

<https://www.stylemanual.gov.au/accessible-and-inclusive-content/inclusive-language/age-diversity> Age diversity Refer to age only if it is necessary. Use respectful language and consistent style if age is relevant. If age is relevant, follow style conventions Question whether age is relevant. Avoid referring to a person's age or an age group if it's not relevant. If you need to mention age, follow style conventions: When the reference to age comes before a noun, punctuate it with hyphens. Unless the age reference begins a sentence, use numerals. Use respectful terms when you write about age Avoid characterising age references when it's not strictly relevant. Standalone words in everyday use, like 'old' and 'young', can carry bias or unintended Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples Age diversity Cultural and linguistic diversity Gender and sexual diversity People with disability Writing and designing content Grammar, punctuation and conventions Content types Structuring content Referencing and attribution Example A 39-year-old man faces court today on several charges. You can withdraw your super once you're 65, even if you're still working. Fourteen-year-old Jasmine Greenwood is the youngest Australian on the Paralympic Games squad. subtext. Words that carry stereotypes, for example 'elderly', are not acceptable. When an age or age range is relevant to a fact, you can use the term 'people' with the age reference. Inclusivity requirements Use respectful and inclusive language that talks to the person, not their difference. It's the law. Commonwealth laws include: Age Discrimination Act 2004 Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 Public Service Act 1999. Older people The term 'older people' is acceptable. Don't use the term 'old people'. It is disrespectful. Choose the term that best fits the context. Young people The most neutral term is 'young people'. 'Youth' is a gender-neutral term and is also acceptable. Be careful using the plural 'youths'. This is often used to refer to male youths only and may carry other connotations. Example Survey data showed people aged 15 to 17 years were the highest proportion of internet users. Write this older people retired people or retirees older Australians senior Australians or seniors Not this old people Example More older Australians are using smartphones to do their business. Depending on the context, you can use the words 'adolescents', 'children' and 'babies'. 'Kids' can be suitable, depending on the content's voice and tone. Refer to level of study instead of age Refer to students by the level of study they are doing, not by their age, unless the age is relevant. Tertiary students can be many ages. Refer to them simply as 'students' or, in the case of PhD students, as 'PhD candidates'. Avoid using 'mature-age student' unless it is relevant to what you are writing. Release notes The digital edition includes a section on age diversity. It has more examples of appropriate terms to refer to age than either the sixth edition or the Content Guide. Like the sixth edition, the digital edition recommends using 'youth' as a neutral term. The Content Guide recommended against using the term 'youth'. Write this young people youth Not this junior or juniors Example The eSafety Commissioner resources for kids and young people are tailored to different reading ages. Children in Defence families can need support through a move. Example preschool students high-school students postgraduate students About this page References Australian Human Rights Commission (n.d.) The power of oldness, AHRC, accessed 22 May 2020. Last updated This page was updated Monday 6 September 2021. <https://www.stylemanual.gov.au/accessible-and-inclusive-content/inclusive-language/cultural-and-linguistic-diversity> Cultural and linguistic diversity Australians have different cultural backgrounds and speak many languages. Use inclusive language that respects this diversity. Speak to the person, not their difference Use inclusive language. You can use the general term 'multicultural communities' to write about people from different cultural backgrounds. People writing for government sometimes use the term 'culturally and linguistically diverse' (CALD) communities. Avoid using the acronym unless you're speaking to a specialist audience. Inclusivity requirements Use respectful and inclusive language that talks to the person, not their difference. In Australia, it's the law. Commonwealth laws include: Racial Discrimination Act 1975 Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 Public Service Act 1999. Mention people's cultural affinity or identity only when you need to. Australians speak many different languages and have different cultural and religious beliefs. Each culture has its own values and beliefs. You can be sensitive to these differences when you write, through doing user research. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples Age diversity Cultural and linguistic diversity Gender and sexual diversity People with disability Writing and designing content Grammar, punctuation and conventions Content types Structuring content Referencing and attribution Avoid using words such as 'ethnic Australians' or 'ethnic groups'. This can imply that migrant heritage or migrant status is unusual. Refer to people living in Australia as 'Australians' The meaning of the word 'Australian' can vary in different contexts. It could mean anyone who lives in Australia. Legally, it could mean only people who are Australian citizens. Depending on the type of content, you might need to explain what you mean by the term. For example, 'Australian students' could refer to all students in Australia including international students. Mention heritage, cultural or other national identity only if it's necessary. Consult guidance on how to refer to nationalities, peoples and places outside of Australia. When you specify a dual identity or other heritage as an adjective, connect the reference and the term 'Australian' with an en dash. To refer to people who have recently arrived in Australia, use the words: 'migrants' 'immigrants' 'new arrivals'. These words don't say anything about a person's culture or language: they are neutral. Don't use these words once people have settled and become Australian citizens. They suggest a temporary or marginal status. Use the terms 'given name' and 'family name' Many naming systems around the world differ from those used in English-speaking countries. Given names come before family names in English-speaking countries. In some Asian cultures, people write the family name first. Write this The Japanese–Australian community takes part in the Summer Festival in Melbourne. [Dual identity expressed as an adjective] Japanese Australians take part in the Summer Festival in Melbourne. [Dual identity expressed as a noun phrase] Not this Many Japanese take part in the Summer Festival in Melbourne. [Does not convey dual identity of community or individuals] Example This is not always obvious when the names are unfamiliar. Sometimes, the owners of names foresee the possible confusion for English speakers. They reverse the order in an English-speaking context. When you ask people their name, don't ask for 'Christian name', 'first name', 'forename' or 'surname'. These terms all take for granted the European conventions and order of names. Instead, ask for their: given name family name. Some people state a preferred name instead of their given name. This could be different from their legal name, so be clear about which you need. Other countries have variations of name order. For example: In Indonesia, some people have only one name. They might use this in Australia for both their given name and family name to conform with Western conventions. In Myanmar, names are not divided into given and family names. These names keep their full form instead. For more on this rule, refer to guidance

on personal names. Release notes The digital edition updates inclusive language guidance around cultural and linguistic diversity. It recommends against using the term 'ethnic', as it is now out of favour. The Content Guide had brief information on the 'Accessibility and inclusivity' page. About this page Last updated This page was updated Monday 6 September 2021. Wong Hei Takeshi Noboyuki Example Hei Wong Noboyuki Takeshi <https://www.stylemanual.gov.au/accessible-and-inclusive-content/inclusive-language/gender-and-sexual-diversity> Gender and sexual diversity Inclusive language conveys gender equality and is gender neutral. Respect people's gender and sexual identity with pronoun choice, job titles and personal titles. Use gender-neutral language Use terms that recognise gender equality. Avoid terms that discriminate on the basis of a person's gender or sexual identity. Our use of language reflects changes in society. There is wide agreement about using language to support equality between all genders.

Inclusivity requirements It is unlawful to discriminate against a person under the Sex Discrimination Act 1984. This discrimination relates to their: sex marital or relationship status actual or potential pregnancy sexual orientation gender identity intersex status. It is also unlawful to discriminate against a person because they are breastfeeding. Pronoun choice Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples Age diversity Cultural and linguistic diversity Gender and sexual diversity People with disability Writing and designing content Grammar, punctuation and conventions Content types Structuring content Referencing and attribution Learn the user's pronoun. If it's not clear and you can't ask them, choose gender-neutral pronouns. The singular 'they' is gender-neutral. It avoids specifying a person's gender. You can use 'they' or 'them' when you would otherwise use a singular personal pronoun such as: 'he' 'she' 'him' 'her'. You can also use 'themselves' or 'themselves' instead of 'himself' or 'herself'. 'Themselves' is an extension of using 'they' for a single person. The use of gender-neutral pronouns to refer to a person of unknown gender has a long history. Usage now covers people who either: don't wish to identify as a particular gender identify as non-binary or gender-fluid. There are many ways to avoid using gender-specific pronouns. Avoid gender-specific job titles Avoid using job titles that end in '-man' or '-woman'. Avoid using the traditional terms for jobs that end in '-man'. Example You must provide copies of the application to your referees. [Use the second-person pronouns ('you' and 'your') with direct tone and active voice.] Candidates must provide copies of the application to their referees. [Use a plural pronoun. The pronoun 'their' relates to a plural subject 'candidates'.] Every candidate must provide copies of the application to referees. [Leave the pronoun out altogether.] Write this police officer minister of religion firefighter supervisor Not this You should also avoid job terms that specify women. Gender is not relevant to a person's profession or title in general. Use gender-specific adjectives only when gender is relevant. For example, an economic analysis might discuss 'female-dominated' or 'male-dominated' industries. Titles 'Ms' and 'Mx' 'Ms' is now widely used instead of 'Mrs' or 'Miss'. It does not disclose marital status. 'Mx' refers to non-binary people and those who do not wish to be referred to by their gender. Use 'Mx' when a person indicates this is what they prefer, but not otherwise. Forms and surveys can ask for people to specify gender. Don't ask for a title or gender identity unless the form is designed to collect this information. For example, a form can ask for a person's given and family name. It does not need to ask for their preferred title. Check for changes in language use Take care in areas where language is changing. Follow the rule that people have the right to identify their sexual orientation and gender identity as they choose. The discussion is still evolving about words for other aspects of gender and sexual diversity. policeman clergyman fireman foreman Write this actor host waiter flight attendant Not this actress hostess waitress stewardess Gender and sexual diversity terms It can help to know the meanings of words people use about gender and sexual diversity. This includes sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and sex characteristics. 'Gender' is about social and cultural differences and identity. 'Gender' and 'sex' both mean 'the state of being male or female' but are often used in different ways. 'Gender expression' is the way a person expresses their gender. 'Gender identity' is about who a person feels themselves to be. It refers to the way a person identifies or expresses their masculine or feminine traits. 'Gender-queer' and 'non-binary' refer to people who don't identify as either male or female. They may identify as both or neither. 'Gender-fluid' refers to people who do not identify with a fixed gender. 'Intersex' refers to people with innate genetic, hormonal or physical sex characteristics that do not conform to medical norms for female or male bodies. 'Sex' refers to the legal status that was initially determined by sex characteristics observed at birth. 'Sex characteristics' are a person's physical sex features, such as their chromosomes, hormones and reproductive organs. 'Sexual orientation' is a person's romantic or sexual attraction to another person, such as heterosexual, gay, lesbian or bisexual. 'Sexuality' includes biological sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, pregnancy and reproduction. 'Transgender' means people whose gender identity is different from that given to them at birth. These are not the only ways to use these words. The definitions highlight some of the main points and distinctions. For more advice on these terms, go to: the Human Rights Commission the Australian Institute of Family Studies Intersex Human Rights Australia. LGBTI and LGBTIQ+ communities The term LGBT arose in the 1990s to refer to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people. The term has since expanded to LGBTI, to include intersex people. LGBTI is now widely accepted and used. Recently, the term has expanded again to LGBTIQ, LGBTIQ+ or LGBTIQA+. The 'Q' refers to the queer community or to people questioning their gender identity. The 'A' refers to asexual people. The newer terms are used less frequently. The use of '+' represents other sexual identities. Australian Government agencies use both LGBTI and LGBTIQ+.

'SOGIESC' is a term writers use when discussing law and policy. It refers to 'sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and sex characteristics'. This term replaces the earlier term 'SOGII'. It referred to 'sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex' issues. Release notes The digital edition contains new guidance on inclusive language around gender and sexual diversity. It adds advice on the distinctions between gender, sex and sexuality, on LGBTIQ+ communities and on the use of the title 'Mx'. The sixth edition focused on inclusive treatment of the sexes. It gave options for avoiding gender-specific pronouns, and noted the singular 'they' had acquired a 'special value' in the context of inclusive language. The digital edition goes further: it suggests using the singular 'they' as a gender-neutral pronoun when avoiding gender-specific pronouns. This is consistent with advice that was in the Content Guide. The Content Guide had advice on avoiding gendered pronouns, on transgender and intersex issues and on gender and sexuality. About this page References Attorney-General's Department (2015) Australian Government guidelines on the recognition of sex and gender, AGD website, accessed 25 May 2020. Australian Bureau of Statistics (2018) 'Sex and gender diversity on the

2016 Census', Census of population and housing: reflecting Australia – stories from the Census, 2016, catalogue number 2071.0, accessed 22 May 2020. Australian Human Rights Commission (2015) Sex discrimination, AHRC website, accessed 25 May 2020. Australian Human Rights Commission (2019) About sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex status discrimination, AHRC website, accessed 25 May 2020. Child Family Community Australia, LGBTIQ+ communities: glossary of common terms, CFCA resource sheet, Australian Institute of Family Studies website, accessed 25 May 2020. Australian Press Council (2019) Advisory guideline: reporting on persons with diverse sexual orientation, gender identity, and sex characteristics, APC, accessed 25 May 2020. Australian Public Service Commission (2018) Lexicon of gender, APSC website, accessed 25 May 2020. ReachOut (2019) Understanding what it means to be intersex, ReachOut.com, accessed 25 May 2020. Last updated This page was updated Monday 15 July 2024. <https://www.stylemanual.gov.au/accessible-and-inclusive-content/inclusive-language/people-disability>

People with disability Disability does not define people. Use inclusive language that respects diversity. Focus on the person, not the disability. Mention disability only when it's relevant to the content. When you are writing about people with disability, focus on the person. Engage with people through user research. User research can uncover whether an individual or community preference is: person-first language identity-first language. Use person-first language for Australian Government content, unless user research says otherwise. Be responsive if you get feedback on the language you've used. It can guide user research around language that respects individual or community preferences. Accessibility and inclusivity requirements Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples Age diversity Cultural and linguistic diversity Gender and sexual diversity People with disability Writing and designing content Grammar, punctuation and conventions Content types Structuring content Referencing and attribution Example people with disability [Person-first language] disabled person [Identity-first language] You must design accessible content to meet the Digital Service Standard: Criterion 1. Understand user needs Criterion 9. Make it accessible You must make all government content accessible to people with disability. Use respectful and inclusive language that talks to the person – not their difference. Commonwealth laws include: Disability Discrimination Act 1992 Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 Use respectful language Respectful language acknowledges peoples' preferences to identify with a particular community or characteristic. Terms should not identify people without an understanding of personal preference. For example, many people who are deaf or hard of hearing may identify as 'Deaf' – a cultural group with a different first language. Avoid using the disability as an adjective that defines the person, unless that is their preference. Use the word 'disability' as an uncountable noun. Use person-first language when you don't understand individual or community preferences. Describe the person and then the characteristic. Write this person with disability person who is deaf or hard of hearing person who is blind or has low vision person living with disability person with mental illness, person with psychosocial disability, person with a psychiatric condition person with intellectual disability, person with developmental disability person with learning disability person with cognitive disability person who uses a wheelchair or mobility device person with reduced mobility person with physical disability accessible parking You can cause offence when you do not use respectful language, even if it is well intentioned. Don't say a person is inspirational only because of their disability. Don't write about people as if they are heroes or victims. Avoid euphemisms and made-up terms, such as 'differently abled' and 'handicapable'. People with disability could consider these types of terms condescending. When you are making comparisons, write: 'person without disability' – rather than 'able-bodied' 'sighted person' for someone who is not blind 'hearing person' for someone who is not deaf 'neurotypical' for someone who is not autistic. The social model of disability The traditional view of disability has been a medical model. In this approach, disability is a health condition for health professionals to treat, fix or cure. Many people with disability prefer another approach: the social model of disability. This is a way to understand how people with disability interact with their environment and others in society. The social model is about shifting the problem from individual impairments to the social environment that people operate in. Not this person with a disability handicapped person handicapped parking crippled invalid incapacitated mad mute deaf and dumb deaf person blind person person without sight From this viewpoint, disability arises from the way people with disability interact with the world. They encounter physical barriers, digital barriers and barriers of attitudes and communication. These block their participation in society. The social model recognises the reality of a disability and its effects. By contrast, the medical model looks at impairments that create a medical condition. The Australian Federation of Disability Organisations has more information on the social model of disability. Advocates of the social model of disability focus on the barriers to participating in society faced by people living with disability. People who are blind or have low vision 'Legal blindness' and being 'legally blind' have specific definitions. In government use, these terms relate a person's sight loss to eligibility criteria. Many people who are legally blind do have some vision. The terms 'blind' and 'low vision' include people with no sight and people who have some sight. A person who is totally blind does not perceive light and has no usable vision. A person who has low vision has some ability to see. Wearing regular glasses will not improve their vision. A person who is blind or who has low vision might use screen reading software, Braille displays, or screen magnification technology to access content. People who are blind might use other ways to communicate using hearing or touch. Acceptable terms include 'person who is blind' and 'person who has low vision'. Don't write 'the blind' or 'person without sight'. People who are deaf or hard of hearing The terms 'deaf' and 'hard of hearing' include people with no hearing or limited hearing. They might have difficulty using audio content. If you are providing audio content, make the information available in other ways – such as captions and a transcript. The World Federation of the Deaf disapproves of the term 'hearing impaired' as it describes people as if they have a deficiency. Refer to someone with hearing loss as a 'person who is deaf or hard of hearing'. Some people who are deaf or hard of hearing use the Australian sign language, Auslan. Some people who are deaf or hard of hearing view themselves as members of a community and language group. This community calls itself the Deaf community, and encourages others to do the same. The Deaf community uses the term with a capital letter 'D' as a mark of its identity. Members of the Deaf community might still use deaf with a lowercase 'd' to refer to their hearing. People with cognitive disability People with cognitive disability include people with intellectual disability, acquired brain injury or dementia. 'Cognitive disability' is a broad term that covers a range of conditions. Genes, illnesses, injury, physical factors or environmental factors may cause cognitive disability.

Creating content in more than one format, such as making an Easy Read version, can help some people with cognitive disability access information. Follow W3C updates on making content usable for people with cognitive and learning disabilities. People with learning disability People with 'learning disability' might have difficulty planning and difficulty processing new information. The causes are neurological. They are difficult to address and can be lifelong. Some Australian support groups and educators use 'learning difficulty' and 'learning disability' for all people who have difficulty learning a basic academic skill. Learning disability is not the same as a learning difficulty, which can be overcome with intensive teaching or training. Learning difficulties are not generally considered to be disability. Examples of learning disabilities are dyslexia (reading), dyscalculia (mathematics) and various auditory processing disorders (sound and verbal instructions). Having a learning disability is not related to intelligence. People with mental illness 'Mental illness' is a broad term that covers many different conditions that influence the way people act, think, feel or see the world. The term 'psychosocial disability' is specific to some people with severe mental health conditions. It covers both psychological and social factors. It focuses on restrictions on participating in society. Not every mental illness involves a psychosocial disability. Some ways of talking about mental illness can cause offence. Use people-first language when you refer to a person with mental illness. Describe the person as 'having' mental illness, just as you would for any other illness or injury. Don't describe the person as 'being' a disease. Write this people with mental illness people with mental ill-health Not this the mentally ill Write this Rupert has schizophrenia. Mental illness sometimes attracts social stigma. This stigma may prevent people from acknowledging their mental health conditions and talking about them with others. There is advice about the best language to use for mental illness in guides from the Australian Human Rights Commission and Everymind. Neurodiversity The term 'neurodiversity' refers to the idea that neurological differences, such as autism and ADHD, sit within the normal spectrum of human variation. Neurological differences are not always a disability. Advocates refer to the diverse range of differences in the brain and behaviour. They say societal barriers are the main factors disabling people. Neurodiversity was first used for people on the autism spectrum. It is now also applied to other conditions, such as dyslexia. Release notes The digital edition revises and expands inclusive terminology on the topic of people with disability. It includes a new section on the 'social model of disability'. The sixth edition related inclusive language around disability to the legal requirements for accessibility, and briefly mentioned the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG). Contextual references to those guidelines appear throughout the digital edition. The Content Guide had summary information about complying with WCAG and on inclusive language. The digital edition will continue to update terms on inclusive language to reflect contemporary usage. About this page Evidence Alice has depression. Lu has bipolar disorder. Not this Rupert is a schizophrenic. Alice is a depressive. Lu is bipolar. Australian Network on Disability (2019) Inclusive language, AND website, accessed 25 August 2020. Disabled People's Organisations Australia (2020) Terminology, DPOA website, accessed 25 August 2020. International Day of People with Disability (2018) Respectful communication, IDPwD website, accessed 25 August 2020. People with Disability Australia (2018) Social model of disability, PWDA website, accessed 25 August 2020. PWDA (2021) Language guide, PWDA website, accessed 17 March 2022. References Australian Disability Clearinghouse on Education and Training (n.d.) 'Learning difficulty versus learning disability', Specific learning disability, ADCET website, accessed 6 November 2019. Australian Inclusive Publishing Initiative (2019) Inclusive publishing in Australia: an introductory guide, AIPI website, accessed 21 May 2020. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (September 2019) People with disability in Australia, AIHW, accessed 25 August 2020. Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (New York, 13 December 2006) [2008], UNTS 2515 p. 3. Inclusion Australia (n.d.) What is intellectual disability?, Inclusion Australia website, accessed 10 September 2020. Vision Australia (n.d.) Blindness and vision loss, Vision Australia website, accessed 22 May 2020. Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability (December 2019), Issues paper: health care for people with cognitive disability, Disability Royal Commission website, accessed 3 September 2020. Worldwide Web Consortium (2020) Making content usable for people with cognitive and learning disabilities [working draft], W3C website, accessed 27 August 2020. W3C (2017) Diverse abilities and barriers, W3C website, accessed 25 August 2020. Last updated This page was updated Wednesday 5 June 2024.