https://www.stylemanual.gov.au/grammar-punctuation-and-conventions/punctuation-and-capitalisation/question-marks Question marks Users expect direct questions and requests to end with a question mark. Indirect questions, commands and rhetorical questions can take other punctuation. Question marks usually go after the last letter in a sentence Brackets and parentheses Colons Commas Dashes Ellipses Exclamation marks Forward slashes Full stops Hyphens Question marks Quotation marks Semicolons Spelling Shortened words and phrases Numbers and measurements Italics Names and terms Titles, honours, forms of address Content types Structuring content Referencing and attribution Like other punctuation marks, question marks stay with the text they refer to. Usually, this is immediately after the last letter of the last word of the sentence. Brackets and quotation marks change the position of question marks For brackets and quotation marks, place the question mark: before a closing bracket or quotation mark if the question is part of the text in the brackets or quotation marks after the closing bracket or quotation mark if the question is part of the surrounding text. Inserted question marks can show uncertainty Question marks can express doubt and uncertainty about dates or other specific details. Direct questions and requests end in a question mark Direct questions end with a question mark. Most begin with one of these words: 'who', what', 'when', 'where', 'why', how', 'which', 'whose' 'are', 'is', 'was', 'were' 'has', have' 'did', 'do', 'does' 'can', 'will', 'could', 'would', 'should', 'might'. These types of questions are called interrogative sentences. Example Question mark before the closing bracket or quote She asked, 'Is the report due on Tuesday?' They decided (and why wouldn't they?) to cancel the program. Question mark after the closing bracket or quote What did she mean by 'the report is due ASAP'? Did they decide to cancel the program (the EDTA program)? Example John Limeburner (?1743–1785) was a convict who arrived in Australia on the First Fleet. Pery Baylee (1784–?) was commandant of Macquarie Harbour penal station in Van Diemen's Land from 1831 to 1833. Example Who will attend the meeting next week? Some sentences don't start with one of the words such as 'who', 'could' and 'does' but still end with a question mark. Sometimes questions are tagged on to the end of another clause. Requests are often framed as questions. Requests suggest that people have the option of saying 'no'. Indirect questions and commands don't use a question mark Indirect questions don't end with question marks, even if they include a word such as 'who' or 'does'. Indirect questions are often used in headings. Whose turn is it to take the minutes? Are you ready to start the meeting? Have they finished voting? Did you attend the meeting? Will the new government deliver a budget surplus? Could you please make your changes by tomorrow? Example That's your proposal? Example They would say that, wouldn't they? Example Can you consider who your future colleagues might be? Can you please upload your edits? Example He asked who will attend the meeting next week. Example Who we are [Heading] To turn indirect questions into direct questions you can: rearrange the words so the verb comes before the subject introduce a word such as 'can' or 'why' – but make sure there is a subject. Guidance in this manual recommends to avoid questions as headings, except for Easy Read materials. Spellcheckers often recommend that you change indirect questions to end with a question mark. This isn't always correct. It depends on whether you are asking a question. Instructions and commands aren't framed as questions. They don't start with words such as 'what', 'are' or 'does', and don't end with a question mark. Commands and instructions don't suggest that people have a choice. Rhetorical questions end in a question mark or exclamation mark Depending on the context, a rhetorical question can end in a question mark or an exclamation mark. Exclamation marks add emphasis – this can make a rhetorical question sound blunt. Release notes The digital edition has targeted advice on how to use a question mark. It has the same information as the sixth edition but provides more examples to help users. The Content Guide had no specific guidance about question marks. How to submit a claim [Heading] Example Who are we? How do I submit a claim? Example Consider who your future colleagues might be. Please upload your edits. Example Will you ever stop asking questions? Will you ever stop asking questions! About this page References Dixon JC and Bolitho B (2005–2019) Course notes and exercises: editing and proofreading for the workplace, Centre for Continuing Education, Australian National University, Canberra. Murphy EM with Cadman H (2014) Effective writing: plain English at work, 2nd edition, Lacuna, Westgate. Seely J (2001) Oxford everyday grammar, Oxford University Press, Oxford. Stilman S (2004) Grammatically correct, Writer's Digest Books, Ohio. Truss L (2003) Eats, shoots and leaves: the zero tolerance approach to punctuation, Profile Books, London.
https://www.stylemanual.gov.au/grammar-punctuation-and-conventions/punctuation/quotation-marks Quotation marks 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. Quote direct speech in single quote marks Single quotation marks are also known as 'quote marks', 'quotes', 'speech marks' or 'inverted Brackets and parentheses Colons Commas Dashes Ellipses Exclamation marks Forward slashes Full stops Hyphens Question marks Quotation marks Semicolons Spelling Shortened words and phrases Numbers and measurements Italics Names and terms Titles, honours, forms of address Content types Structuring content Referencing and attribution commas'. Use them to: show direct speech and the quoted work of other writers enclose the title of certain works draw attention to a word you're defining. Double quotation marks aren't Australian Government style. Use them only for quotations within quotations. Short quotations of direct speech are enclosed in single quotation marks. Don't use quotation marks for long quotations. Instead, use block quotes. Quotes within quotes For quotations within quotations, use double quotation marks inside single ones. Omissions in direct speech When quoting direct speech, take great care to be accurate. Writers and publishers have been sued for inaccurate quotations attributed as direct speech. If you use ellipses for omitted words, ensure that the omission won't mislead readers about the content or tone of the source you're quoting. If the quotation needs the information for context, add specific detail in square brackets. You Example 'Yes, that's all that happened,' she replied. The opposition leader asked, 'But where's the money going to come from?' Example He also wrote, 'The decisions of the department for "major procurement" were always political choices.' Correct He said, 'I don't agree with the proposal because we need to do more research.' He said, 'I don't agree with the proposal …' Incorrect He said, 'I don't agree with the proposal.' He said, 'I … agree with the proposal.' must be sure that the specific detail is correct and that it retains the meaning intended by the original speaker. If you paraphrase omitted material, place the paraphrasing in square brackets. Errors in quoted material Quoted material sometimes contains a spelling or grammatical error. To show the error is in the original, insert an italicised 'sic' in non-italicised square brackets after the error. This

shows the reader that the error comes from the original. Non-Australian English quotes In quoted material use the original spelling of the quoted material, even if it uses US spellings such as ‘color’. The capitalisation of words must also be the same as in the original. If the US material uses the US conventions for quotation marks, you can update them to the Australian convention. Format long quotes as block quotes with no quotation marks Quotations that are longer than about 30 words are: usually indented from the text margin sometimes set in a smaller font size or a different font. Example ‘The [Queensland] government agrees.’ Example ‘They all listened to [the new manager’s] speech.’ Example The email read, ‘At the time, the population of Sydney was much higher than Melberne [sic].’ Example Australian style The President said, ‘The Prime Minister told me “No”, so I’m working on an updated plan.’ US style The President said, “The Prime Minister told me ‘No,’ so I’m working on an updated plan.” When they are set like this, they are called ‘block quotations’. Don’t use quotation marks to identify the quoted material – the formatting does that instead. Block quotes should also be coded with the HTML

> element. To include several paragraphs of quoted speech without the attribution tag, such as in a media release, use a quotation mark: at the beginning of each paragraph at the end of the last paragraph only. Write speech in transcripts and plays with no quotation marks Quotation marks are unnecessary in transcripts and plays if the name of the speaker comes before the direct speech. The same applies for questions and answers (Q&As). Refer to certain kinds of titles using quotation marks When referring to these titles, use quotation marks in references and citations: Example As Templeton (2019) writes: According to the ACT Auditor-General, the transport benefits from the project are projected to be lower than the costs. She noted other benefits that had been included by the ACT Government to justify the project. Example Dr Nicoll said, ‘My experience as a public servant helped me learn how to run workshops. ‘My experience also helps me make my workshops practical.’ Example Senator MARCELLUS: Look at the latest report. These results aren’t great. Dr BERNARDO: I’ve seen this happen before. It looks like we might be over budget. Example Q. Have you ever been convicted of an offence, other than a parking or speeding offence? A. No. a chapter in a book or report an article in a periodical an essay a lecture a poem a song. Draw attention to words using quotation marks You can use quotation marks instead of italics to make words stand out from your sentence. Examples include: a technical term on its first mention in a non-technical document a word or phrase that has been coined or that you’re using in a specific sense colloquial words, nicknames, slang, or ironic or humorous words and phrases, in formal writing. You don’t usually need to repeat the quotation marks the next time you use the word. They might be useful if the next mention is a long way from the first. Another use of quotation marks is for words introduced by expressions such as ‘titled’, ‘marked’, ‘the term’ and ‘defined as’. Keep quoted punctuation marks in the quote Punctuation in and after quotation marks depends on the punctuation of the quoted text and how it is used in the content. If the punctuation mark is part of the quoted text, place the punctuation mark before the closing quotation mark. Example Read the chapter titled ‘Number and natural language’ in The innate mind: structure and contents. It describes how people learn to recognise numbers. Example The papers were marked ‘Five Eyes only’. Can anyone here define ‘entropion’? The survey used the term ‘companion animal’ to describe assistance dogs in workplaces. He said the new policy was ‘obviously a great success’ and then explained its many failings. Example The same rule applies for directly quoted speech followed by the attribution. If the punctuation mark is part of the sentence outside the quoted text, it follows the closing quotation mark. Quoted material can appear as parenthetical information, enclosed in parentheses, dashes or commas. In these cases, place the quotation marks inside the sentence punctuation. If the quotation ends a sentence or is a sentence in its own right, place the final full stop before the final quotation mark. Sometimes, there are 2 punctuation marks – one for the quotation and one for the sentence. Decide which is stronger and use it. Don’t use both punctuation marks. ‘Is it okay to ask a colleague out for a coffee?’ I asked the HR section. He asked, ‘Has it arrived?’ Example ‘It has arrived,’ said the manager. ‘Has it arrived?’ asked the manager. Example She said that it was ‘time to start work’. Many things have been called ‘the new black’, but they usually fade to grey. Did the complainant at any time ask you to ‘Please turn down the noise’? Example His stirring speech (‘We shall never surrender’) galvanised the UK and its allies. His stirring speech – ‘We shall never surrender’ – galvanised the UK and its allies. His stirring speech, ‘We shall never surrender’, galvanised the UK and its allies. Example She said, ‘It’s time to start work.’ ‘When we get the final figures,’ the manager said, ‘we’ll know how it will affect our bottom line.’ ‘I have the final figures,’ the manager said. ‘This will ruin our bottom line.’ Correct The Speaker called ‘Order!’ The surrounding text determines the font (roman, italic, or bold) of the quotation marks. If the content inside the quotation marks is in italics, but the sentence is in roman, use roman for the quotation marks. Release notes The digital edition revises advice about punctuation used with quotation marks. It departs from advice in the sixth edition about the position of punctuation and quotation marks in sentences interrupted by expressions, such as ‘they said’. The sixth edition recommended the comma be placed outside the quotation mark, before the expression. The digital edition recommends the comma be placed inside the quotation mark: the quotation mark comes directly before the expression. The Content Guide had advice on the use of single and double quotation marks, with which the digital edition is consistent. About this page Evidence Oxford University Press (2016) ‘9.2 Layout of quoted text’, New Oxford style manual, Oxford University Press, Oxford. University of Chicago (2017) ‘6.40 Commas with quotations’, Chicago manual of style, 17th edn, University of Chicago Press, Chicago. References Dixon JC and Bolitho B (2005–2019) Course notes and exercises: editing and proofreading for the workplace, Centre for Continuing Education, Australian National University, Canberra. Houston K (2015) The long and fascinating history of quotation marks’, Slate, accessed 20 Did you hear him say, ‘That’s unlikely’? Incorrect The Speaker called ‘Order!’. Did you hear him say, ‘That’s unlikely.’? Example

She described it as ‘weird’. [The quotation marks are in roman even though ‘weird’ is in italics.] ‘Wow,’ he said. [Both the quote marks and the quote are in roman type.] February 2020. Microsoft Corporation (2019) Keyboard shortcuts in Word: insert international characters, Microsoft website, accessed 1 December 2019. Mozilla (n.d.) ‘

: The Block Quotation element’, HTML elements, MDN Web Docs website, accessed 3 December 2020. Murphy EM and Cadman H (2014) Effective writing: plain English at work, 2nd edn, Lacuna, 2014. Owen M (2018) How to type accented letters in macOS three different ways, appleinsider website, accessed 4 December 2019. Oxford University Press (2016) ‘Quotations and direct speech’, New Oxford style manual, Oxford University Press, Oxford. Seely J (2001) Oxford everyday grammar, Oxford University Press, Oxford. Stilman S (2004) Grammatically correct, Writer’s Digest Books, Ohio. Truss L (2003) Eats, shoots and leaves: the zero tolerance approach to punctuation, Profile Books, London, 2003. The Unicode Consortium (2019) Unicode, Unicode website, accessed 2 December 2019. University of Chicago (2017) ‘6.115: “Smart” quotation marks’, Chicago manual of style, 17th edn, University of Chicago Press, Chicago. World Wide Web Consortium (W3C (n.d.) ‘HTML

tag’, W3CSchools website, accessed 3 December 2020. Whitbread D (2009) Design manual, 2nd edn, UNSW Press, Sydney, Australia. Last updated This page was updated Monday 24 October 2022. https://www.stylemanual.gov.au/grammar-punctuation-and-conventions/punctuation-and-capitalisation/semicolons Semicolons Semicolons link sentences. They complicate sentences for users if overused. Do not use them at the end of bullet and numbered list items. Avoid using a semicolon to link sentences Short, simple sentences are easier to read. Overusing semicolons makes writing more difficult to Brackets and parentheses Colons Commas Dashes Ellipses Exclamation marks Forward slashes Full stops Hyphens Question marks Quotation marks Semicolons Spelling Shortened words and phrases Numbers and measurements Italics Names and terms Titles, honours, forms of address Content types Structuring content Referencing and attribution understand. Semicolons can create a break that is stronger than a comma but weaker than a full stop. They can link 2 sentences that share or develop an idea. The information must be closely related. Instead of a semicolon, it’s usually best to use either: a full stop followed by a new sentence a comma before the last item, followed by a conjunction. Sentences should be in plain language and no longer than 25 words. Don’t use a semicolon if all it does is make your sentence longer. Too much punctuation makes text crowded and difficult to read. If a sentence has a lot of punctuation marks, it might be a sign that the sentence is too long or complex. Try to rewrite into shorter, clearer sentences. If you have to use a semicolon, on both sides of the semicolon write full sentences. Other than in some sentence lists, it’s incorrect to have a sentence fragment on one side of the semicolon. Don’t end bullet and numbered list items with semicolons You don’t need a semicolon at the end of each list item for bullet and numbered lists. It clutters the list and makes it hard to read. Example He wrote a report for each group. The red report was for one group; the blue report was for the other. Sometimes it’s optional; sometimes it’s compulsory. Write this Find out if it’s optional or compulsory before you start. Ask someone to help you if you don’t know the difference. Not this Find out if it’s optional or compulsory before you start; ask someone to help you if you don’t know the difference. Correct Staff can leave at any time; they don’t need a work schedule. Incorrect Staff can leave at any time; no work schedule. Separate in-text references with semicolons Use a semicolon between each reference when you have more than one in-text reference in brackets. Use a bullet or numbered list instead of semicolons in a complex sentence Complex lists in sentences can be hard to read. If you can’t use a bullet or numbered list, separate list items with: commas if the list is simple, such as a list of single words semicolons if the list is complex, such as a list of items that already contain commas or conjunctions. In complex lists, you need semicolons to show what goes with what. It is almost always better to break a complex list into a bullet or numbered list to make it easier to read. Like this The successful applicant will demonstrate: integrity, persistence and good judgement experience in projects of this type a sound understanding of interdepartmental relationships. Not this The successful applicant will demonstrate: integrity, persistence and good judgement; experience in projects of this type; and a sound understanding of interdepartmental relationships. Example Effective leaders are adaptable (Nicoll 2019; Taylor 2018; Weir 2020). Example The successful applicant will demonstrate integrity, persistence and confidence. [No semicolon is needed, as each item is a single word or phrase with no other punctuation.] The successful applicant will demonstrate integrity, persistence and confidence; experience in projects of this type; and a sound understanding of interdepartmental relationships. [Semicolons are needed, as some list items have a comma

in them.] Release notes The digital edition is consistent with the sixth edition in its advice on semicolons. A minor change is that it promotes use of other punctuation marks instead. The Content Guide recommended avoiding semicolons. Sources cited as evidence support the uses explained in the digital edition. About this page Evidence Australian Broadcasting Corporation (2020) 'Punctuation: semicolon', The ABC style guide, ABC website, accessed 21 January 2020. American Psychological Association (2020) '6.4 Semicolon', Publication manual of the American Psychological Association, 7th edn, American Psychological Association, Washington DC. Murphy EM with Cadman H (2014) '7.4: semicolon', Effective writing: plain English at work, 2nd edn, Lacuna, Westgate. Oxford University Press (2016) '4.4 Semicolon', New Oxford style manual, Oxford University Press, Oxford. University of Chicago (2017) '6.56 Use of the semicolon', Chicago manual of style, 17th edn, University of Chicago Press, Chicago. References Dixon JC and Bolitho B (2005–2019) Course notes and exercises: editing and proofreading for the workplace, Centre for Continuing Education, Australian National University, Canberra. Seely J (2001) Oxford everyday grammar, Oxford University Press, Oxford. Stilman S (2004) Grammatically correct, Writer's Digest Books, Ohio. Strunk W and White EB (2000) The elements of style, 4th edn, Longman, New York. Truss L (2003) Eats, shoots and leaves: the zero-tolerance approach to punctuation, Profile Books, London, 2003. The project will go ahead in Tasmania, Queensland and Victoria. [No semicolon is needed, as each item is a single word.] The project will go ahead in Rose Bay, Tasmania; West End, Queensland; and Fitzroy North, Victoria. [Semicolons are needed, as some list items have a comma in them.] Last updated This page was updated Tuesday 19 October 2021. https://www.stylemanual.gov.au/grammar-punctuation-and-conventions/spelling Spelling Spelling errors detract from readability. Follow one dictionary for consistency and use it to check variable spellings. Choose one dictionary for consistency Government organisations should choose one dictionary of Australian English. This manual recommends either: the Australian concise Oxford dictionary (ACOD) the Macquarie dictionary. Use your organisation's preferred dictionary as a spelling reference when you write. Spelling and word usage can change over time. Make sure you use an up-to-date edition that reflects current language usages. Dictionaries include any variable spellings for words. Always use the first entry in the list. This helps to ensure words are spelt consistently in government content. Only use an alternative spelling listed for a word if you have evidence it will meet a user need. Record decisions you make about alternative spellings in a style sheet. The entry for a spelling can expand on changes to the basic form of a word. These changes show things like the plural, past tense, or the root from which a word is formed. These changes are called 'inflections' and 'derivations'. Dictionaries will also show hyphenation, when to use capital letters and how to write foreign words and phrases. Specialist dictionaries General dictionaries won't meet all needs. Other dictionaries may have helpful features, for example: Shortened words and phrases Numbers and measurements Italics Names and terms Titles, honours, forms of address Content types Structuring content Referencing and attribution more details on origins of words (etymologies) clearer examples word division for breaking words over lines of text appendices. Specialist dictionaries are essential for scientific or technical writing. The style sheet for the content should include specialist terms. Dictionaries describe language usages English is a global language. There are many regional varieties of written and spoken English. Dictionary spellings capture standard English words. Dictionaries also capture words and usages particular to varieties of English, including Australian English. Dictionaries are descriptive not prescriptive. They describe how people actually use and spell English rather than prescribing rules for using English correctly. Dictionaries objectively record language for the people who speak it. This is why dictionary entries include different meanings for each word and alternative spellings. The important thing is to use the word that matches the meaning you want to convey. Most words have a single spelling. This can lead people to assume there is always a 'correct spelling'. But spellings aren't uniform or consistent around the world. Australian, British and American English share words that have the same meaning, but can be spelt differently. Australian spellings generally follows British spellings, but there are exceptions. For Australian spellings, always use an Australian English dictionary. In addition, style guides (like the Style Manual) usually have guidance for their users about how to write specific terms and phrases. Follow guidance in this manual The Style Manual has specific guidance about writing certain terms and phrases correctly. Follow our guidance for: names and terms, including Australian place names titles, honours and forms of address numbers and measurements terms that support inclusion common misspellings and word confusion. There is also guidance related to spelling at

punctuation and capitalisation. Spelling in this manual The spelling in this manual follows the sixth edition of the ACOD. This dictionary reflects Australian English usage. Style Manual also recognises conventions and spellings particular to government content. The spellings used by Australian Government organisations that follow the Macquarie dictionary might differ from those in this manual. This is perfectly acceptable – choose either of our recommended dictionaries (or a specialist dictionary) and follow it consistently. Always follow our guidance for specific terms and phrases. Users might notice that the Style Manual departs from some spellings used in the sixth edition. For example, we now write 'ement' not 'ment' in acknowledgement, lodgement and judgement (but we use 'judgment' for legal material). This is consistent with current advice in Australian English dictionaries. Release notes The digital edition reflects contemporary spellings and Australian English usages. Corpus data informs departures from the sixth edition. The primary set of corpora for Australian- specific data are those on English-Corpora.org. 'News on the web' and 'Global Web-based English' corpora enabled comparative analysis between Australian English usages and other varieties of English. Checks through the Australian National Dictionary Centre also used data on Factiva and the Oxford National Corpus. Subject matter experts across the Australian Public Service assisted with spellings that have a legislative basis. The Content Guide recommended The Macquarie dictionary. It did not mention the Australian concise Oxford dictionary or any other alternative. It gave advice on setting spellcheckers in Microsoft Word, which the digital edition does not.
https://www.stylemanual.gov.au/grammar-punctuation-and-conventions/spelling/common-misspellings-and-word-confusion Common misspellings and word confusion When words sound similar or the same, people can confuse their spelling. If you're not sure about the spelling of a word, check a dictionary. Check for words that are easily confused or misspelt The spelling of some words is variable. Sometimes it's difficult to know which spelling or word to use because: Australian, American and British English have different ways of spelling a word a word might sound similar to another, so people can mishear it and write the wrong word. Follow one dictionary for consistency and use it to check variable spellings. Choose the right word and spell it correctly Correct word use makes content readable and clear to users. Getting words wrong risks losing users' engagement with, and trust of, your content. This alphabetical list contains some of the words that people get wrong in government writing. Check your dictionary for the full set of meanings of each word. accept/except The verb 'to accept' means 'to agree' or 'to receive'. The verb 'to except' means 'to exclude'. Shortened words and phrases Numbers and measurements Italics Names and terms Titles, honours, forms of address Content types Structuring content Referencing and attribution Example She will accept their apology for the delay and agree to a later deadline. affect/effect The word 'affect' means 'to produce an effect on'. The word 'effect' means 'the result of an action' or, as a verb, 'to bring about or make something happen'. allusion/illusion The word 'allusion' means 'a reference'. It is often followed by 'to'. The word 'illusion' means 'a mistaken belief'. ascent/assent The word 'ascent' means 'upward movement'. The word 'assent' means 'to agree'. It is often followed by 'to'. complement/compliment The noun 'complement' means 'something that completes something else' or, as a verb, 'to complete something'. The noun 'compliment' means 'an expression of praise' or, as a verb, 'to praise'. I can meet most days, except Tuesday morning. Example The Cancer Council looks at the ways cancer affects Australians and how to support them. One effect of the 'Quit smoking' campaign was the overall decline of the number of smokers by 12%. The manager wanted to effect change in the team. Example In his speech, the minister made an allusion to a policy the department is developing. At a glance, it seemed the colour was black rather than grey, but that was just an illusion. Example Bill told us about his ascent to the top of Mount Kosciuszko on horseback a few years ago. There is no guarantee the manager will assent to postpone delivery. Example council/counsel The word 'council' means 'a formal advisory body of people'. The word 'counsel' means 'advice' and 'to advise'. It also refers to a barrister or other 'legal adviser'. conscience/conscious The word 'conscience' means 'a moral sense of right and wrong'. The word 'conscious' means 'awake and aware of one's surroundings and identity'. dependant/dependent A 'dependant' is a person who relies on another, especially for financial support. The word 'dependent' is usually followed by 'on', and means 'conditional' or 'subordinate'. discreet/discrete The word 'discreet' means 'careful' or 'prudent'. The word 'discrete' means 'distinct'. I enjoy working with my team members. Our skills complement one another perfectly. It is important to compliment the team when they meet a deadline. Example At the recent meeting, the council voted in favour of raising rates by 5%.

If I had followed their counsel I would have achieved a better outcome. Our legal counsel advised seeking an out-of-court settlement. Example His conscience stopped him from accepting their hospitality. They were conscious of the time and soon returned to their desks. Example Please fill out this request for subsidy on behalf of your dependant. The expansion of the program is dependent on funding. Example disinterested/uninterested The word ‘disinterested’ means ‘impartial’ and ‘unbiased by personal interest’. The word ‘uninterested’ means ‘not interested’, ‘indifferent’ or ‘unconcerned’. ‘Disinterested’ is often used to mean ‘uninterested’, but this use is not correct. dived/dove The verb ‘to dive’ means ‘to descend’ or ‘to plunge into or under’. In Australian English, write ‘dived’ to use the past tense of the verb ‘to dive’. The word ‘dove’ is the past tense of ‘dive’ in American English. drank/drunk The verb ‘drank’ is the past tense of ‘to drink’. The verb ‘drunk’ is a participle and is used with ‘has’, ‘have’ or ‘had’. The adjective ‘drunk’ means ‘intoxicated by alcohol’. elicit/illicit The word ‘elicit’ is a verb meaning ‘to draw out’, ‘to cause’ or ‘to evoke’. She trusted him with the information because he was always discreet. The requirements of the different projects meant the branch recruited managers with discrete skill sets. Example The judge’s deliberation was disinterested and considered. The invitation to the concert was wasted on me because I’m uninterested in jazz music. Example Bystanders dived into the creek to help the drowning swimmer. Example Yesterday, the graduates drank the soft drinks from the staff fridge. I arrived after they had drunk all the coffee. The police released a campaign warning people not to drive while they are drunk. The word ‘illicit’ is an adjective meaning unlawful. immanent/imminent The word ‘immanent’ means ‘part of something’s intrinsic nature’ or ‘remaining or operating within’. The word ‘imminent’ means ‘impending’ or ‘about to happen’. for all intents and purposes/for all intensive purposes The correct expression is ‘for all intents and purposes’, meaning ‘in every practical sense’. foreword/forward The noun ‘foreword’ means ‘the introductory comments at the beginning of a book’. The word ‘forward’ is usually an adjective or adverb. It means ‘in advance (of time)’, ‘ahead’ or ‘onward’. judgement/judgment Write ‘judgement’ rather than ‘judgment’. The exception is a court decision; write this as ‘judgment’. Example The questions in the survey were designed to elicit helpful responses. Alcohol was once considered an illicit substance. Example The search for meaning is immanent in human nature. Emergency Services advised residents that evacuation was imminent. Example The paperwork may take a few weeks to come through but, for all intents and purposes, you are hired. Example The report is almost ready. All I need to do is write the foreword. The publication date was brought forward. The report will now be released in June, and not October as initially stated. Example lead/led The word ‘lead’ is a noun meaning ‘leadership’ or ‘principal’; a verb meaning ‘to go before’, ‘to conduct’; or an adjective meaning ‘in front’. ‘Led’ is the past tense of ‘lead’. ‘Lead’ (not led) means a base metal and is pronounced as ‘led’. licence/license The word ‘licence’ is a noun. It means ‘a document from an authority giving formal permission’. The word ‘license’ is a verb. It means ‘to obtain or grant a licence’. lose/loose The verb ‘to lose’ means ‘be deprived of’ or ‘cease to have’. The word ‘loose’ is usually an adjective, but is also a noun, adverb or verb. Two of the meanings as an adjective are ‘not held by bonds or restraint’ and ‘not held together’. master degree/masters degree/master’s degree You can speak to one of our counsellors without fearing judgement. Please cite the High Court’s most recent judgment in the issues paper. Example They followed my lead. She was the lead negotiator. He took the lead in the race. The deputy secretary led the discussion. The chemical symbol for lead is ‘Pb‘. Example The state and territory websites have information about getting and renewing your drivers licence. Visit our website if you would like to license your pet. Example If we don’t meet the deadline, we may lose the bonus payment. Some of the screws on his desk were loose so he worried about workplace health and safety. A common confusion is how to write about master level degrees. Common spellings include ‘master’, ‘master’s’ and ‘masters’. Use ‘master degree’. When referring to a specific qualification, use ‘Master of [area of study]’. passed/past The word ‘passed’ means ‘moved onwards’, ‘overtook’ or ‘handed over’. The word ‘past’ can be a noun meaning ‘previous time’, an adjective meaning ‘gone by in time’ or an adverb meaning ‘beyond’. practice/practise The word ‘practice’ is a noun. It means ‘a repeated activity’ or ‘a habit’. It also refers to the ‘business of a professional’, for example, of a lawyer or doctor. The word ‘practise’ is a verb. It means ‘to repeat an activity’, ‘to undertake a pattern of behaviour’ or ‘to pursue a profession’. precede/proceed The verb ‘to precede’ means ‘to come or go before in time, order or importance’. The verb ‘to proceed’ means ‘to go about something (in a particular way)’ or ‘to go forward or on further’. Example He completed his master degree last year. Having a Master of Arts helped her gain

the promotion. The university offered several master degrees to postgraduate students. Example While driving yesterday, I passed the department's new offices. In the past, staff would have to book a room to have a meeting. We have moved past that; now we meet online. Example It's not good practice to use long sentences. The new law graduate landed an internship at his lecturer's practice. Practise your speech until it is perfect. She hopes to practise medicine. principal/principle The word 'principal' is a noun or an adjective. It means 'first in rank or importance' or 'chief'. The word 'principle' is usually a noun. It means 'a fundamental truth or law as the basis of reasoning or action'. It also means a 'personal code of right conduct' (often plural). program/programme Use 'program' rather than 'programme', including for computer programs. Use 'program' for the titles of new programs based on government policy. Use 'programme' only when it is part of the formal name of an existing program. regardless/irregardless Always use 'regardless'. It means 'without regard', 'independent of' or 'anyway'. It is often followed by 'of'. 'Irregardless' is likely a combination of the words 'irrespective' and 'regardless'. It is not accepted as standard Australian English. Example The manager tends to precede staff meetings with an anecdote to put people at ease. Given the circumstances, it is best to proceed cautiously. The director managed to proceed with the next point on the agenda, despite the interruption. Example The principal of the school made a compelling appeal for funding. Equal rights and self-determination of people is a principle of international law. They refused to sacrifice their principles for financial gain. Example One of the most challenging aspects of our work is designing programs that can be implemented quickly. The Prescription Shopping Programme lets medical practitioners check their patients' prescription histories. Example Our aim is for all staff to have access to this training, regardless of location. The following instructions will work regardless of which mobile platform you use. stationary/stationery The word 'stationary' means 'not moving'. The word 'stationery' means 'writing and office equipment' such as paper, pens and paper clips. that/which The words 'that' and 'which' are both relative pronouns. They should not be used interchangeably. Your choice can alter the meaning of your sentence. To make your writing clear, use: 'that' for essential information 'which', with punctuation, for non-essential information. For examples, refer to guidance about pronouns. their/there/they're The word 'their' is the possessive form of 'they'. It shows ownership. The word 'there' means 'in or at a position or location'. It is also used to introduce sentences. 'They're' is the contraction of the pronoun 'they' and the verb 'are'. would have/would of Sometimes people mishear the verb form 'would have' as 'would of'. Always write 'would have' or the contracted form 'would've'. 'Would of' is incorrect. These are interesting times but we must carry on regardless. Example The truck collided with a stationary car. The notebooks are in the stationery cupboard. Example Their manager bought a cake for morning tea. If you're leaving for the conference now, I'll have to meet you there later. There is a problem we need to manage. They're all in a meeting until 2 pm. Correct Release notes The digital edition builds on information from the sixth edition about 'variable spellings'. The Content Guide had information on 'preferred spellings'. About this page References Little W, Fowler HW and Coulson J (1973) Shorter Oxford English dictionary on historical principles, Oxford University Press, New York. Oxford University Press (2017) Australian concise Oxford dictionary, 6th edn, Oxford University Press, Melbourne. Last updated This page was updated Monday 14 August 2023. https://www.stylemanual.gov.au/grammar-punctuation-and-conventions/shortened-words-and-phrases Shortened words and phrases Use shortened forms if they help the user understand quicker. Make sure everyone understands them. Abbreviations Acronyms and initialisms Contractions Latin shortened forms Numbers and measurements Italics Names and terms Titles, honours, forms of address Content types Structuring content Referencing and attribution Abbreviations Abbreviations are shortened words. They can hinder people's understanding, so they have limited uses. 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. Contractions Contractions are shortened words. People will read and understand them depending on their context. Avoid them in formal content. https://www.stylemanual.gov.au/grammar-punctuation-and-conventions/shortened-words-and-phrases/abbreviations Abbreviations Abbreviations are shortened words. They can hinder people's understanding, so they have limited uses. Limit the use of abbreviations Abbreviations contain the first single letter or first few letters of a word. They don't include the last letter of a word. Abbreviations are generally not good for readability and can be misunderstood. Avoid using them in general content where possible. Abbreviations Acronyms and initialisms Contractions Latin shortened forms Numbers and measurements

Italics Names and terms Titles, honours, forms of address Content types Structuring content Referencing and attribution Example app for ‘appendix’ vol for ‘volume’ cont for ‘continued’ p for ‘page’ para for ‘paragraph’ Like this Thank you for your email about errors in the third paragraph of the webpage How to apply for a special use permit. Abbreviations are useful in very limited circumstances: in a table or chart, where space is unavailable for the full form of the word – provide a note under the table or chart giving the full form when using ‘cont’ to show continuing text in another part of content (for example, on another page of a print newsletter) – the full form of the word is more helpful where space allows. Semi-formal and informal content uses abbreviations more often. Use abbreviations only if users will understand what they mean. If there’s any doubt, define the abbreviation on first use. Avoid using abbreviations in any public-facing content. Accessibility requirements Avoid (or explain) unusual words, phrases, idioms and so on. WCAG quick reference: 3.1.3 Unusual words – level AAA 3.1.4 Abbreviations – level AAA Don’t put a full stop after most abbreviations Don’t place a full stop after an abbreviation. There are exceptions: when the abbreviation ends a sentence and isn’t followed by another punctuation mark for abbreviations of scientific names for plants and animals for the abbreviation ‘n.d.’(meaning ‘no date’) for the year of publication in references. Not this Thank you for your email about errors in the third para of the webpage How to apply for a special use permit. Example It’s listed as a container of ‘misc goods’. [No full stop after the abbreviation] The full name of the company is Sizzling Outback Tours Inc. [A full stop after the abbreviation ends the sentence] Have you reviewed the relevant para? [No full stop after the abbreviation: another punctuation mark ends the sentence] Xanthorrhoea glauca subsp. angustifolia [Full stop in the abbreviation for ‘subspecies’] Office of Parliamentary Counsel (n.d.) Glossary, Federal Register of Legislation website, accessed 12 January 2020. [No date of publication on this webpage] Capitalise the same way as the spelt-out version Use the same capitalisation as for the unabbreviated word. Don’t abbreviate the first word in a sentence Write out the abbreviated term in full. Add ‘s’ to create plural abbreviations Add an ‘s’. One exception is ‘pp’ (pages), which is used when referring to multiple pages. Release notes The digital edition recommends avoiding use of abbreviations in general content, and in any public-facing content. It follows the Content Guide’s advice to avoid using Latin shortened forms. The digital edition lists common shortened forms and provides advice on the limited circumstances where they could be used and how to punctuate them. This is a departure from advice in the sixth edition, which listed ‘thoroughly anglicised’ shortened forms used regularly in publications. It did not explicitly warn against their use. The sixth edition recommended against using ‘i.e.’, ‘e.g.’ and ‘etc.’ in paragraph text and in formal content. The digital edition removes the sixth edition requirement to use full stops with non-Latin abbreviations. Exceptions to this rule are: Latin shortened forms (including for the formal names of plants and animals) the abbreviation for ‘no date’ (n.d.) used in referencing and citation. The new general rule is supported by corpus information checked with the Australian National Example misc for ‘miscellaneous’ Dec for ‘December’ Example Appendix B explains this further. [Not ‘App B’] Example I’ve sent you some paras to check. Refer to pp 58–64. Dictionary Centre. It is consistent with the recommendation to use minimal punctuation. The removal of full stops affects style for abbreviations of: Australian place names organisation names months and days of the week. About this page References Btb Translation Bureau (n.d.) ‘1: abbreviations’, The Canadian style, Btb Translation Bureau website, accessed 4 May 2020. Content Design London (2019) ‘Abbreviations and acronyms’, Content Design London readability guidelines, Content Design London website, accessed 30 March 2020. GOV.UK (2016) ‘A-to-Z: abbreviations and acronyms’, Style guide, GOV.UK, accessed 9 September 2020. Hales A, Williams K and Rector J (February 2017) ‘Alienating the audience: how abbreviations hamper scientific communication’, Association for Psychological Science, accessed 7 January 2020. Lieberman C (17 January 2006) ‘Accessibility hat trick: getting abbreviations right’, A List Apart, accessed 7 January 2020. Sehl K (24 April 2019) ‘The ultimate list of social media acronyms and abbreviations’, Hootsuite Blog, accessed 8 January 2020. Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (2020) ‘4.4: abbreviations and acronyms’, Canada.ca content style guide, Canada.ca, accessed 4 May 2020. United States Government (n.d.) ‘Minimize abbreviations’, Plain language guidelines, plainlanguage.gov. W3C (World Wide Web Consortium) (n.d.) ‘G102: providing the expansion or explanation of an abbreviation’, Techniques for WCAG 2.0, W3C website, accessed 7 January 2020. W3C (n.d.) ‘H28: providing definitions for abbreviations by using the abbr element’, Techniques for WCAG 2.0, W3C website, accessed 7 January 2020.

W3C (n.d.) ‘PDF8: Providing definitions for abbreviations via an E entry for a structure element’, Techniques for WCAG 2.0, W3C website, accessed 7 January 2020. W3C (n.d.) ‘Understanding Success Criterion 3.1.4: abbreviations’, Understanding WCAG 2.1, W3C website, accessed 5 May 2020. Last updated This page was updated Thursday 6 June 2024. https://www.stylemanual.gov.au/grammar-punctuation-and-conventions/shortened-words-and-phrases/acronyms-and-initialisms 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. Choose acronyms and initialisms people will recognise Acronyms comprise the initial letters (and sometimes syllables) of the words in a term and are pronounced as a word. Initialisms comprise the initial letters (or sounds) of the words in a term and are pronounced as letters, not as a word. Abbreviations Acronyms and initialisms Contractions Latin shortened forms Numbers and measurements Italics Names and terms Titles, honours, forms of address Content types Structuring content Referencing and attribution Example Qantas Anzac TAFE modem Example ABC GST Some shortened forms are a combination of an initialism and an acronym. Acronyms and initialisms are common in formal content. If understood by users, they can make content easier to use. They communicate terms in as few letters as possible to make content easier and faster to read. When preparing content for well-established publications, such as professional journals, look at the author guidelines and examples of the content. This will show whether using acronyms and initialisms is appropriate and, if so, which shortened forms are used. Explain acronyms and initialisms to all users People unfamiliar with certain terms might not understand their shortened forms. Acronyms and initialisms might also be misread by screen readers. To make sure all shortened forms are accessible: Define them the first time you use them in content (unless you’re certain all users will understand them without a definition – consult a dictionary first). Include them with their spelt-out forms in the glossary. This is particularly important if the content contains many specialist shortened forms. Spell out most acronyms on first use If there’s a chance users won’t know the meaning of an acronym or initialism, define it at first mention. Write the term in full first and follow with the acronym or initialism in parentheses. Use the shortened form rather than the full term for later mentions. NDIS XML Example DFAT EPIRB CPAP JPEG Example CSIRO for ‘Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation’ HTML for ‘hypertext markup language’ Example The Department of Social Services (DSS) manages a range of benefits and payments for eligible Australians. DSS helps Write well-known acronyms or initialisms first and follow with the full term in parentheses. You don’t need to define some acronyms and initialisms on first use. These include: some place names (NT, ACT) time of day (am, pm) some organisational names (BHP, Qantas) terms that began as acronyms but are now words in their own right (radar, scuba, sonar). Repeat the full term if the user needs it If you use the shortened form only a few times in long-form content, consider writing out the full term more than once. People could come across the shortened form without reading the text where it is first defined. For example, a user might click straight to a section that only includes the shortened form. Check the correct shortened form for government organisations The names of government departments are often shortened, but not always in the same way. Rather than using acronyms or initialisms, it can be easier for people if you: spell out the agency’s name in full the first time you use it then use the generic name (‘department’, ‘agency’, ‘bureau’) afterwards. This is usually more useful to non-specialist users. support communities through a number of programs and services. Example All living organisms have DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid) within their cells. DNA tells cells what proteins to make. Example DVA (Department of Veterans’ Affairs) Home Affairs (Department of Home Affairs) Example The Bureau of Meteorology prepares Australia’s official weather forecasts. The bureau provides its forecasts on its website. The Department of Finance is in Canberra. The department supports government financial management. Include a list if content relies on many acronyms and initialisms For content with many specialised acronyms and initialisms, provide a glossary – a list of terms and their meaning that users can refer to. Include the glossary at the end of the content or on a separate webpage. Use a hyperlink in the text to help people access the glossary. You don’t need to include a glossary if: there are only a few unfamiliar shortened forms each one is only in a very limited section of text each one is spelt out when first mentioned. Print considerations The glossary usually appears before the references (with the endmatter). Don’t end acronyms and initialisms with a full stop Don’t place a full stop after the acronym or initialism. The exception is if the shortened form ends a sentence and isn’t followed by another punctuation mark. Use capitals for most acronyms and initialisms Acronyms are

usually all capitals, but use lower case for some familiar acronyms (taser, captcha, laser). Use an initial capital for familiar acronyms that are proper nouns (Qantas, Anzac). Initialisms are often all upper case (VOIP, FOI) but there are exceptions (bpm). Consult a dictionary if you're unsure of the capitalisation. If the acronym or initialism represents common nouns, don't begin each word of the full form with a capital letter. Example Will you be attending COAG this month? [No full stop after the acronym] I'm working on a B2B project at the moment. [No full stop after the initialism] She's now working in FOI. [A full stop after the initialism that ends the sentence] Is the company being investigated by ASIC? [No full stop after the acronym because another punctuation mark ends the sentence] If the acronym or initialism represents a proper noun, start each word with a capital letter (excluding words such as 'of' and 'and'). Avoid plural and possessive forms on the first use Avoid using the plural or possessive of an acronym or initialism when you define it. This makes it easy for users to recognise the shortened form in later content. Quote acronyms and initialisms the same way as the speaker When quoting an exact phrase, write exactly what the speaker said. If they used an acronym or initialism, quote it. Show the full term in square brackets if users might not recognise the term or if you haven't already explained it. Release notes Example EIS for 'environmental impact statement' TB for 'tuberculosis' Example ASIO [Australian Security Intelligence Organisation] OPC [Office of Parliamentary Counsel] NSW [New South Wales] ILSC [Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation] Example It's compulsory for certain businesses to have an Australian Business Number (ABN). The Australian Business Register manages applications for ABNs. [There's no need to use an apostrophe before the 's' for ABNs as the term is plural, not possessive.] The Australian National University (ANU) has a new student policy. The ANU's policy is popular with its staff and students. [Use an apostrophe before the 's' to show that the ANU owns the policy.] Example 'We're continuing to manage the number of SES [Senior Executive Service] to ensure the Public Service isn't top heavy,' he said. As well as the initial letters of words, definitions in the digital edition allow for initial syllables for acronyms and initial sounds for initialisms. The sixth edition included 'and sometimes other letters' in its definitions for acronyms and initialisms. The digital edition updates punctuation style for shortened forms. It removes the requirement to use full stops with non-Latin abbreviations. Consistent with what was Content Guide advice, it recommends avoiding the use of Latin shortened forms. Consistent with the sixth edition, it does not use full stops with acronyms or initialisms, or contractions. The digital edition lists common shortened forms and provides advice on the limited circumstances where they could be used and how to punctuate them. This is a departure from advice in the sixth edition, which listed 'thoroughly anglicised' shortened forms used regularly in publications. It did not explicitly warn against their use. The Content Guide mentions shortened words and phrases but did not provide detailed advice. It advised to avoid using Latin shortened forms, in line with the guidance in this edition of the Style Manual. About this page References Btb Translation Bureau (n.d.) '1: abbreviations', The Canadian style, Btb Translation Bureau website, accessed 4 May 2020. Content Design London (2019) 'Abbreviations and acronyms', Content Design London readability guidelines, Content Design London website, accessed 30 March 2020. GOV.UK (2016) 'A–Z: abbreviations and acronyms', Style guide, GOV.UK, accessed 4 May 2020. Hales A, Williams K and Rector J (February 2017) 'Alienating the audience: how abbreviations hamper scientific communication', Association for Psychological Science, accessed 7 January 2020. Narod S, Ahmed H and Akbari M (2016) 'Do acronyms belong in the medical literature?: a countercurrents series', Current Oncology, 23(5):295–296, doi:10.3747/co.23.3122. Oxford University Press (2016) '10: Abbreviations and symbols', New Oxford style manual, Oxford University Press, Oxford. Sehl K (24 April 2019) 'The ultimate list of social media acronyms and abbreviations', Hootsuite Blog, accessed 8 January 2020. Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (2020) '4.4: abbreviations and acronyms', Canada.ca content style guide, Canada.ca, accessed 4 May 2020. University of Chicago (2017) '10.2: Acronyms, initialisms, contractions', Chicago manual of style, 17th edn, University of Chicago Press, Chicago. W3C (World Wide Web Consortium) (n.d.) 'G102: providing the expansion or explanation of an abbreviation', Techniques for WCAG 2.0, W3C website, accessed 7 January 2020. W3C (n.d.) 'H28: providing definitions for abbreviations by using the abbr element', Techniques for WCAG 2.0, W3C website, accessed 7 January 2020. W3C (n.d.) 'PDF8: Providing definitions for abbreviations via an E entry for a structure element', Techniques for WCAG 2.0, W3C website, accessed 7 January 2020. W3C (n.d.) 'Understanding Success Criterion 3.1.4: abbreviations', Understanding WCAG 2.1, W3C website, accessed 5 May 2020 Watson L (8 February

2017) ‘How to create content that works well with screen readers’, Accessibility in government blog, accessed 7 January 2020. Wright N (n.d.) ‘Keep it jargon-free’, Resources, plainlanguage.gov. Last updated This page was updated Friday 7 July 2023. https://www.stylemanual.gov.au/grammar-punctuation-and-conventions/shortened-words-and-phrases/contractions Contractions Contractions are shortened words. People will read and understand them depending on their context. Avoid them in formal content. Shorten single words and grammatical phrases with care Single-word contractions use the first and last letters of a word and sometimes other letters in between. Grammatical contractions join 2 words. They use an apostrophe to show that there are missing letters. Abbreviations Acronyms and initialisms Contractions Latin shortened forms Numbers and measurements Italics Names and terms Titles, honours, forms of address Content types Structuring content Referencing and attribution Example Cth for ‘Commonwealth’ Dr for ‘Doctor’ [As a title] Ltd for ‘Limited’ [As a legal status] Example aren’t (are not) don’t (do not) isn’t (is not) Legal documents and many specialist and professional publications use specific contractions. Look at examples of existing content to see whether you can use grammatical contractions. Don’t use them if you’re unsure. Avoid using contractions of single words in more formal content such as high-level briefing and responses to official inquiries. The exceptions are contractions used in formal writing, such as ‘Dr’ and other titles. Grammatical contractions are not generally used in formal content. You can use them in less formal content which aims to create: a conversational tone (for example, in a newsletter) a friendly or collaborative tone (for example, in brochures and manuals). Find out if the user will understand the contractions Look at existing agency content to see whether grammatical contractions are appropriate. If developing a new publication or communication channel, conduct user research. This will help you understand how people respond to grammatical contractions. Some users might find grammatical contractions difficult to understand. They can add an extra cognitive load. Don’t end contractions with full stops Don’t place a full stop after contractions. The exception is when the contraction ends a sentence and isn’t followed by another punctuation mark. Australian practice differs from US English, which adds a full stop after a contraction (for it’s (it is) Example The department has not breached its staffing cap. [Formal high-level briefing or a response to a parliamentary question] The department hasn’t breached its staffing cap. [Less formal briefing or other less formal communications] We appreciate that the new rules weren’t advertised widely. We’re now contacting everyone who might be affected. Please don’t hesitate to contact us if you have any questions. [Friendly and conversational content for users of a service] Example Tempo Australia Ltd hired him last year. [No full stop after the contraction] He is currently working for Tempo Australia Ltd. [A full stop after the contraction ends the sentence.] They said they can’t! [No full stop after the contraction because another punctuation mark ends the sentence] example, ‘Mr.’, ‘Ltd.’). Don’t use an apostrophe to show missing letters in a contraction of a single word (‘Dr’, ‘Ltd’). Grammatical contractions use only one apostrophe, even if the contraction leaves out letters from more than one place. Capitalise contractions in the same way as the full word Use the capitalisation that you would use for the uncontracted word. Capitalisation of the uncontracted word depends on the context. Use the full word at start of the sentence (except for grammatical contractions) Write out the contracted term in full unless it’s a grammatical contraction. Only use the contraction ‘no’ with numerals The word ‘number’ is sometimes substituted with ‘no’. This is a contraction of the word numero. The plural form of the contraction is ‘nos’. Only use the contraction ‘no’ when immediately followed by a numeral. In all other instances, write the word out in full so it isn’t confused with the negation ‘no’. This contraction is not a standard symbol for numbers expressed as units of measurement. Correct shan’t Incorrect sha’n’t Example The Cth Games [The contraction ‘Cth’ is capitalised because it refers to the name of a sporting event: the Commonwealth Games.] A cth is a term for a political community. [Here, ‘cth’ isn’t capitalised because it’s generic.] Example Commonwealth resources are available. [The word begins a sentence, so it isn’t contracted.] Don’t forget your notes for the meeting. [Grammatical contractions can start a sentence.] Release notes The digital edition updates punctuation style for shortened forms. It removes the requirement to use full stops with non-Latin abbreviations. Consistent with what was Content Guide advice, it recommends avoiding the use of Latin shortened forms. Consistent with the sixth edition, it does not use full stops with acronyms or initialisms. It is consistent with the sixth edition requirement not to use full stops with contractions. It changes the recommendation to use a full stop with the contraction ‘no’ for the word ‘number’ (or numero). This aligns the guidance with the general rule for shortened forms, and with the principle of minimal punctuation. It prefers ‘Cth’ over ‘Cwlth’ as the

contraction for ‘Commonwealth’. This reflects a departure from the sixth edition based on a corpus check with the Australian National Dictionary Centre. The digital edition follows the Content Guide’s advice to avoid using Latin shortened forms. It lists common shortened forms and provides advice on the limited circumstances where they could be used and how to punctuate them. This is a departure from advice in the sixth edition, which listed ‘thoroughly anglicised’ shortened forms used regularly in publications. It did not explicitly warn against their use. The sixth edition recommended against using ‘i.e.’, ‘e.g.’ and ‘etc.’ in body text and in formal content. About this page References Castillo González MP (2007) Uncontracted negatives and negative contractions in contemporary English: a corpus-based study [doctoral thesis], University of Santiago de Compostela, accessed 19 June 2020. Content Design London (2019) ‘Contractions’, Content Design London readability guidelines, Content Design London website, accessed 19 May 2020. Like this Archive box no 152 has been found in the basement. I won’t be able to get their manager’s number until tomorrow. There are a number of options available to us. Not this I won’t be able to get their manager’s no until tomorrow. There are a no of options available to us. GOV.UK (2016) ‘A-to-Z: contractions’, Style guide, GOV.UK, accessed 4 May 2020. Palacios C (1 August 2019) ‘Using contractions in formal writing: acceptable or not?’, bka Content, accessed 30 March 2020. United States Government (n.d.) ‘Use contractions’, Plain language guidelines, plainlanguage.gov. UK Department of Health and Social Care (2010) Making written information easier to understand for people with learning disabilities, GOV.UK, accessed 19 May 2020. Watson L (8 February 2017) ‘How to create content that works well with screen readers’, Accessibility in government blog, accessed 7 January 2020. Last updated This page was updated Wednesday 5 July 2023. https://www.stylemanual.gov.au/grammar-punctuation-and-conventions/shortened-words-and-phrases/latin-shortened-forms Latin shortened forms Use English rather than Latin shortened forms, except in some cases. People will prefer the English equivalent unless the context requires special use. Avoid using Latin shortened forms in most content Use Latin forms only in limited situations – for example: where there’s limited space, such as in tables in technical and specialist publications that use them. Meanings of common Latin shortened forms Shortened form Complete Latin word Meaning c. circa about, approximately cf. conferatur compare e.g. exempli gratia for example et al. et alii and others etc. et cetera and so forth, and so on i.e. id est that is MS manuscriptum manuscript Abbreviations Acronyms and initialisms Contractions Latin shortened forms Numbers and measurements Italics Names and terms Titles, honours, forms of address Content types Structuring content Referencing and attribution NB nota bene take careful note PPS post postscriptum second postscript PS postscriptum postscript v., vs versus against viz. videlicet namely Shortened form Complete Latin word Meaning Unlike other shortened forms, some Latin shortened forms have full stops. The terms ‘i.e.’ and ‘e.g.’ need full stops after each letter. This helps screen readers announce them. Don’t follow ‘e.g.’ or ‘i.e.’ with a comma, regardless of whether you would use a comma in the sentence. Use the English words where possible Rather than using ‘e.g.’ or ‘i.e.’ write the English words out in full. Write ‘for example’ and ‘that is’ instead, particularly in more formal publications. Don’t use the shortened form for et cetera. Use of ‘etc.’ is redundant in a list introduced by ‘for example’, ‘such as’ or ‘including’. These expressions show that the list is incomplete. If you think you need to include ‘etc.’ because there’s more to say, include these ideas in your sentence instead. Like this They found some aspects of grammar confusing – for example, the different types of pronouns. The department has a major problem with its website – that is, users find pages are very slow to load. Not this They found some aspects of grammar confusing, e.g. the different types of pronouns. The department has a major problem with its website, i.e. users find pages very slow to load. Correct This funding is intended for upgrading roads in Gold Coast and Hinterland urban centres (for example, Surfers Paradise and Southport). This funding is for upgrading roads in the Gold Coast and Hinterland urban centres (Surfers Paradise, Southport, Upper Coomera and Robina). [All the places are listed, so ‘for example’ isn’t needed.] Incorrect Release notes The digital edition follows the Content Guide’s advice to avoid using Latin shortened forms. It lists common shortened forms and provides advice on the limited circumstances where they could be used and how to punctuate them. This is a departure from advice in the sixth edition, which listed ‘thoroughly anglicised’ shortened forms used regularly in publications. It did not explicitly warn against their use. The sixth edition recommended against using ‘i.e.’, ‘e.g.’ and ‘etc.’ in body text and in formal content. The digital edition updates punctuation style for shortened forms. It removes the requirement to use full stops with non-Latin abbreviations. Consistent with the

sixth edition, it does not use full stops with acronyms or initialisms, or contractions. The digital edition changes the recommendation to use a full stop with the contraction ‘no’ for the word ‘number’ (from the Latin, numero). This aligns the guidance with the general rule for shortened forms, and with the principle of minimal punctuation. About this page References American Psychological Association (2020) ‘6.29: Latin abbreviations’, Publication manual of the American Psychological Association, 7th edn, American Psychological Association, Washington DC. Content Design London (2019) ‘Words to avoid’, Content Design London readability guidelines, Content Design London website, accessed 4 May 2020. GOV.UK (2016) ‘A-to-Z: eg, etc and ie’, Style guide, GOV.UK, accessed 22 February 2020. Oxford University Press (2016) ‘10.6: e.g., i.e., etc., et al.’, New Oxford style manual, Oxford University Press, Oxford. Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (2020) ‘2.6: Use simple sentences’, Canada.ca content style guide, Canada.ca, accessed 20 February 2020. University of Chicago (2017) ‘10.42: scholarly abbreviations’, Chicago manual of style, 17th edn, University of Chicago Press, Chicago. Last updated This page was updated Monday 23 January 2023. This funding is for upgrading roads in Gold Coast and Hinterland urban centres (for example, Surfers Paradise, Southport etc.). https://www.stylemanual.gov.au/grammar-punctuation-and-conventions/numbers-and-measurements Numbers and measurements Style for numbers and measurements supports accessibility and readability for users. Numbers and measurements Choosing numerals or words Currency Dates and time Fractions and decimals Mathematical relationships Measurement and units Ordinal numbers Percentages Telephone numbers Italics Names and terms Titles, honours, forms of address Content types Structuring content Referencing and attribution Choosing numerals or words Numbers as numerals are generally easier for people to scan. Numbers as words remain a convention that people expect in some types of content. Currency Use the correct numbers, words and symbols for currency so people are clear about the amount. Dates and time Dates and expressions of time need to be readable and clear, particularly in content that contains detailed timelines. Write, abbreviate and punctuate dates and times consistently so people can understand your content. Follow international and Australian standards to write dates and times for data systems and international communication. Fractions and decimals Decimals are useful when people need a precise value. Fractions are useful when an exact value is not important. Mathematical relationships A mathematical relationship is the connection between sets of numbers or variables. In most content, the connection should be described in words. Only use symbols if there’s a user need. Code symbols correctly to ensure they are accessible. Measurement and units Standard units of measurement support readability and accuracy. Express precise values for users by combining numerals with the correct unit symbol. Ordinal numbers Ordinal numbers, such as ‘first’, ‘second’ and ‘third’, show the order, position or importance of things in a list or sequence. Percentages Percentages help people compare things and understand proportions. Use numerals with the percentage sign. Be concise when you write about percentages. Telephone numbers Write telephone numbers so people can read and use them easily. There are rules for grouping https://www.stylemanual.gov.au/grammar-punctuation-and-conventions/numbers-and-measurements/choosing-numerals-or-words Choosing numerals or words Numbers as numerals are generally easier for people to scan. Numbers as words remain a convention that people expect in some types of content. Use numerals for 2 and above in text In text, the general rule is: Use numerals for ‘2’ and above. Write the numbers ‘zero’ and ‘one’ in words. Follow the same rule for writing numbers in headings and subheadings. Apply exceptions to this general rule in specific situations, explained on this page. The numbers ‘0’ and ‘1’ are difficult for some users to read. Some typefaces make it difficult to see the difference between: Numbers and measurements Choosing numerals or words Currency Dates and time Fractions and decimals Mathematical relationships Measurement and units Ordinal numbers Percentages Telephone numbers Italics Names and terms Titles, honours, forms of address Content types Structuring content Referencing and attribution the letter ‘O’ and numeral ‘0’ the letters ‘I’ (capital ‘i’), ‘l’ (lower-case ‘L’) and numeral ‘1’. In some typefaces, the numeral ‘1’ can also be confused with the numeral ‘7’. Writing ‘zero’ and ‘one’ helps to ensure all users understand you are referring to the number. Use words for 2 and above in these specific situations There are exceptions to the general rule for using numerals in text. Use words for numbers when: starting a sentence writing a fraction writing a proper noun that includes a number written as a word writing a publication title that includes a number written as a word quoting a figure of speech. In addition, use words for numbers below 10 for government content that follows journalistic conventions (for example, media

releases). Starting a sentence with a number Start sentences with words rather than numerals. If you must use a number at the start of a sentence, write it out in words. Write this Only one person agreed to it. Their aim is zero net emissions by 2050. They were open to discussing 3 options. Not this Only 1 person agreed with it. Their aim is 0 net emissions by 2050. They were open to discussing three options. Write this Twelve people from our group went to the rally. From our group, 12 people went to the rally. Not this It is sometimes better to rearrange the sentence. Fractions Write words in general text for fractions. Use fractions when: an exact number is not important the user needs only a general idea of the values. If the exact number and value is important, use decimals instead. Proper nouns, titles of publications and figures of speech Write numbers as words if this is how they appear in a name or title. Use words for figures of speech. 12 people from our group went to the rally. Write this The board received 621 complaints. Not this Six hundred and twenty-one complaints were received by the board. Example About two-thirds of staff attended last week's meeting. There were 270 candidates for the Legislative Council, an average of 7.5 candidates per vacancy. Example The Treasurer wrote the terms of reference for the Review of the Four Major Banks and Other Financial Institutions. Private politics : a study of five political outlooks by Alan Davies Example Two's company and three's a crowd. Let's take five. She felt ten feet tall. Government content and other style conventions Various style guides treat numbers differently. Media organisations generally use words for all numbers below 10 (or 11), and use numerals for the rest. Content of the same type necessarily uses the same style, for example, in media releases. Check your user research. It might show a need to use words for numbers other than 'zero' and 'one', for example, in: longer works print publications containing very few numbers. Be consistent. Once your style for numerals or words is settled, use the same style throughout the content or series of publications. Write all numbers as numerals in these specific situations There are exceptions to using words for 'zero' and 'one'. Write all numbers as numerals: in units of measurement to show mathematical relationships – such as equations and ratios – and for decimals when you are comparing numbers in tables and charts for dates and times in a series of numbers in specific contexts – such as steps, instructions, age and school years in scientific content. Units of measurement Always use numerals to report a measurement (unless it is a large rounded number). Mathematical formats, relationships and comparisons Always use numerals: Correct 1 km 1 kilometre Incorrect one kilometre to show mathematical relationships (such as equations and ratios) in decimal numbers to compare numbers in tables, graphs and charts. Use numerals when writing fractions in specialist content. Otherwise the general rule is words for fractions. Mathematical relationships Use well-understood conventions to write mathematical relationships. Keep relationships together so they are easily understood. To do this use: numerals only the correct operator characters spacing between numerals and operators non-breaking spaces. Decimal numbers Use decimals when you need to be precise. Always write them as numerals. Comparisons Compare numerals, not words and numerals. If one number is a decimal, the other must be a decimal and so on. Comparisons are sometimes hard for people, so make them clear. It may seem obvious, but Example a ratio of 7:1 8 + 1 = 9 Example They had 8.5 full-time equivalent staff in the section. Innisfail averages 3,547.8 mm of rainfall per year. Write this For those aged 75 to 84, the rate was 2.5 times as high as the rate for the control group. This fell to 1.1 times as high for those aged 85 and over. Not this For those aged 75 to 84, the rate was over twice as high as the rate for the control group. This fell to 1.1 times as high for those aged 85 and over. comparisons are only useful if like is compared with like. Tables, graphs and charts Lists or blocks of data must consist of numerals, or people will find them hard to understand. Always use numerals in graphs, charts and tables. Numerals save space and help people scan, find and compare values quickly. Restrict data to key indicators and results. Keep the presentation of data as simple as possible, and use consistent units and magnitudes. Date and times Always use numerals for dates and time. Series of numbers In any document that contains a lot of numbers, it is always better to write numbers as numerals. Always use numerals for: a related group of items a discussion of statistics. This is regardless of the size of the numbers involved. If you have two series of numbers, for the sake of clarity you can use words for one series and numerals for the other. Example Wednesday 1 April 2020 She took the call at 1 pm. Example The anthology includes 160 poems by 22 poets – 14 of whom were born in Australia, 4 in New Zealand, 3 in England and 1 in Austria. The number of internet subscribers increased by 3.6%. Fibre connections grew by 22.4% and fibre growth for the year to June was 69.8%. Example Of the mothers of the 23 sets of triplets registered during the year, 8 had no previous children, 8

had one child and 7 had two previous children. [The first series uses numerals to break down the total number of triplets according to groups of mothers. The second series uses words for the number of children each group of mothers had already had.] Lists of steps and instructions Lists, points and instructions are easier to follow if written as numerals. Age and school years Always use numerals for age and school years. In scientific content You can use powers of 10 for large numbers in technical content, such as science and engineering publications. Don’t use powers of 10 in general content. Use commas in numbers with 4 or more digits Numbers from 1,000 need a comma. Separate the digits into groups of 3 (working from right to left). Don’t use a space or non-breaking space instead of a comma. This is because screen readers can announce spaced digits as separate numbers. Example 1. Write a list In point 2 of the record of discussion ... Step 3: insert the audio cable into the left audio jack. Example They're a close-knit group of 12-year-olds. The siblings are in year 1 and year 5. Example 2.5 × 10 is the same as 2,500,000 6 Example 1,750 25,690 745,902,350 Correct The government awards 2,500 grants to community projects annually. Combine numerals and words for large rounded numbers Numbers up to one million are easy to read as numerals. When you’re using rounded numbers of 1,000 or more, use commas to separate numerals into groups of 3 (working right to left). Use a combination of numerals and words for large numbers over a million when they are rounded. It is easier to read ‘2.5 million’ than ‘2,500,000’. Billions, trillions and quadrillions: billion = 1,000 million (10) trillion = million × million (10) quadrillion = thousand × million × million (10). Choose between numerals or words for currency Use numerals and symbols for amounts of money. However, money can be written entirely in words for approximations and figures of speech. Release notes Incorrect The government awards 2 500 grants to community projects annually. Example The budget allocated $50 billion to that initiative. The organisation announced $3 trillion in superannuation savings. 9 12 15 Example They self-declared a $0 turnover. 50c $1 US$20,000. Example The government’s new policy will save thousands of dollars. That’s my two cents worth. The digital edition updates the rule for using words for numbers in body text. It recommends using words only for zero and one, and using numerals for other numbers. Government content that follows journalistic conventions is treated as an exception. Expert advice has informed this change from the sixth edition. The change reflects accessibility considerations and style for numbers in contemporary digital content. The sixth edition recommended using words up to 100 (in general text) or words up to 9, and then numerals (in statistically oriented text). The digital edition retains the rule to start a sentence with a word rather than a numeral and lists some other exceptions to the new general rule, consistent with sixth edition guidance. The digital edition recommends using a comma in numbers with 4 or more digits. This recommendation is based on accessibility advice. The sixth edition recommended using a thin space in numbers with 5 or more digits and no space in numbers with 4 digits. The digital edition retains the sixth edition rule about using numerals in tables and technical content. It also retains the rules about using words for common expressions and to begin sentences. The sixth edition rule about using a mixture of words and numerals for large numbers also appears in the digital edition. The Content Guide recommended numerals for all numbers, including zero and one, noting a few exceptions to the rule. About this page Evidence Bohm T (2 December 2019) Letter and symbol misrecognition in highly legible typefaces for general, children, dyslexic, visually impaired and ageing readers,Typography, accessed 2 June 2020. GOV.UK (2016) A-to-Z: numbers’, Style guide, GOV.UK, accessed 2 June 2020. References American Psychological Association (2020) ‘Numbers’, Publication manual of the American Psychological Association, 7th edn, American Psychological Association, Washington DC. Australian Broadcasting Corporation (2020) ‘Numbers, measurements’, The ABC style guide, ABC website, accessed 3 June 2020. Btb Translation Bureau (2020) ‘Numerical expressions’, The Canadian style, Btb Translation Bureau website, accessed 3 June 2020. Content Design London (2019) ‘Grammar points: numbers’, Content Design London readability guidelines, Content Design London website, accessed 3 June 2020. European Commission (2020) ‘6: Numbers’, English style guide: a handbook for authors and translators in the European Commission, European Commission. General Services Administration (n.d) ‘Numbers and percentages’, 18F content guide, 18F Content Guide website, accessed 3 June 2020. Loranger H (23 March 2014) ‘Break grammar rules on websites for clarity’, Nielsen Norman Group, accessed 3 June 2020. New Zealand Government (2020) ‘Numbers’, Content design guidance, Digital.govt.nz, accessed 3 June 2020. NSW Government (2022) ‘Numbers, dates and times’, Content style guide, Digital.NSW website, accessed 21 November 2022. Oxford University Press (2016) ‘11.2.2: Figures or words?’, New

Oxford style manual, Oxford University Press, Oxford. TechCommNZ (May 2016) ‘Five or 5? Words versus numerals ...’, TelecommNZ Newsletter, accessed 3 June 2020. Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (2018) '4.6: Numbers', Canada.ca content style guide, Canada.ca, accessed 3 June 2020. University of Chicago (2017) 'Numbers', Chicago manual of style, 17th edn, University of Chicago Press, Chicago. US Government Publishing Office (2016) ‘Numerals’, Government Publishing Office style manual, U.S. Government Publishing Office, accessed 17 September 2021. Last updated This page was updated Tuesday 9 July 2024. https://www.stylemanual.gov.au/grammar-punctuation-and-conventions/numbers-and-measurements/currency Currency Use the correct numbers, words and symbols for currency so people are clear about the amount. Quantify an amount of money with a symbol and numeral Write amounts using the relevant currency symbol followed by numerals. Don’t put a space between the currency symbol and the numerals. For an amount less than $1, you can write it either as a whole number of cents or as a decimal value. For the cents form: Numbers and measurements Choosing numerals or words Currency Dates and time Fractions and decimals Mathematical relationships Measurement and units Ordinal numbers Percentages Telephone numbers Italics Names and terms Titles, honours, forms of address Content types Structuring content Referencing and attribution Example $27.99 Use the letter ‘c’ for cents after the numerals. Don’t add a space between the numerals and the ‘c’. Don’t use a full stop after the ‘c’ unless it’s at the end of a sentence. If the amount is a decimal number, always use 2 digits after the decimal point. If the amount is less than 10 cents, use a zero before the number of cents. Clarify when you are using Australian dollars Where content is clearly only referencing Australian dollars, use ‘$’. If users could be confused about the currency being referenced, place ‘A’ before the ‘$’. Don’t insert a space between them. Example $0.50 50c Example $0.80 $0.78 Correct $0.04 Incorrect $0.4 Example The minimum wage in Australia is $19.49 per hour. Example The minimum wage in Australia is A$19.49 per hour. [Use of ‘A’ is appropriate if the content is intended for users outside Australia.] The journalist was paid A$89 per hour during her posting in Hong Kong. [Use of ‘A’ helps users understand that the journalist was not paid in Hong Kong dollars]. Reference non-Australian currencies for accessibility Non-Australian currency symbols may be inaccessible to people who access content using screen readers. Screen readers may be unable to interpret and describe the symbols. Avoid the use of non-Australian currency symbols where possible. Options for referencing non-Australian currencies Use the 3-letter International Bank Account Number (IBAN) currency codes – for example, THB, USD, VND. This is the preferred method because it doesn’t use symbols and makes content more accessible. When referencing ‘dollar’ currencies, use a country prefix followed by the ‘$’ symbol – for example, A$, C$, NZ$, US$. If there is any chance of confusion, use the 3-letter IBAN codes. Use the currency symbol only, for example ‘£’ for the British pound, if you have evidence that it is the best way to meet a user need. Using IBAN currency codes (preferred) Use them for all currencies referenced in the content (including Australian dollars). Don’t place a space between the IBAN currency code and the numerals. Use the same number of decimal places for all the currencies you refer to. If using foreign currency symbols: Explain them on first use unless they are very widely known (for example, US$). Place them before the numerals and don’t insert a space. Don’t also use the IBAN currency code. Example Minimum wages are currently: Australia – AUD19.49 per hour Thailand – THB313.00 per day Vanuatu – VUV220.00 per hour Vietnam – VND4.18 million per month (urban Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City). Write this The minimum wage in Japan is currently Japanese yen (¥) 901 per hour. It was previously ¥874 per hour. [The Japanese yen symbol isn’t very widely known in Australia, so explain it at first mention unless you're writing for a specialist audience familiar with the symbol.] The minimum wage in the United States is currently US$7.25 per hour. [Because US$ is very widely known, don’t explain it on first use.] Former Australian currency units Use words rather than symbols for former Australian currency. Before 14 February 1966, pounds (£), shillings (s) and pence (d) were Australia’s units of currency. Few people would recognise these symbols now, so write them out in full. Some countries still use pounds as their currency. If there is any chance of confusion, state ‘former Australian pounds’ or use the symbol ‘A£’. Quantify large amounts of money Use the level of precision needed for the content. Use words for inexact amounts Use words for amounts of money that are an expression rather than an actual amount. Release notes Not this The minimum wage in the United States is currently $7.25 USD per hour. [Don’t use both the currency symbol and the IBAN currency code. This also applies when writing Australian dollar amounts.] Write this 9 pounds, 8 shillings and 7 pence Not this £9 8s 7d Example They spent more than $2.1

million. [Use in descriptive text.] Total expenditure was $2.195 million. [Use in a financial report.] $2.195m [Use in a table or chart. No space or full stop. Explain the shortened form ‘m’ in a note.] Example This approach is likely to save thousands of dollars. The contract was worth several million dollars. The digital edition recommends using the dollar symbol and numerals most cases for Australian currency. It gives three options for citing foreign currencies supported by a search of Australian corpora. It recommends avoiding non-Australian currency symbols where possible and using words instead of symbols when referring to former Australian currency. The sixth edition gave the option of using a combination of words and numbers for currency in descriptive and narrative prose. The Content Guide did not have guidance on the style for currency. About this page References Australian Broadcasting Corporation (2020) ‘Currency’, The ABC style guide, ABC website, accessed 3 June 2020. General Services Administration (n.d.) ‘Numbers and percentages’, 18F content guide, 18F website, accessed 3 June 2020. Reserve Bank of Australia (2019) Annual report 2019, Reserve Bank of Australia website, accessed 5 June 2020. Reserve Bank of Australia (1994) International Comparisons of Bank Margins - August 1994: Table 1, Reserve Bank of Australia website, Australian Government, accessed 10 June 2020. Reserve Bank of Australia (2020) International market operations: foreign exchange operations, Reserve Bank of Australia website, accessed 5 June 2020. Royal Australian Mint (n.d.) Journey to an Australian currency [PDF 846KB], Royal Australian Mint website, accessed 5 June 2020. Royal Australian Mint (2020) Mint Issue 126: February 2020 [PDF 2.91MB], Royal Australian Mint website, accessed 5 June 2020. The Unicode Consortium (2020) ‘Currency symbols’, Unicode 13.0 character code charts, Unicode website, accessed 4 June 2020. University of Chicago (2017) ‘9.21: non-US currencies using the dollar symbol’, Chicago manual of style, 17th edn, University of Chicago Press, Chicago. University of Chicago (2017) ‘9.23: other currencies’, Chicago manual of style, 17th edn, University of Chicago Press, Chicago. Last updated This page was updated Monday 6 September 2021. https://www.stylemanual.gov.au/grammar-punctuation-and-conventions/numbers-and-measurements/dates-and-time Dates and time Dates and expressions of time need to be readable and clear, particularly in content that contains detailed timelines. Write, abbreviate and punctuate dates and times consistently so people can understand your content. Follow international and Australian standards to write dates and times for data systems and international communication. Follow Australian conventions for dates There are Australian conventions for writing dates in words and numerals, and in numeric formats. These conventions include how to sequence elements of the date. Use numerals and words for dates in most content. Use numeric dates when space is limited and in content types like tables. Combine numerals and words for dates in body text Numbers and measurements Choosing numerals or words Currency Dates and time Fractions and decimals Mathematical relationships Measurement and units Ordinal numbers Percentages Telephone numbers Italics Names and terms Titles, honours, forms of address Content types Structuring content Referencing and attribution In Australia, the conventional sequence for dates is ‘day month year’. Use this sequence when expressing dates in numerals and words. For dates in body text, use numerals for the day and year and spell out the name of the month. Don’t include a comma or any other punctuation. Spell out the name of the day if it is being used, but don’t include a comma after the day. The names of months and days start with an initial capital because they are proper nouns. Insert a non-breaking space between the day and the month so they stay together on one line. A non-breaking space means that a line break will split the date before the year. Keeping the day and month together allows people to identify the information appearing before the line break as a date. Don’t use an ordinal number (12th, 21st etc.) when writing dates in body text. Write this 31 December 2020 Thursday 31 December 2020 Not this December 31, 2020 Thursday, 31 December 2020 Write this Please find attached the new agenda for the extraordinary general meeting, 2 pm 8 November 2022. [With a non- breaking space between ‘8’ and ‘November’] Not this Please find attached the draft minutes of the extraordinary general meeting held in Sydney, 8 November 2022. [With no non-breaking space between ‘8’ and ‘November’] Write this 1 May 1997 Schedule 3 commences on the first 1 July after the bill receives Royal Assent. [Extract from an explanatory memorandum] Not this 1st May 1997 Schedule 3 commences on the first 1st July after the bill receives Royal Assent. Incomplete dates Follow the general rules above when writing incomplete dates. Spell out the month in words if you need to leave out either the day or the year. There is an exception to the general rule for writing dates in body text. If you refer to the day but not the month, use an ordinal number. Don’t put the ordinal suffix (‘st’, ‘nd’, ‘rd’ or ‘th’) in superscript.

Superscript can cause problems for people who use screen readers. If you refer to the year only, use the full numerical year. Don't abbreviate it. Use shortened forms for dates when space is limited Only use abbreviations if space is limited – for example, in tables, illustrations, charts and notes. Ensure that it is obvious to users which days of the week or months you are referring to. The standard abbreviations for the days of the week are: Monday – 'Mon' or 'M' Tuesday – 'Tues' ('Tue') or 'Tu' Wednesday – 'Wed' or 'W' Thursday – 'Thurs' ('Thur','Thu') or 'Th' Friday – 'Fri' or 'F' Example The winning yacht usually reaches Hobart on 27 December. More than 1,700 jobs have been created since January 2018. Write this She will leave by the 20th. Not this She will leave by the 20 . th Write this 1945 Not this '45 45 Saturday – 'Sat' or 'Sa' Sunday – 'Sun' or 'Su'. The abbreviations in parentheses are alternatives for the standard abbreviation they follow. Only use the alternatives when the context ensures their meaning is clear. Note: Style Manual lists Monday as the first day of the week. This is consistent with the order of calendar days in a calendar week as defined in the international standard adopted by Australia. The standard abbreviations for the months are: January – 'Jan' February – 'Feb' March – 'Mar' April – 'Apr' May – retain as 'May' June – retain as 'June' or shorten to 'Jun' July – retain as 'July' or shorten to 'Jul' August – 'Aug' September – 'Sept' or shorten to 'Sep' October – 'Oct' November – 'Nov' December – 'Dec'. Only use the shortest form of days and months – 'F', 'M', 'N' and so on – in limited applications. An example is a time-series chart where the context and order allow users to understand the difference between each capital letter. Don't use a full stop after shortened days and months. No full stop is the correct Australian Government style for all abbreviations, acronyms and initialisms and contractions. Don't abbreviate dates in body text Avoid abbreviated words when writing dates in body text. Words written in full are usually easier to read and understand. Don't write dates as numerals unless space is limited Avoid writing dates entirely in numerals for general content. Use numeric dates only when space Write this The Labor Party called an urgent conference on Saturday 22 December. Not this The Labor Party called an urgent conference on Sat 22 Dec. is limited (such as in tables). Numeric dates can be confusing because their order and format differs between countries. Use Australia's conventional order of 'day month year' unless you are writing for users in a country that uses a different style. Use a forward slash in numeric dates Separate the numbers in a numeric date with an unspaced forward slash, using the format 'day/month/year'. This format uses single digits for single-digit days and months. Numeric dates can have 2-digit elements You can also use 2 digits for each element. Only use this style for the year: in financial data if it is clear which century you are referring to if users understand the order of the elements ('day month year' for Australian users). Whichever style you use for date formats, use it consistently. Full stops in computer applications Many computer systems and applications use a full stop in numeric dates. Use 2 digits for the day and month and 4 digits for the year: 'dd.mm.yyyy'. Write this 4/6/2021 [Australia: d/m/yyyy] 7/12/2020 Not this 12/7/2020 [USA: m/d/yyyy] 2021-06-04 [Sweden: yyyy-mm-dd] Example 07/12/20 30/06/22 Example 07.12.2020 10.09.2021 Don't use an apostrophe for decades Write decades with an 's' on the end. Don't use an apostrophe to show the plural. In more casual writing, you can use expressions such as 'the eighties'. You can also use an apostrophe to show the missing numerals in a decade – for example, 'In the '80s, all my jackets had shoulder pads.' Use words for spans of years in body text As a general rule, write spans of years in words, using 'to', 'from … to' or 'between … and'. Write the years out in full, not as abbreviations. Don't replace the word between the years with an en dash. Use en dashes for particular types of year spans Government content often includes spans of years. Some year spans are easier to read and understand if they contain an unspaced en dash rather than words. Correct 2010s 1980s Incorrect 2010's 1980's Write this the years 2015 to 2019 from 2015 to 2019 between 2015 and 2019 Not this the years 2015–2019 from 2015–2019 between 2015–2019 This is particularly true in content that contains multiple spans of years. In this case, using en dashes makes the content easier to scan. Use an unspaced en dash for a: financial year calendar year span of years in the titles of publications and programs span of years written in parentheses, such as for a term of office and the years of birth and death. Always include the phrases 'financial year', 'financial years', 'calendar year' or 'calendar years' unless the context makes the meaning clear. You can also introduce the relevant phrase at first mention and just write the year span, without the phrase, in later mentions. Finally, exercise your judgement. Consider using en dashes for year spans when using words makes the content harder to read. Always use unspaced en dashes in spans of years. Don't use forward slashes. Use words for spans of days and months in body text As a general rule, use 'from

… to’ and ‘between … and’ in spans of days and months. If it’s appropriate for your content, keep elements of the span together by inserting non-breaking Example This document includes expenditure and revenue estimates for the 2021–22 financial year. For comparison, the attachment contains estimates for 2020–21 and 2019–20. The agency measures injury hospitalisations and deaths over 2 calendar years. Data showed a small increase in injury hospitalisations for 2017–2018 and 2019–2020. Injury deaths declined over the earlier period, but showed a marked increase for 2019–2020. The library holds a reference copy of the Inclusion and diversity strategy 2022–24. Alfred Deakin was Prime Minister for much of Australia’s 2nd Parliament (1903–1906). Sidney Nolan (1917–1992) had 3 younger siblings. Write this National Road Safety Action Plan 2018–20 Australia’s energy consumption rose by 0.6% in 2018–19 and fell by 2.9% in 2019–20. Not this National Road Safety Action Plan 2018/20 Australia’s energy consumption rose by 0.6% in 2018/19 and fell by 2.9% in 2019/20. spaces between them. When you include a year, insert a non-breaking space between the day and month. A non- breaking space keeps the day and month together while the line break splits the date before the year. Use en dashes for spans of days and months when space is limited Only use en dashes for spans of days and months if you have limited space. This could be in display text, tables, lists or in social media posts. But also exercise your judgement – consider using en dashes if using words makes the content harder to read. The en dash is spaced when the day and month appear on both sides of the span. The en dash is unspaced when the month only appears at the end of the span. Refer to specific days, events and periods with capitals Treat specific days, public events and periods in history as proper nouns and use initial capitals. Use lower case for ‘the’ and any prepositions, unless they are capitalised as part of a proprietary name. Example Parliament is scheduled to sit from 3 to 21 December. [Non-breaking spaces between ‘3’, ‘to’, ‘21’ and ‘December’] We will do snap inspections between 6 and 8 September. [Non-breaking spaces between ‘6’, ‘and’, ‘8’ and ‘September’] The exhibition will run from 30 November to 23 February 2022. [Non-breaking space between ‘30’ and ‘November’ and between ‘23’ and ‘February’] Example Example Symposium Series 2025 Plain language: 3–5 March Accessible tables: 9–11 June Content design: 8–10 September In body text, use lower case for generic terms like the names of seasons –‘autumn’ – and astronomical events such as ‘equinox’ and ‘solstice’. Write ‘century’ and ‘centuries’ in lower case. Holidays and events Use initial capitals for all institutional holidays, religious days and public events. Follow the capitalisation of proprietary names. Periods and events of historical importance Use initial capitals for specific periods and events of historical importance, but not when you abbreviate them to a generic term. World wars There are 2 acceptable styles for referring to the world wars. Use either style, but be consistent in your content. Example New Year’s Day Good Friday Ramadan Yom Kippur the City2Surf the AFL Grand Final Labour Day the Adelaide Festival Party In The Paddock 2024 Anzac Day [‘Anzac’ stands for Australian and New Zealand Army Corps, but only takes an initial capital. The acronym appears in legislation with an initial capital and this has become the commonly-used form.] Example the Renaissance the Bronze Age the French Revolution, the revolution the Battle of Long Tan, the battle Example First World War, Second World War Use 2 non-breaking spaces to keep each name together on one line of text. Write ‘World War I’ and ‘World War II’ with roman numerals. The accepted way to write most roman numerals is by typing letters of the alphabet. Use a capital ‘i’ – I – for the world wars. The Style Manual acknowledges that the house styles of some government agencies require the use of the arabic numerals ‘1’ and ‘2’. User research will always guide an agency’s style choices. Our recommendation to use roman numerals comes from corpus evidence. Shortened forms for world wars In content with many mentions of the world wars, you might decide to use a shortened form. Write the name of the war out in full the first time you use it. Include the shortened form in parentheses immediately afterwards and use the shortened form from then on. Use roman numerals in the shortened form. Eras and periods Use initial capitals for the actual name of a geological era or period but not for broad historical and cultural times. Centuries Use numerals, not words, for centuries. This is an exception to the rule for ordinal numbers. Write ‘century’ and ‘centuries’ in lower case. Don’t use shortened forms, such as 18C or C18, unless you have limited space. Don’t use superscript for the ordinal suffix. World War I, World War II [With roman numerals] Example The Second World War (WWII) started in 1939. Many Australians died in WWII. World War I (WWI) started in 1914. Many Australians enlisted for service in WWI. Example the Lower Jurassic period the Mesozoic era the colonial era baroque ornamentation Use CE and BCE to represent the common era (CE) and the time before the common era (BCE). There is no

‘year 0’ in this system. The years progress from 1 BCE to 1 CE. Write ‘CE’ and ‘BCE’ without full stops and with a non-breaking space separating them from the year or century. Seasons and seasonal events Use lower case for the seasons and recurrent seasonal events. Use numerals for times of day In most documents, numerals give a clearer expression of time. Write times of day using numerals, especially when you need to convey precise times. Write this the 18th century in the 2nd and 3rd centuries a 19th-century writer an 8th-century monastery Not this the eighteenth century in 2C and 3C a nineteenth-century writer an eighth-century monastery an 8 -century monastery th Example 44 BCE 1452 CE the 3rd century BCE the 3rd century CE Example winter summer solstice Use a colon between the hours and minutes. The use of a colon as the separator, rather than a full stop, reflects a shift in contemporary Australian usage. A colon ensures that the time isn’t confused with a decimal number. For example, ‘10.50’ can be read as ‘10 and a half’ as well as ‘50 minutes past 10’. Screen reader users will probably hear ‘10.50’ as ‘10 point 5’. Times using ‘am’ and ‘pm’ The initialisms ‘am’ and ‘pm’ come from the Latin phrases ante meridiem (before noon) and post meridiem (after noon). Write ‘am’ and ‘pm’ in lower case. Separate the numbers and the initialism with a non-breaking space. Don’t use ‘am’ and ‘pm’ with words that duplicate their meaning, for example ‘morning’ and ‘afternoon’. You can use 2 zeros to show the full hour, but they aren’t essential. Use 2 zeros if that is consistent with other expressions of time in your content, such as in running sheets. Noon, midday and midnight Use ‘noon’, ‘midday’ or ‘midnight’ instead of ‘12 am’ or ‘12 pm’. This makes it easier for people to understand the time. Example The bus leaves at 8:22 am. The broadcast will run from 9:45 am to 11:45 am. Correct Please respond by 10 am tomorrow. Let’s meet at 6:30 pm. Incorrect Please respond by 10 am tomorrow morning. Let’s meet at 6:30 pm in the evening. Example 9 pm 9:00 pm Write this Write ‘o’clock’ only when you quote someone directly or transcribe a recording. In these situations, use numerals and the word ‘o’clock’. The 24-hour clock Use the 24-hour clock if it helps people understand your content. This is important when referring to times in these contexts: travel certain scientific fields the armed services content written for countries using the 24-hour clock. The 24-hour clock is also useful in content where space is limited. This is because it uses fewer characters than times with ‘am’ and ‘pm’. For this reason, it is often used in timetables and schedules. This system numbers the hours from 00:00 hours (midnight) to 23:59. It always uses at least 4 digits. It can have 6 digits if seconds are included: The first 2 digits are the hours. The next 2 digits are the minutes. The last 2 digits are the seconds, if you include them. Always use a ‘leading zero’ for hours under 10 – for example, write ‘05:30’ not ‘5:30’. Use a colon to separate the hours, minutes and seconds in the 24-hour clock. Don’t add ‘am’ or ‘pm’ to times written in 24-hour clock format. We have extended the closing date to midnight Friday 7 October 2022. Not this We have extended the closing date to 12 am Friday 7 October 2022. Example ‘The minister is speaking at about 10 o’clock,’ they said. Example 00:45 [12:45 am] 07:38 [7:38 am] 23:18 [11:18 pm] 23:59:17 [11:59:17 pm – includes hours, minutes and seconds] Some government agencies that produce technical and scientific content don’t use a colon for the 24-hour clock – for example, 2300 and 0430. This is the ‘basic format’ used for international communication. If space is limited and you use the 24-hour clock in general content, we recommend inserting a colon for clarity. This is the ‘extended format’ used for international communication. Time zones You might need to define which time zone you are referring to. Time zones are usually written with the 24-hour clock. The main Australian zones are: ACST (Australian Central Standard Time) ACDT (Australian Central Daylight saving Time) AEST (Australian Eastern Standard Time) AEDT (Australian Eastern Daylight saving Time) AWST (Australian Western Standard Time) LHST (Lord Howe Standard Time) LHDT (Lord Howe Daylight Time). Daylight saving time is not observed in the Northern Territory, Queensland and Western Australia. There are also time zones for some Australian external territories. Coordinated Universal Time Coordinated Universal Time (UTC) is a time standard used as the basis for regulating world timekeeping. UTC expresses the unadjusted local time at 0° longitude. It is not adjusted for daylight saving. Write this 06:45 23:18 Not this 06:45 am 23:18 pm Example The meeting will commence at 15:30 AEDT on 17 November 2022. Local standard time at longitudes around the world is represented by an offset to UTC. UTC is based on International Atomic Time (TAI), which is a weighted average of atomic clocks located around the world, including in Australia. TAI does not take into account changes in the earth’s rotation, so leap seconds are occasionally added to UTC. UTC is the standard and legal reference for times of day in Australia. The UTC(AUS) standard is maintained by the Australian Government’s National Measurement Institute. Time zones are written as positive or negative offsets to

UTC. Write the initialism ‘UTC’, followed by ‘+’ or ‘−’, followed by the time offset to UTC in 24-hour system format. Use en dashes for spans of time when space is limited Only use en dashes for time spans if you have limited space. This could be in display text, tables, lists or in social media posts. But also exercise your judgement – consider using en dashes if using words makes the content harder to read. The spacing of the en dash depends on the elements of the span. Use an unspaced en dash: if the ‘am’ or ‘pm’ appears only at the end of the span for spans of time in the 24-hour clock format. Use a spaced en dash: when ‘am’ or ‘pm’ appears on both sides of the span if ‘noon’, ‘midday’ or ‘midnight’ appears in the span. Example During winter, the time in Sydney is UTC+10:00. São Paulo is in the Brasília Time Zone which is UTC−03:00. Example Soccer training this Sat: 8–9 am Available appointment times are: 08:00–08:15 13:30–13:45 16:45–17:00 Help desk opening hours: Monday to Thursday: 7 am – 4 pm Friday: 9 am – midday Don’t combine words and the en dash. Follow the manual’s number rules for duration When expressing duration (lengths of time) in body text, follow Style Manual rules about choosing words or numerals. This means writing the words ‘zero’ and ‘one’ and using numerals for ‘2’ and above. The rules also say to use the numerals ‘0’ and ‘1’ in specific situations. For duration, the specific situations are likely to be when: you compare numbers in a sentence a sentence contains a series of numbers. Write the words ‘zero’ and ‘one’ in sentences that don’t contain other numerals. Write the numerals ‘0’ and ‘1’ in sentences that contain numerals from 2 and above, or where all numbers show duration. Spell out the units of time: ‘hours’, ‘minutes’ and ‘seconds’. Use fractions written in words if users only need a general idea of values. Only use decimal numbers if they are the best way to explain what people need to know. But be aware that some people might not understand the decimal’s time value. For example, 1.25 hours is 1 hour 15 minutes, not 1 hour 25 minutes. It is usually better to avoid decimals and include the number and unit of time. Write this Closed 11 am – 2 pm. Not this Closed between 11 am – 2 pm. Example There are 7 minutes and 30 seconds remaining. [Numerals for 2 and above] The hearing adjourned for 2 hours. [Numerals for 2 and above] The committee will break for lunch for one hour. [Words for zero and one] Although we allowed candidates 1 minute to answer each question, most took over 2 minutes. [Numerals when comparing duration] I noted faults at these time stamps: 0 minutes 45 seconds, 1 minute 4 seconds and 3 minutes 8 seconds. [Numerals for a series of numbers showing duration] Use shortened forms for units of time when space is limited It is usually better to spell out the units that measure time. This is particularly so in general content. Only use short forms if space is limited and the short forms are easy to identify correctly. If you need to abbreviate time, use the following units as shortened forms: second – s minute – min hour – h day – d week – wk month – mo year – y or yr (Choose one and use it consistently in your document.) The International System of Units – SI – is the international standard for measurement. The unit for second – symbol ‘s’ – is the SI base unit for time. Other time measures are not SI units – but ‘min’, ‘h’ and ‘d’ are used with ‘s’ and recognised as legal units of measurement in Australia. They are listed in Schedules 1 and 2 of the National Measurement Regulations. There are also commonly-used shortened forms for time measures – for example, ‘wk’ (week), ‘mo’ (month) and ‘yr’ or ‘y’ (year). These are not legal units of time, but are likely to be understood when used alongside other time units. If your expression contains one time measure only, insert a non-breaking space between the number and unit. Never add an ‘s’ to show a plural. Example The session finished about a quarter of an hour early. [Words for a fraction – gives a general idea of the duration] I clocked her at 15 minutes and 12 seconds. [Easier to understand than 15.2 minutes] They broke the record by 0.04 seconds. [Numeral – a decimal gives people the information that is appropriate in this context. But the words ‘… by 4 hundredths of a second’ might be clearer to some users.] Write this 35 s 15 min 6 h But don’t space a number and its unit when your expression contains more than one time measure. Use a non-breaking space between each time value instead. Never add an ‘s’ to show a plural. Data systems support specific (and usually several) shortened forms for units of time. For example, hours might be: h, hh, hr, hours, hrs. They might also be case-sensitive or case- insensitive. You will need to check system specifications. 5 d 3 wk 8 mo 2 y or 2 yr [There are non-breaking spaces between numbers and units. There is no ‘s’ to show plurals.] Not this 35s 6hs 15mins 5d 3wks 8mo 2y or 2yr [There are no non-breaking spaces between numbers and units. There is an ‘s’ after ‘min’, ‘hr’ and ‘wk’.] Write this 11min 12s 7h 8min 30s [There is no space between a number and its unit. There is a non-breaking space between each time measure in the expression.] Not this 11min12s [There is no (non-breaking) space between ‘11min’ and ‘12s’.] 11 min 12 s [There is a non-breaking space between ‘11’ and ‘min’ and between

‘12’ and ‘s’.] 7hs 8mins 30s [There is an ‘s’ after ‘7h’ and ‘8min’.] Avoid using ‘bi’ to mean either 2 or twice The prefix ‘bi’ can be confusing when used with expressions of time: ‘Bimonthly’ can mean either every 2 months or twice a month. ‘Biannual’ means twice a year. ‘Biennial’ means every 2 years. Instead of using these words, be clear about the frequency and period of time you mean. How to combine dates and times There is no fixed rule about the order of dates and times when combining them in body text. You can choose whether the date or the time should come first. The order doesn’t matter as long as the information is clear and the sentence flows logically. But make sure that: you follow the style rules for each element the time doesn’t come between the day and the date you use the same style throughout your document consistently. Combining dates and times when space is limited Use the same approach to combine the date and time when you have limited space. This might Write this We meet once every 2 years. Not this We meet biennially. Write this They will appear before the committee at 3 pm on Wednesday 7 August 2024. They will appear before the committee on Wednesday 7 August 2024 at 3 pm. [There is a non-breaking space between ‘3’ and ‘pm’, no comma after ‘Wednesday’, and a non-breaking space between ‘7’ and ‘August’.] Not this They will appear before the committee at Wednesday 3 pm on 7 August. [The time appears between day and date.] They will appear before the committee on Wednesday, 7 August at 3 pm. [There is a comma between day and date.] be in a table, social media post, or in a display or presentation context (display text). We always recommend using minimal punctuation, but exercise your judgement. A comma between the date and time can make information easier to scan if you haven't used a preposition like ‘at’ or ‘on’. You can also use shortened forms for the date. Only do this if you are sure users will understand what you mean. Meet standards for data systems and information interchange Follow international standards when writing dates and time: for international communication to transfer data between systems. The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) develops and publishes the international standard for dates and time format – the ISO 8601 series. Australia and New Zealand have adopted the international standard. The Australia – New Zealand standard is Date and time: representations for information interchange. It is published as the AS/NZS ISO 8601 series in 2 parts: Part 1: basic rules Part 2: extensions You can purchase copies of ISO 8601 and AS/NZS ISO 8601 from Standards Australia. Standards are voluntary International and Australian – New Zealand standards on dates and time are voluntary. The standards ensure that data systems and humans can exchange date and time information internationally and across time zones in a recognised format. A description of all the dates and times standards is beyond the scope of the Style Manual. Example Lunch and Learn: Financial security in the 1980s Friday 1 March at 12 midday 3rd floor seminar room Lunch and Learn: Financial security in the 1980s 12 midday, Friday 1 March 3rd floor seminar room Content Meetup Tue 23 Apr at 4 pm All welcome! We cover these standards from Part 1: basic rules: calendar date ordinal date local time of day combined calendar date and local time of day. We don’t cover Part 2: extensions. Basic and extended formats There are 2 format options for each standard: ‘basic format’ and ‘extended format’. Basic format does not have separators between units of dates and time. Avoid using basic format in body text. It is easy for computers to read but harder for humans. Extended format is also for computers, but it includes separators between units to make it easier for humans to read. We show both formats in our examples. Calendar date The standard sets out a descending order of year (4 digits), month (2 digits) and day (2 digits) for a complete representation of calendar date. The numbers can be unspaced (basic format) or separated by a hyphen (extended format). ISO format is becoming more common, especially in software. Ordinal date Ordinal dates are often used when transferring data between data systems. This is because they are easy for simple systems to read. Ordinal dates are not the same as ordinal numbers. Ordinal dates have 7 digits: The first 4 digits represent the year. The next 3 digits represent the day. This is the ISO standard. Some older systems might use 2 digits for the year, not 4. Days are numbered from 1 to 365 (366 for a leap year). For example, 20 September is the 263rd day of the year (264th in a leap year) and its 3 digits are 263. Example 20201207 [Calendar date, basic format] 2020-12-07 [Calendar date, extended format] The ordinal date can be unspaced (basic format) or separated by a hyphen (extended format). If you use dates in electronic data transfer, use basic format and don’t separate the numbers. If people, rather than a computer, will read the information, use extended format and insert a hyphen between the year and day. Local time of day The standard for a complete representation of local time of day starts with the letter ‘T’ followed by 2-digit numbers for the hour, minute and second. The numbers can be unspaced (basic format) or separated by a colon

(extended format). You can omit the ‘T’ if there’s no possibility of confusion. A ‘reduced precision’ time of 15 minutes after 7 pm in basic format – ‘1915’ – can easily be confused with the calendar year 1915. In these cases, it is better to write time of day as T1915 (basic format) or 19:15 (extended format). Note: The format for local time of day doesn’t allow for daylight saving. The format showing daylight saving includes the time shift between local time and Coordinated Universal Time. This is beyond the scope of the Style Manual. Combined date and local time of day Combine date and local time of day using the style standards set out above. Always use the letter ‘T’ between the date and time. The basic format for international communication is unspaced. The extended format uses hyphens for the date and colons for the time of day. Example Write 7 January 2023 as: 2023007 [The 4-digit form for the year, basic format] 23007 [The 2-digit form for the year, basic format]. Write 31 July 2020 as: 2020-213 [The 4-digit form for the (leap) year, extended format] 20-213 [The 2-digit form for the (leap) year, extended format]. Example 153020 [Local time of day, basic format – 15h 30m 20s, that is 20 seconds after 3:30 pm] 15:30:20 [Local time of day, extended format] Example Insert a non-breaking space correctly You can insert a non-breaking space using the Unicode character U+00A0. keyboard shortcut Ctrl+Shift+Spacebar in Word. Release notes The digital edition adds new content including rules and examples for: date spans time spans and lengths shortened forms Coordinated Universal Time combined dates and times. There is expanded guidance on standards for data systems and information interchange. The digital edition changes the punctuation used with expressions of dates and time. There are no full stops for shortened forms of months and days of the week. This is consistent with the new general rule for abbreviations. Unlike the sixth edition, but consistent with the Content Guide, the digital edition recommends using a colon rather than a full stop when expressing times. The Latin shortened forms, ‘am’ and ‘pm’ do not have punctuation. This is consistent with the sixth edition and the Content Guide. Consistent with the Content Guide, the digital edition recommends specifying noon or midnight for 12 o’clock (instead of using ‘am’ or ‘pm’). The recommendation to express a date span using a phrase, rather than an en dash, aligns with the Content Guide. Like the sixth edition, the digital edition recommends the use of non-breaking spaces between the day and month in dates. It differs from the sixth edition by recommending the use of a numeral with centuries. The digital edition recommends 2 acceptable styles for references to the world wars, while the sixth edition does not have an explicit rule. The Content Guide illustrated guidance, but did not have explicit advice, on the use of spacing for dates and time. The use of a space between time and ‘am’ or ‘pm’ is consistent with the sixth 20230811T121505 [Basic format – 11 August 2023 at 15 minutes and 5 seconds after midday.] 2023-08-11T12:15:05 [Extended format] 2023223T121505 [Ordinal date, basic format – same date and time as above] 2023-223T12:15:05 [Ordinal date, extended format] edition, but a departure from examples given in the Content Guide. About this page Evidence Australian Broadcasting Corporation (2024) ‘Wars’, The ABC style guide, ABC website, accessed 14 March 2024. Biotext Pty Ltd (2024) ‘Date and time systems’, Australian manual of style, AMOS website, accessed 4 January 2024. Bureau International des Poids et Mesures (BIPM) (n.d.) SI base unit: second (s), BIPM website, accessed 4 October 2023. Butterfield J (ed) (2015) Fowler’s dictionary of modern English usage, 4th edn, Oxford University Press, Oxford. 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