NSW Department of Education

How to write a meta description

All web pages must have meta descriptions to produce the best results possible when users search from external search engines or internal search.

What is a meta description?

A page's meta description gives Google and other search engines a summary of what the page is about. It also helps the reader decide whether they should click through to the page.

The description might be displayed as a snippet under the meta title in search results.

Meta description for Early childhood education page on Google.

Why is a meta description important?

Having a good description will increase the chances of a user visiting your web page through search results.

You can use the same text for your meta description as in your page description. Your meta description can also be used as the **lead paragraph** for your page.

Start writing!

- If possible, the subject matter expert should write the meta description as they have the best understanding of the content and the keywords that would be applicable.
- Write a brief description about the web page content, but only in a sentence or two.
- Make it compelling and keyword-rich. Include the words your audience would use. For example instead of using 'examination', use 'exam' or 'test'.
- Use a call to action where appropriate to encourage a click-through.
- Use verbs and active voice.
- Do not exceed 180 characters including spaces.

Good examples

- Opt in to a new business intelligence program for principals.
- Use the NSW Department of Education content style guide for all department websites and publications.
- These guidelines will help you write in the right tone of voice to make sure everyone who interacts with our content has a consistent experience.
- Social media provides an opportunity to engage and interact with our various audiences, promote staff expertise and share valuable information.

What not to do

- Don't use information or data that could go out of date.
- Don't try to use all the keywords from the page. It's better to have a clear and concise description using a couple of the most popular keywords.

- Don't make something up if you don't understand the content.

How-to guides

Learn how to add and edit your page's meta description using our guides:

- **Adobe Experience Manager (AEM) - create a page**

Category:

- Communication and engagement

Topics:

- Governance

Business Unit:

- Communication and Engagement

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