webpage, website</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Inclusive and respectful language guide

Macquarie University is proudly one community, a community that is made up of people of different ages, life or educational experiences, genders, cultural backgrounds, marital status, beliefs and perspectives. We work hard to create an inclusive and respectful environment for every member of our community.

The language and words we use at Macquarie matter. We know that language is a powerful tool in creating a culture in which everyone is valued and respected – language that doesn’t offend, demean, insult or exclude people in our community or in our reach.

This guide will help you in writing inclusive and respectful words that are relevant to all or relevant to your context. The examples used in this guide are simply that – a guide to raise awareness and help you make the right word choice for your context.

In Group Marketing, we have three rules of thumb when writing for our intended audience:

1. Use gender-neutral language when the context supports it.
2. Use language that focuses on the person, not on the person’s personal characteristics or condition.
3. Avoid stereotyping and making assumptions.

Even with the best intentions, we sometimes get it wrong because of an unconscious tendency to make assumptions based on the way we think or feel. But we aim to be conscious writers and consistently communicate in a way that supports diversity and inclusion.

GENDER-NEUTRAL LANGUAGE AND RESPECTFUL TERMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AVOID</th>
<th>ALTERNATIVES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>actress</td>
<td>actor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>addict</td>
<td>person with a drug problem, person with a substance use disorder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>alumna (female graduate)</td>
<td>alumni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>alumnus (male graduate)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>If the person is from a country in Asia, it’s more respectful to specify the country of birth/origin. For example, a student from China.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>black or white thinking</td>
<td>all-or-nothing thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blind</td>
<td>person with a visual impairment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cancer sufferer, cancer victim</td>
<td>person living with cancer, person affected by cancer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chairman</td>
<td>chair, chairperson, convenor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>deaf</td>
<td>person with a hearing disability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>diabetic</td>
<td>person with diabetes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>epileptic</td>
<td>person with epilepsy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>handicapped person</td>
<td>person with a physical disability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>he or she (as generic pronouns)</td>
<td>academics, lecturers, teachers, staff members, students, researchers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>juvenile, youth</td>
<td>young person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lady</td>
<td>woman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>man of letters</td>
<td>academic, scholar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>manpower</td>
<td>workforce, people, staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MND patient</td>
<td>patient (or person) with MND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>our</td>
<td>Avoid using ‘our’ before groups of people, such as ‘senior citizens’, because it’s condescending</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE LANGUAGE**

Walanga Muru, Macquarie’s Office of Indigenous Strategy, can provide specific advice on using culturally appropriate and respectful language when writing for or about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Also read Walanga Muru’s *Aboriginal Cultural Protocols* – a guide on appropriate word usage and respectful terms in a cultural context.

**MORE READING**
The following organisations provide advice on appropriate terminology:

- Dementia Australia
- Mental Health Coordination Council
- Disability language guide (People with Disability Australia)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Replacement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>schizophrenic</td>
<td>person with a mental health disorder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sexual orientation or gender identity</td>
<td>Do not mention sexual orientation or gender identity when it is not relevant. LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) or LGBTQI+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex) are broadly accepted terms that express a diversity of sexual orientations and gender identities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the disabled, the handicapped</td>
<td>people with disability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the old, the aged</td>
<td>older people, senior citizens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>underdeveloped countries</td>
<td>developing countries, developed countries</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Punctuation guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PUNCTUATION</th>
<th>USE</th>
<th>EXAMPLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Apostrophes (‘)</strong></td>
<td>Use an apostrophe to form a contraction.</td>
<td>We’re a university that’s progressive and innovative.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use an apostrophe to show omission of letters or numbers.</td>
<td>Macquarie was established in the ’60s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use an apostrophe + ‘s’ to show singular possession.</td>
<td>The University’s research priorities are set out in the Strategic Research Framework. The student’s preferred area of study is business.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use an apostrophe after ‘s’ to show singular possession in words or names ending in ‘s’.</td>
<td>Annie Ellis’ skills in business have improved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use an apostrophe after ‘s’ to show plural possession (exception: the children’s playground, the women’s conference).</td>
<td>The students’ graduation robes are available. Make sure the kids’ lunchboxes contain a piece of fruit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use an apostrophe + ‘s’ for plural nouns that don’t end in ‘s’.</td>
<td>The children’s education is important. The women’s conference is in May. The sheep’s wool was soft.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use an apostrophe for plurals of single letters, but do not use an apostrophe for plural expressions of numbers.</td>
<td>Make sure you cross your t’s and dot your i’s. They received mostly 4s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use an apostrophe when writing about expressions of time for singular expressions, but don’t use an apostrophe for plural expressions.</td>
<td>one year’s time, one day’s salary, one year’s experience two weeks time, three years experience, 12 years experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Brackets (Round)</strong></td>
<td>Use round brackets to insert parenthetical information into a sentence.</td>
<td>Three fields (two-digit level) were rated well above world standard.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Brackets [Square]</strong></td>
<td>Use square brackets to clarify information within quoted material or to show an error within quoted material.</td>
<td>The education student says, “Mia Mia [Macquarie’s on-campus childcare centre] is invaluable for early childhood learning and teaching.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Colon (:)</strong></td>
<td>Use a colon to introduce a list in a sentence, but be sure that the words before the colon form a complete sentence. A list is when you have a series of at least three items.</td>
<td>There are five strategic priorities under the University’s Strategic Research Framework: Healthy People, Resilient Societies, Prosperous Economies, Secure Planet, Innovative Technologies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use a colon to introduce text that expands or illustrates the text immediately preceding the colon. The text that precedes the colon must be a complete sentence. The text that follows the colon can be a complete sentence, a phrase, or even a single word.</td>
<td>Macquarie is home to Australia’s first university-led fully integrated health sciences centre: MQ Health. Two words describe Macquarie: bold and innovative.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Style guides differ on whether you should capitalise the first word after a colon. At Macquarie, we capitalise the first word after the colon only when the colon introduces a complete sentence in body copy.</td>
<td>Macquarie leads Australia in synthetic biology research: Our researchers are renowned internationally for their work in this specialised field.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A colon can be used to introduce a quotation.</td>
<td>At the national conference, Professor John Smith said: “It’s our community that will anchor us as we recalibrate for the future.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>COLONS IN HEADINGS</strong></td>
<td>In a two-part heading separated by a colon, capitalise the first word after the colon.</td>
<td>Getting to know you: A team bonding experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>COLONS IN TITLES</strong></td>
<td>Use a colon to separate a title from a subtitle in the names of presentations. Use an initial capital letter for the first word that follows the colon and for proper nouns.</td>
<td>Keynote address: Service transformation journey Executive address: A day of connection and collaboration Leadership story: Creating impact and leading for inclusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PUNCTUATION</td>
<td>USE</td>
<td>EXAMPLE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Comma (,)</strong></td>
<td>Use a comma to separate independent clauses (or complete sentences) that are linked with a conjunction.</td>
<td>Macquarie is bold and innovative, and we enjoy an enviable reputation for research excellence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use a comma after an introductory clause or phrase that provides extra information or modifies the sentence.</td>
<td>Although we are a first-rate university for research excellence, we ensure our students are at the centre of our focus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A comma signals to your reader that the main clause is coming up.</td>
<td>For example, the Connect Macquarie Park Innovation District has the most innovative postcode in Australia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>You can omit the comma if the clause or phrase is short and the omission doesn’t cause confusion (eg Before the meeting she reviewed the agenda).</td>
<td>Therefore, our students graduate with the skills employers need.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In November 2020, our reimagined Bachelor of Arts won the Employability category in the Australian Financial Review Higher Education Awards.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use a pair of commas to enclose extra (or parenthetical) information in a sentence. If you remove the parenthetical element, the sentence still makes sense.</td>
<td>Macquarie University, one of Australia’s leading universities, is home to world-class facilities. (In this example, the commas signal to the reader that we’re providing extra information. The extra information can be lifted from the sentence without altering the meaning.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use an Oxford/serial comma to separate three or more items in a series only if there is a risk of ambiguity.</td>
<td>Our most popular areas of study include business, medicine and health, and languages and linguistics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Don’t use a comma to separate a verb from its subject.</td>
<td>In applying our research, our [subject] discoveries translate [verb] into real change and help [verb] people globally. (Don’t use a comma before ‘and help’.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ellipsis (…)</strong></td>
<td>Use an ellipsis to indicate the omission of words in quoted material.</td>
<td>“In theory, lower interest rates reduce borrowing costs … and therefore the economy.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>TIP:</strong> Insert a space on either side of the ellipsis points.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Em dash, so-called because it’s the width of an upper case ‘M’ (—)</strong></td>
<td>At Macquarie, we prefer using a spaced en dash in print and online writing for two reasons:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Em dashes tend not to play nice with the online environment and restrict accessibility.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Em dashes are more at home in fiction and creative writing.</td>
<td>No example provided because we don’t use em dashes at Macquarie.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We have pioneered learning and teaching approaches that challenge conventions – our criteria to shift thinking.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Solar, wind, hydro and tidal power – all are viable options for renewable energy.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>En dash (–)</strong></td>
<td>Use a single en dash, with a space on either side, to introduce text that expands or illustrates the previous text. In this way, the en dash can be used instead of a colon.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We recommend international students go on the Bondi–Coogee walk.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Single</strong></td>
<td>Use an unspaced en dash to show spans of numbers or letters. The en dash means up to and including.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>For more information, see pages 19–23 and 33–40 of the Strategic Research Framework.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The A–Z style guide is a quick reference tool that answers your style-related questions and helps you follow our preferred style.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use an unspaced en dash to show an association between words that retain their separate identities.</td>
<td>In the years 2015–2020, we focused on developing a solid reputation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The en dash is used to show a break in thought.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Ellipsis (…)**

**TIP:**

Insert a space on either side of the ellipsis points.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PUNCTUATION</th>
<th>USE</th>
<th>EXAMPLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>En dash, so-called</strong> because it’s the width of a lower case 'N' (–) <strong>Pair</strong></td>
<td>Use a pair of en dashes, with a space on either side, to introduce a non-essential appositive and to interrupt the flow of the sentence.</td>
<td>Macquarie University – one of Australia’s leading universities – is home to world-class facilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use a pair of en dashes, with a space on either side, to enclose additional information and to interrupt the flow of the sentence.</td>
<td>Macquarie University is a vibrant hub of intellectual thinkers – and bold innovators – all working towards a brighter future for our community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Exclamation (!)</strong></td>
<td>Use exclamation marks sparingly in less formal content, such as promotional material and social media posts, to convey excitement.</td>
<td>Open Day is on today!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Forward slash (/)</strong></td>
<td>Use a forward slash between ‘and’ or ‘or’.</td>
<td>You can study on campus and/or online.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>TIP:</strong> Don’t insert a space on either side of the forward slash.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Full stop (.)</strong></td>
<td>Use a full stop at the end of a complete sentence.</td>
<td>Macquarie is ranked among the top one per cent of universities in the world.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>As a rule, a full stop is not used at the end of a heading or a subheading, even if the subheading is a complete sentence.</td>
<td>Macquarie University CREATE YOUR FUTURE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use one space, not two spaces, after the end of sentences in body copy.</td>
<td>You can study science. Or you can study arts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not, You can study science. Or you can study arts.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hyphens (-)</strong></td>
<td>Use a hyphen for a compound word that comes before the noun that it modifies. (A compound word has two or more words that acts as a single concept.)</td>
<td>We offer hundreds of high-quality degrees across a wide range of study areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Don’t use a hyphen if the compound word comes after the noun.</td>
<td>We offer hundreds of degrees that are of high quality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Don’t use a hyphen if the compound word is listed as a set phrase in the Macquarie Dictionary or has become well established.</td>
<td>Our target group for this campaign is high school students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Don’t use hyphens with compounds formed from adverbs ending in ‘ly’.</td>
<td>Our highly skilled graduates are in demand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>As a rule, use a hyphen when a word contains a prefix with a double vowel except for common words or where the prefix ends with ‘o’. Check the Macquarie Dictionary or our hyphenation guide.</td>
<td>pre-eminent, re-admission, non-essential but coordinate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Question mark (?)</strong></td>
<td>Use a question mark after a direct question.</td>
<td>What are our study areas?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quotation marks (&quot;&quot;)</strong></td>
<td>Use single quotation marks to show a quotation inside a quotation.</td>
<td>&quot;Last year, after my fellow researchers told me ‘a discovery is imminent’ I was thrilled,” says Professor John Smith.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use single quotation marks to set off the titles of book chapters and articles.</td>
<td>The chapter titled ‘Australia’s higher education system today’ presents statistical information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use single quotation marks to set off words as words or letters as letters.</td>
<td>The letter ‘p’ is silent when it precedes an ’s’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use single quotation marks to set off unfamiliar uses of words or made-up words.</td>
<td>Australian eucalypts can ‘remember’ past exposure to extreme heat. Gerunds maintain some of their ‘verbness’ and can be modified by adverbs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PUNCTUATION</td>
<td>USE</td>
<td>EXAMPLE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quotation marks (“”)</strong></td>
<td>Style guides differ on the use of quotation marks. At Macquarie, we use double quote marks at the beginning and end of the exact words of a writer or a speaker. If the quote has an attribution tag, use a comma as a separator. If the final full stop is part of the quoted text, place it before the closing quote mark. General rule of thumb: For a full sentence quote, place the full stop (or other punctuation mark) before the quote mark. For partial quotes, place the full stop after the closing quote mark.</td>
<td>Professor John Smith says, “It’s our community that will anchor us as we recalibrate for the future.” Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) Professor Rorden Wilkinson explains: “Our new approach is designed to support students to make the successful transition to tertiary study.” (These are examples of a quote with an attribution tag that comes before the written or spoken words. The full stop is part of the quoted text and placed before the final quote mark. Either a colon or a comma can be used after the attribution tag.) “It’s our community that will anchor us as we recalibrate for the future,” he says. (This is an example of a quote with an attribution tag that comes after the written or spoken words.) If a partial quote is integrated into a sentence, place the final full stop after the closing quote mark. It was noted in the annual report that “2020 was an unprecedented year for Macquarie University.” (This is an example of a written quote that doesn’t have an attribution tag. The partial quote has been integrated into the sentence.) If the quote does not have a lead-in phrase, place the full stop before the quote mark. “2020 was an unprecedented year for Macquarie University.” (This is an example of a written quote that doesn’t have an attribution tag.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Semicolon (;)</strong></td>
<td>Use a semicolon between two closely related independent clauses (or complete sentences). Use a semicolon to join two closely related independent clauses when the second clause contains a conjunctive adverb (eg ‘however’). Use a semicolon when at least one item in a series has its own comma – that is, separate the items with a semicolon instead of a comma. Always insert a semicolon before the final conjunction.</td>
<td>Macquarie is renowned for thinking differently; we instil this philosophy in our students. The Australian higher education landscape continues to be constrained; however, it is important to remain relevant and progressive. Find your ideal career path under our 12 areas of study, including media, communications and creative arts; security, intelligence and criminology; and information technologies.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Short URLs guide

In print and online where hyperlinking isn’t possible, short URLs are preferable because they:

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

CREATING AN MQ.EDU.AU SHORT URL
All short URLs created for an event or campaign follow a standard format and require the approval of Group Marketing.

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

SHORT URL BEST PRACTICE TIPS
1. Make the URL readable by human beings. While the URL doesn’t need to be perfect, you should use normal language and avoid acronyms. Our audience should find the URL easy to understand 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) 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/leaders-and-achievers
   • mq.edu.au/academic-advantage
Writing for specific audiences guide

WRITING FOR PRINT
For the most, print publications take the core tone (see ‘Brand language – Tones of voice’ in the Macquarie University Brand Identity Guidelines).

Generally, use first and second person (ie ‘we’ and ‘you’) when writing copy for brochures and flyers:
- Macquarie helped me develop my talents.
  (student perspective in a quote or longer-form story)
- At Macquarie, we believe in learning beyond the lecture theatre.
  (use ‘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 by reporting in the third person with quotes wherever possible (see ‘Writing for the media’).

Keep in mind the aesthetics of printed materials. Avoid widows and orphans. A widow is a single word or short phrase appearing alone at the top of column. An orphan is a single word appearing at the bottom of a paragraph or column. Also avoid hyphens and en dashes at the end or beginning of a line.

WRITING FOR THE WEB
For the most, online writing is a blend between the core tone and the casual tone (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.

When linking to related content, use in-text hyperlinks with relevant words (don’t use ‘click here’) to point readers to more information.

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 be used only for the main heading on the page.
- Use all other headings in decreasing importance (H2, H3, H4).
- Don’t apply a style or random heading style because you think it looks good.

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 news or journalistic writing style is adopted.

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 John Smith, will receive a $6.37 million grant for dementia research from the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), Minister for Health Sarah Jones announced today.

They are generally written in the past tense:
- A research team, led by Dr James White, 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.
- “At the Centre, we investigated how we can use high-end molecular analysis technologies to improve food and food production so that we can develop new food sources and protect existing ones in the future,” said Centre Director Professor Emma Black.

Use the inverted pyramid writing structure by including new information in the first paragraph. Think about why you are sharing the story and what will interest the audience the most. Background information is generally included towards the end of the media 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.
All our social media presence takes the casual tone (see ‘Brand language – Tones of voice’ in the Macquarie University Brand Identity Guidelines). Use relevant hashtags, where the medium allows them, to ensure your content is found by more people.

Limit your hashtags to about five per post to avoid seeming desperate.

Social media character limits are constantly changing, and it can be difficult to know the ideal length of a Facebook post, an Instagram caption or a Twitter tweet – and their various layers (eg headlines, descriptions). Follow these guidelines for general descriptions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM</th>
<th>IDEAL LENGTH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facebook post</td>
<td>125 characters (including spaces)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Posts with images or links usually perform better.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instagram</td>
<td>2200 characters (including spaces)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(As yet, there is no best for the ideal length. If you have a great story to tell with an image, go for it.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>140 characters (including spaces)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Best practice is to limit your tweets to 100 characters to allow room for retweets (RT) and commentary. Keep hashtags to around six characters if you can.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YouTube</td>
<td>3 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Try to keep videos to less than 3 minutes. Keep headlines within 70 characters and descriptions within 5000 characters. Make sure the most important information is up front, as YouTube will truncate descriptions at around 150 characters.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pinterest</td>
<td>100–200 characters (including spaces)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SlideShare</td>
<td>1-7-7 rule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(SlideShare, a subsidiary of LinkedIn, allows you to share PowerPoint slides. The optimal length is 61 slides, according to social media experts. Stick to the 1-7-7 rule for presentations – that is, each slide should have one main idea, with no more than seven bullet points per slide and no more than seven words per bullet point.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>