

Released under FOI



ACCC/AER style guide

Version Control

5 October 2022	3	Changed the style for Consumer Data Right (CDR) and added in a separate CDR section
27 January 2023	4	Added section on use of employee or staff
5 April 2023	5	Updated the section on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Changed the title to First Nations peoples. Added a new resource.

Released under FOI

ACCC/AER style guide

This guide contains examples and guidance that apply specifically to the ACCC/AER and the work we do.

Table of Contents

ACCC or Commission	1
ACCC/AER	1
ACCC and AER styles, fonts and logos.....	1
Acronyms and initialisms.....	1
Addresses.....	1
Alternative text, captions and titles for images	1
Ampersands.....	2
Apostrophes.....	2
And/or	2
Australian Government or Commonwealth.....	2
Australian states and territories.....	2
Bold text (for emphasis)	2
Brackets (parentheses).....	3
Bullet point lists	3
Capitalisation	3
Capitals for titles of documents, books, films and so on	3
Capitals for parts of a book or document.....	4
Capitals for titles of people	4
Capitals for codes of conduct.....	4
Captions for photographs and images.....	4
Captions for tables, graphs and charts.....	5
Collective nouns.....	5
Country names.....	5
Consumer Data Right (CDR).....	5
Currency	6
Dashes	6

Released under FOI

Employee or staff	6
Enquire or inquire.....	6
Exclamation marks.....	7
First Nations peoples	7
Foreign words and foreign abbreviations.....	7
Forward slashes.....	7
Fractions	7
Full stops	8
Government terms	8
Government inquiries, programs and agreements and so on	8
Legal material	9
Hyphens.....	9
Inclusive language	11
Italics	11
Legislation – Australian	11
Legislation – other countries	11
Links	11
Measurement and units.....	12
Numbers	12
Organisation names.....	12
Percentages.....	12
Phone numbers.....	12
Quotation marks and quotes	12
Referencing	13
Shortened forms	13
Spelling for the ACCC and AER.....	14
Symbols.....	16
Temperature	16
‘They’ singular use	17
Time.....	17
Time with days or dates	17

Released under FOI

Word usage 17

Released under FOI

ACCC or Commission

To avoid confusion with other commissions such as the Productivity Commission or Government Prices Oversight Commission, it is better to use the shortened form (ACCC) or full name (Australian Competition and Consumer Commission). After making this clear, you may need to refer to 'decisions by ACCC Commissioners'.

ACCC/AER

'ACCC/AER' is treated as singular. 'The ACCC and AER' are treated as plural. Either can be used, depending on context.

- The ACCC/AER has an early intervention scheme.
- The ACCC and AER share staffing, resources and facilities.

ACCC and AER styles, fonts and logos

The ACCC logo is one of our most important visual assets. Even though the logo is made of separate elements – the Australian Government crest and the ACCC logo – we should always use the elements together.

Don't alter the relationship between any of the different elements in our logo.

Don't try to re-create the logo yourself. Always use a master artwork file available from the intranet at [Visual style guide & logos](#).

When using the logo on printed material, ensure that the crest element of the logo is no smaller than 20 mm wide.

When using the logo on digital applications, ensure the crest is a minimum height of 32 pixels.

The [visual style guide](#) has been developed to help give a consistent look and feel to our online and offline communication tools.

When starting a new MS Word document users should select from the available templates in MS Word as these have been created to conform with style and accessibility requirements.

[Acronyms and initialisms](#)

Acronyms and initialisms are shortened forms. They replace full names and special terms in text. Use them only if people recognise and understand them.

For more information click to the Style Manual in the heading link.

Addresses

Spell out words such as street and road.

- Collins Street **not** Collins St
- Corner of Collins and Exhibition Streets **not** Cnr Collins Street and Exhibition Street.

[Alternative text, captions and titles for images](#)

Note that captions do not have full stops.

For more information click to the Style Manual in the heading link.

Released under FOI

Ampersands

Use ampersands (&) in Level 1 (H1) website headings to make them easier to read, and in infographic headings to save space. Don't use them in other headings.

Don't use ampersands in body text unless referring to registered trading and service names or [citing cases](#) – for example, *ACCC v Smith & Anor*.

Don't use ampersands in the body text of infographics, except in the aforementioned contexts. Ampersands can be used in labels in infographics, graphs, tables and charts to save space (for example, we can write the scam category 'Dating & romance scams' in infographic labels in Targeting scams reports).

[Apostrophes](#)

Our style is to write decades out in full to avoid abbreviations:

- 1980s and 1990s **not** '80s and '90s.

[And/or](#)

Avoid using 'and/or' (unless necessary for legal accuracy) as it lacks clarity and looks clumsy. Choose one and your sentence will usually be clear.

[Australian Government or Commonwealth](#)

Always refer to the Australian Government not the 'Commonwealth' or 'Federal' Government.

Previous reference to 'the Commonwealth Department of XYZ' should now be 'the Australian Government Department of XYZ'.

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

Government needs a capital only when used as part of a full title. Use lower case for subsequent mentions:

- The Australian Government is based in the ACT. The government has offices through the territory.

[Australian states and territories](#)

As with countries' names, the names of the Australian states and territories are best spelt out in official publications – except when they are used adjectivally, or when space is limited, or when lengthy repetition would otherwise result. The recommended shortened forms for use in publications are as follows:

- NSW, Vic, Qld, WA, SA, Tas, ACT, NT.

[Bold text \(for emphasis\)](#)

To create emphasis, use minimal bold text. Don't underline (underlining should be used only for hyperlinks). Don't use bold for acronyms, initialisms or terms in parentheses.

Released under FOI

- Priority foods can only claim to be **produced** or **grown** in Australia if they contain 100% Australian ingredients.
- perishable agricultural goods (PAG) **not** perishable agricultural goods (**PAG**).

Brackets (parentheses)

Don't use angled brackets (< / >) in webpages as these are used for coding.

Bullet point lists

Bullet points can help you to break information up into chunks that are easy to scan and read.

Different list types serve different purposes and have different structures. Choose the style of list that will help the user understand the content. For example, if a specific number or order of points is not mentioned, then the list does not need to be numbered.

If writing a fragment list of questions where each item completes the lead-in sentence, add a question mark to the last list item only. If writing a sentence list of questions where each item is a complete question, finish each item with a question mark.

See the Style Manual for examples to help with [choosing a type of list](#).

Capitalisation

The Australian Government and the ACCC/AER use minimal capital letters. Capital letters don't add importance or emphasis; unnecessary use is distracting for readers.

Capitalise the first word in a sentence and in headings and titles. Use lower case for all other words, unless they are proper nouns or periodicals. This is called 'sentence case'.

- Legal invoice workflow pilot (webpage heading)
- Airline competition in Australia (document title)
- Advertising and selling guide (document title).

The ACCC and AER use the documentary–note system for referencing. Follow the Style Manual advice to [style and spell titles consistently](#).

Note that specific style guidance applies for [legal material](#) and [codes of conduct](#).

Capitals for titles of documents, books, films and so on

Capitalise only the first letter and proper nouns in titles of documents, books, publications, films and so on unless you are using a direct quote where the author of the original used capitals to begin each word in the title.

- ACCC and AER writing style guide
- Digital Platforms Inquiry final report.

After your first reference to a document, book, publication, film or similar use the generic noun with no capital and roman type:

- I refer to the ACCC and AER writing style guide whenever I write for the ACCC. The guide helps me to write clearly and consistently on behalf of the organisation.

Released under FOI

Capitals for parts of a book or document

Use sentence case for titles, headings and subheadings:

- Policy developments in private health insurance

Use upper case when referring to specific sections and elements such as figures, appendices and tables:

- Chapter 1, Section 9, Figure 22, Part 1, Table 6, Appendix B

Use lower case for plural references to sections and elements:

- See chapters 1 and 2.
- For more analysis of the Townsville floods see appendices B and C.

Note that specific styles apply for [legal material](#) such as [units of Acts of parliament](#).

[Capitals for titles of people](#)

Use capitals for full titles of people within the ACCC and AER. Don't use this house style outside of the organisational context. Don't use capitals for generic references:

- Frida Jones became a Peer Support Adviser in April.
- Directors and assistant directors met to discuss the issue last week.

Chair, Deputy Chair and Commissioner are always capitalised. Board is always capitalised when referring to the AER Board. Don't capitalise generic references to boards:

- The AER authorises a single Board member to act on its behalf.
- Seek approval and strategic guidance from any relevant board.

Capitals for codes of conduct

Use capitals for references to specific code titles – for example, Franchising Code of Conduct or National Electricity Code.

Use lower case for:

- generic references to codes
- when referring to the code after you've already used its full title
- when it is clear which code you are referring to, for example on a page about a specific code.

Do not use a capital 'C' for code in the middle of the sentence – for example, the Code or the Franchising Code. Readability guidelines in the UK show this type of capitalisation slows understanding and is jarring.

It is unnecessary to use quote marks as well – for example, 'the franchising code' or 'the code'.

Captions for photographs and images

Place purposeful accurate descriptions of photographs and other images below the image. Don't repeat text that already appears in the document. If a photograph includes people, list their names in the correct order from left to right, from back row to front row. Credit the source in the caption if necessary under the image's usage requirements.

Released under FOI



Above: Coast of Port Douglas, Queensland (January 2021)

Captions for tables, graphs and charts

Always provide captions for tables, graphs and charts that explain the content of the table, graph or chart. Place these above the item you are describing:

Figure 1: Insurer market share by Australians covered, 2019–20

Attribute sources below tables and images using the [documentary–note](#) referencing system.

Collective nouns

Collective nouns imply a group (for example, council, government, committee).

Always place 'the' before a collective noun:

- The ACCC decided **not** ACCC decided

Always use a singular verb:

- The government is **not** the government are
- The ACCC is deciding **not** the ACCC are deciding
- The ACCC/AER is (but the ACCC and AER are)
- The branch is presenting **not** the branch are presenting

Exceptions are 'media' and 'staff', which are always plural, and 'data', which can be singular or plural.

Country names

Use US as the acronym for the United States, not USA.

For more information click to the Style Manual in the heading link.

Consumer Data Right (CDR)

- the Consumer Data Right, when referring to the program/initiative (not 'Consumer Data Right' or 'the CDR')
- the Consumer Data Right Division, when referring to the division of the agency
- lowercase when referring to the rights of consumers to their data, as a function.

Released under FOI

Currency

Don't add '.00' for full dollar amounts.

You can write [millions](#) of dollars in 3 ways:

- by using the word 'million', \$2.7 million
- entirely in numerals, \$1,000,000
- in tables and graphs by using the abbreviation 'm' with an explanation and no space or full stop \$1m

Dashes

Create an en dash by typing Alt + 0150 on the numeric keypad with Num Lock on or use the Insert symbol option in MS Word.

Use spaced en dashes (–) to set off non-essential information in sentences in most content:

- Sometimes a problem develops with one part of the package – the product or service.

To aid readability, generally avoid using en dashes for spans in text and headings. Instead, use the words:

- 'from' paired with 'to' – for example, 'from 57 to 65 years'
- 'between' paired with 'and' – for example, 'between Monday and Friday'.

But you can use en dashes for spans:

- in financial years: for example, Figure 2: Private health insurance premium increases, inflation and wage growth, 2015–16 to 2019–20
- in page ranges: for example, pp 5–11
- in measurement spans: for example, 8–12 kg
- in technical content, particularly if it has a lot of specific spans and ranges of numbers.

Create an em dash (—) by typing Alt + 0151 on the numeric keypad with Num Lock on or use the Insert symbol option in MS Word.

Use em dashes in pairs with no spaces between them for some quoted speech and deliberate omissions in text. For example: The deed, signed by —, was legally binding.

See the Style Manual for more guidance on [dashes](#).

Employee or staff

The ACCC style is to use the term employee when referring to people who undertake work for the ACCC. This term refers to APS employees as well as others who work for the ACCC, such as contractors and others engaged through third party providers.

If you are communicating about a specific piece of legislation, such as work health and safety rules, you may need to be more specific. Check the definitions in the Act.

Enquire or inquire

The ACCC and AER use 'enquire' and 'enquiries', but we use the noun 'inquiry' for investigations.

Released under FOI

The [Macquarie dictionary](#) defines 'enquire' and 'inquire' as:

- 'to seek information by questioning; ask'
- 'to seek to learn by asking'.

Inquire into means: 'to undertake a process, often a formal one, to establish the facts about'.

[Exclamation marks](#)

Exclamation marks show users emphasis and convey emotion. Only use them in informal content.

For more information click to the Style Manual in the heading link.

[First Nations peoples](#)

Use culturally appropriate and respectful language when writing with, for or about First Nations peoples.

The [Terminology Guide: Use of First Nations, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Indigenous](#) has been developed as a useful resource for employees.

The tag term on the ACCC website is First Nations peoples.

For more information click to the Style Manual in the heading link.

[Foreign words and foreign abbreviations](#)

To write in accessible, plain English, don't use foreign words and foreign abbreviations unless they are part of legal terminology, such as 'per se' and 'v' for versus in [case citations](#), or space is limited, such as in tables.

Abbreviations such as 'e.g.' and 'i.e.' can be used in tables, figures, notes and where space is generally limited; otherwise use the words 'for example' and 'that is'. Generally, use commas with the phrase 'for example'. See [Shortened forms](#) in this guide for examples.

[Forward slashes](#)

Forward slashes are only useful in a limited number of situations. Users are familiar with them in mathematical expressions, dates, web addresses, and in some shortened forms.

For more information click to the Style Manual in the heading link.

[Fractions](#)

Follow these rules for writing fractions:

- Always use the same number of decimal places for quantities you're listing or comparing:
 - 6.452 and 7.894
- If you wish to use non-decimal fractions for amounts that aren't exact, use [hyphens](#) (except when the fraction is preceded by 'a' or 'an'):
 - one-third or one and three-quarters
 - a third or an eighth

Released under FOI

- If you have to express non-decimal fractions in numerals, use the fraction bar rather than the forward slash to separate the numerator from the denominator and create stacked fractions. The forward slash has other functions and using it could create confusion:
 - $\frac{3}{4}$ not 3/4
 - $1\frac{3}{4}$ not 1 3/4

Full stops

Only place one space after a full stop, as MS Word automatically adjusts spaces.

For more information click to the Style Manual in the heading link.

Government terms

Use a capital for Opposition in the official sense, to distinguish the word from its generic meaning.

If you're referring to one of the state or territorial divisions of Australia, for example the State of Victoria, you would write State. But don't use a capital when making generic or plural references:

- state government, state and territory regulatory agencies or state and territory legislation.

The word 'state' does not require a capital when used adjectivally or if it refers to a nation or an abstract entity:

- state control, the states of South-East Asia.

Use initial capitals for the formal names of areas in a department or agency's organisational structure. Don't use initial capitals for generic mentions of parts of the formal names:

- Consumer Data Right Division ('the division')
- Employee Council ('the council')
- Peer Support Adviser Network ('the network')
- Web team ('the team').

Government inquiries, programs and agreements and so on

Use initial capitals for the full names of government inquiries, market studies, plans, policies, programs, treaties, protocols and similar agreements that remain specific, as these are proper nouns. Use initial capitals for abbreviations that remain specific but not for generic references or abbreviations.

Use this approach even when a program, policy, plan or similar also forms the title of a document – for example, ACCC and AER Corporate Plan 2019–20. Use roman type for document titles in such instances.

- Energy Made Easy
- Murray–Darling Basin Plan (and 'the Basin Plan' but 'the plan')
- Dairy Inquiry (but 'the inquiry')
- Cattle and Beef Market Study (but 'the market study')
- ACCC Enterprise Agreement 2016–2019 (and the 'Enterprise Agreement' but 'the agreement')

Released under FOI

- Compliance and Enforcement Policy and Priorities (but 'the policy').

Legal material

Cite the titles of federal Acts, Ordinances, Regulations and other forms of delegated legislation (such as standards, guidelines, rules and notices) exactly. Don't alter spelling or capitalisation conventions.

Follow Style Manual guidance on whether to use roman or italic type.

Use lower case for section and regulation, but upper case for Part and Division. Within a sentence 'section' and 'sections' are abbreviated to 's' and 'ss'. Use a space between abbreviations and number, for example ss 14B.

Note that specific style guidance applies for [codes of conduct](#).

Hyphens

Hyphens can be an important device to avoid ambiguity, but there is no need to overuse them. When deciding whether to use a hyphen, consider the context in which the word or words are used.

Use hyphens to ensure clarity in some compound words. For example:

- anti-competitive

Use hyphens for compound adjectives involving [numerals, spelt-out numbers](#) and [ordinal numbers](#):

- 12-month inquiry
- 3-day summit

Hyphens link elements of compound words as a phrase, but usually only when they are used before a noun as [adjectives](#). Don't use hyphens when the phrase is after the noun in the [sentence structure](#):

- 'the up-to-date accounts' but 'the accounts are up to date'
- 'small-business owners' but 'owners of small businesses'

Don't use a hyphen in compounds with an adjective that ends with an inflection:

- lower earning product

Refer to the following lists and check the spelling in the [Macquarie dictionary](#) if unsure.

Released under FOI

Examples of hyphenated words and phrases

anti-competitive	micro-economic
agency-wide (when used as an adjective)	no-one
co-lead	over-the-counter (when used as an adjective)
community-based (when used as an adjective)	performance-based (when used as an adjective)
child-resistant	short-term (when used as an adjective)
cross-section	south-east
door-to-door (when used as an adjective)	up-front
e-business	user-friendly
e-commerce	whole-of-government (when used as an adjective)
e-conveyancing	world-class
government-owned (when used as an adjective)	
in-house	
long-term (when used as an adjective)	

Examples of words and phrases without hyphens

audiovisual	multinational
bypass	multipurpose
cooperate	policymaker, policymaking
coordinate	preassess, preassessment
court enforceable undertaking	price fixing, price gouging
decision maker, decision making, decision making powers	proactive
email	subcommittee
end user	webpage
firsthand	website
in the long term	web server
in the short term	wellbeing
information gathering, information gathering powers	workforce
interagency	

Released under FOI

lifelong	
macroeconomic	
marketplace	
multidisciplinary	
multilateral	
multimedia	

Inclusive language

It is no longer acceptable to use the 'generic masculine' to include both sexes. Ways around this would be to use the gender-free pronoun 'you', or the plural pronoun 'they'. The ACCC/AER uses 'Chair' not 'Chairman'.

Italics

Italics is used only for Acts of parliament, written in full title. For example, *Competition and Consumer Act 2010*

Italic type is used sparingly as it can affect readability and is difficult for people with dyslexia to read.

For more information click to the Style Manual in the heading link.

Legislation – Australian

Refer to Acts of parliament using the correct style so people can find the source material. Choose when to cite the short and long titles, series numbers, jurisdiction and sections.

For more information click to the Style Manual in the heading link.

Legislation – other countries

Write all legislation from foreign countries in roman type, followed by the country abbreviation.

If you're not sure of an abbreviation, write the sentence to make the jurisdiction clear.

For more information click to the Style Manual in the heading link.

Links

Follow these rules for links:

- Use text for links in most cases. These links are called anchor text.
- Ensure links have purposeful names that let the audience know if they're going to another website or opening a document or publication. This is important for ease of scanning and accessibility reasons.
- Don't include the 'http://' when writing a website address (unless it is an ACCC or AER intranet address).
- Do include the 'www'. This is considered best practice as it makes website references easier to see in printed documents (unless it is an ACCC or AER intranet address).

Released under FOI

- Don't add a full stop to the end of the website address: www.accc.gov.au except when it is the end of a sentence but not the end of a paragraph.
- Never underline words on a webpage, as this will look like a link. Use bold text to show emphasis.
- Place links or references to extra information at the end of sentences.

Measurement and units

Standard units of measurement support readability and accuracy. Express precise values for users by combining numerals with the correct unit symbol.

For more information click to the [Style Manual](#) in the heading link.

Numbers

Generally write numerals for 2 and above. Write the numbers 'zero' and 'one' in words. Use words for ordinal numbers up to 'ninth'. Media releases are an exception to this rule.

Numbers with 4 or more digits (starting from 1,000) need a comma and no space before the next number. This applies to numerals in text, tables and charts.

To keep a number and symbol on the same line, insert a non-breaking space between them using ctrl + shift + spacebar.

Write abbreviations for page(s) and section(s) without a full stop and with a space before the number or section:

- p 42, pp 5–11, s 4, ss 4–7

Organisation names

Use the singular verb with organisation and company names.

- Woolworths is advertising its new stock.

Percentages

Use the percentage sign (%) next to a numeral in text, **not** 'per cent'. Don't use a space between the numeral and the percentage sign. For example, 18% **not** 18 %. Media releases still use 'per cent'.

Phone numbers

Write telephone numbers so people can read and use them easily. There are rules for grouping the numbers, using spacing and creating links.

For more information click to the [Style Manual](#) in the heading link.

Quotation marks and quotes

Quotation marks draw attention to words and reference certain kinds of titles. Write most direct speech in single quote marks. For long quotes, use block quotes without quotation marks.

For more information click to the [Style Manual](#) in the heading link.

Released under FOI

Quotes in media releases

In media releases, punctuate quotes with double quotation marks. Use single quotation marks for quotes within quotes. Use closing quote marks at the end of each paragraph of a quote:

“This voluntary code is a great example of how players in industry can work together to improve their services and all comply with the law.”

“And there are many wins for consumers who will no longer sign up to complicated terms and conditions with hidden costs they can’t afford to pay.”

Referencing

In print publications and documents, the ACCC/AER uses the [documentary–note](#) system for referencing. This system places full acknowledgement of sources in footnotes or endnotes that direct the reader to the references by a note identifier within the text. Avoid using note identifiers in headings.

If you’re citing a PDF in a document, avoid linking directly to the PDF. Instead link to the landing page where the PDF is hosted. See the Style Manual for more about [citing electronic material](#).

Shortened forms

Use shortened forms to save space and eliminate repetition of core words and phrases used frequently in a document. Consider including a [glossary and list of abbreviations](#) if you’ve used many shortened forms.

Don’t use shortened forms to begin a sentence or if you’re only using them once.

When [citing case names](#) and when they would be familiar to the audience, the following legal abbreviations can be used without explanation:

- & *Ors* (and others)
- & *Anor* (and another)
- *t/as* (trading as)

Follow Style Manual advice on [Latin shortened forms](#). Use ‘e.g.’ and ‘i.e.’ in tables, figures, notes and where space is limited; otherwise use the words ‘for example’ and ‘that is’.

Use [commas](#) with the phrase ‘for example’ in most instances:

- For example, additional benefits offered to the other party can counterbalance a potentially unfair term.
- Use unit pricing to get better value for money by comparing packaged and loose products – for example, potatoes.

Don’t use abbreviated time periods such as ‘80s or 18th C. Write these out in full as 1980s and 18th century.

See the Style Manual for more about:

- [shortened forms used in referencing](#)
- [shortened forms of Australian states and territories](#)
- [contractions](#)

Released under FOI

- [spacing](#).

Spelling for the ACCC and AER

Our guide is based on the Style Manual and the [Macquarie dictionary](#), which is available online to all ACCC/AER employees. Use these respectively for words that don't appear below.

Note that we spell 'ise' words with an 's' not a 'z', unless they are proper nouns (for example, World Health Organization). But if 'z' appears in material being quoted you should reproduce it exactly. This applies to any quotation. Don't change quotations in any way, even if you think they are wrong in some respect.

The manual recommends creating [style sheets](#) for individual projects or pieces of content if necessary.

A to D

the ABC (but 'ABC funding' and so on)

account holder

adviser (not advisor)

analyse, authorise, rationalise and so on

anti-competitive

appendix, appendices (not appendixes)

benefit, benefiting

biannual

bid rigging

centre, not center (unless part of a proper noun, for example Pew Research Center)

co-lead, co-leading, co-worker

cooperation, coordination

court enforceable undertaking

database

data set

decision maker, decision making, decision making powers and so on

deselect

Released under FOI

E to I

e-conveyancing

end user

enquire or enquiries for asking questions, inquiries for investigations

fact sheet

farm gate (noun, for example 'at the farm gate')

farmgate (adjective, for example 'farmgate prices')

focus, focusing, focused, focuses

forum, forums

health care (noun, for example 'to receive health care')

healthcare (adjective, for example 'healthcare funding')

index, indexes

information gathering, information gathering powers and so on

interagency

J to L

jail, not gaol

judgement (the act of judging in general)

judgment (for court decisions)

lodgement

M to P

noncompliance, noncompliant

online

organise (not organize), organisation (unless part of a proper noun, for example World Health Organization)

policymaker, policymaking

preassess, preassessment and so on

preselect

price fixing, price fixing conduct and so on

program (not programme), programs, programming, programmed

Released under FOI

Q to Z

reoffend
re-use
roadmap
SBS (not 'the SBS')
statewide
target, targeting, targeted
taskforce
timeframe
trade mark
up-front
usable, usability
webpage
website
workstream

Symbols

Symbols are internationally recognised representations of units of measurement or concepts; they are not abbreviations. Write them without full stops and with a space between the numeral and the symbol.

- 12 km (kilometre)
- 7 A (ampere)
- 5 g (gram)
- 10 Hz (hertz).

Don't use symbols ™, ©, % and ® in headings unless you are very short of space.

Temperature

In text write temperature with numerals and the symbol for degrees Celsius.

To avoid confusion, write temperature spans using 'to':

- -20° C to 8° C
- 9° C to 10° C

Don't leave a space between the numeral and symbol when writing degree, minute, second or place angular measurement symbols.

To insert a Celsius symbol (°):

- hold down the 'Alt' key and type '0176' on your numeric keypad with Num lock on, or
- insert from the 'Insert symbol' option in MS Word.

Released under FOI

'They' singular use

In 1995 the Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department, as part of its Corporations Law simplification program, recommended using 'they', 'them', 'themselves' and 'their' instead of the cumbersome 'he and she', 'his and her' and so on. ACCC and AER authors should use this approach.

If using 'they' creates ambiguity, reconstruct the sentence to eliminate the problem:

- Where an applicant notifies the other residents, they must lodge an s 12 notice within 14 days.

Does the applicant or other residents lodge the notice? The following is a clearer way to write this:

- When notifying other residents of your application, you must lodge an s 12 notice within 14 days.

Time

In general, express time using a 12-hour clock: 1:30 pm not 13:30

Write full hours with just the number of hours: 4 pm not 4:00 pm

Only use the designate once for times within the same period: 6 to 8 am not 6 am to 8 am

Use a colon instead of a full stop: 2:45 pm not 2.45 pm

Use phrases instead of en dashes for most [spans and ranges of numbers](#).

Time with days or dates

Place the time/s first when writing date and time combinations:

- 5 pm 23 February 2020 **not** 23 February 2020, 5 pm

Place the time/s first when writing day and time combinations:

- 9 am to 5 pm, Monday to Friday

Use parentheses to reference a year of publication in body text:

- Monitoring of the Australian petroleum industry (2012)

Use lower case for the seasons except when they are at the beginning of a sentence.

Word usage

See the Style Manual for guidance about [common misspellings and word confusion](#).