English
Style Guide

Stellenbosch
UNIVERSITY
IYUNIVESITHI
UNIVERSITEIT

forward together
sonke siya phambili
saam vorentoe

Why a style guide?

The SU Style Guide is intended as an accessible resource on language usage for the Stellenbosch University (SU) community. The Guide aims to ensure that the language we use for the content and communication we provide on behalf of the University is consistent with the high standards of the University and consonant with our vision and identity as a university. The Style Guide therefore represents guidelines and house rules on the use of the English language rather than a comprehensive set of universal grammar rules, and the preferences reflected in the Style Guide are those preferred by the University. The Style Guide should be used in combination with the new Brand Toolkit, which gives more guidance on the new, unified SU brand in terms of how we present the University visually and how we speak of the University.

Language is wondrously multifaceted, which makes the context in which one would use a word or apply a rule or preference important. Therefore we provide ample examples in the Style Guide. We have also included tips where they seemed relevant. The authoritative sources we used in compiling the Guide are provided in footnotes where required. You will find the full list of works consulted at the end of the publication together with a list for further reading.

The Guide starts off summarising the most important language conventions in English to follow when writing on behalf of the University in Section 1. This section could become a personal style sheet and a trusted companion when creating SU content. The next two sections reflect more on the how of the writing we do: how to use plain language principles to reach an intended audience, and how to make science-related information engaging and relevant to help our readers care about what we write.

The next seven sections dive into the nitty gritty of English: here one can get guidance on topics such as using capitals, punctuation, abbreviations, addresses, numbers and bulleted lists.

We have also included a section on general English grammar challenges. The subsequent section, Legislation and case law, gives indispensable guidance on legal writing for lay people, from writing the name of an act correctly and looking up an act name to deciphering case law citations. The Guide concludes with a section on technical tips and covers topics as diverse as using track changes in MS Word and using the 'find' function in a PDF.

In terms of multilingual language support, we direct users of the Guide to two resources maintained by the SU Language Centre:

- the Trilingual terminology portal for subject-specific terminology

- the online List of Afrikaans-English translation equivalents, which may be downloaded as a PDF document from the Language Centre's Language resources galore web page. You will find the list under Subject-specific resources > Stellenbosch University on this page, which also offers convenient links to other language resources and external terms.

The Style Guide is a working document that is updated when and if necessary. The Corporate Communication and Marketing Division is the custodian of the publication, and it was compiled in consultation with the SU Language Centre. Please feel free to forward your comments, suggestions and enquiries to content@sun.ac.za.

Contents

Section 1

Language conventions

1. Language conventions

This is your go-to section for guidance on language use at Stellenbosch University (SU), presentation and some specific conventions to help you ensure that your internal and external communication on behalf of the University is consistent. Use this section as your personal style sheet.

1.1 The English we use at the University and our go-to sources

SA English follows the conventions of UK English, which is why Stellenbosch University uses UK English as opposed to US English. If you are unsure about spelling, grammar rules or editorial guidelines, please consult:

the online *Oxford English Dictionary (OED)*;[1]	*New Hart's Rules: the Oxford Style Guide* (Hart's);[2]	the open-access online *Collins English Dictionary*[3] (this dictionary is very user friendly and offers useful examples, but the OED prevails over the Collins, especially when it comes to spelling); and	the online *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*[4] (this dictionary leans toward US English, but contains rich, helpful content).

These sources (except *Collins*, which is open-access) are available electronically to SU staff and students through the SU Library. If the first three sources are silent on an issue, try *Fowler's Modern English Usage*[5] and the *Chicago Manual of Style*[6] to help you find your way. The Language Centre's Language Service is also happy to assist.

1 *Oxford English Dictionary.* 2021. Oxford: Oxford University Press. [Online]. Available at https://www-oed-com.ez.sun.ac.za/. The online edition is the most current and updated version, and each entry indicates when the last modifications were made.
2 Waddingham, A (ed.). 2014. *New Hart's Rules: the Oxford Style Guide.* 2nd edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press..
3 *Collins English Dictionary.* 2021. Collins. [Online]. Available at https://www.collinsdictionary.com/.

4 *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English.* 2014. 6th edition. Essex: Pearson Education. [Online]. Available at https://www-longman-hat-co-za.ez.sun.ac.za/?l-en.
5 Burchfield, RW (ed.). 2004. *Fowler's Modern English Usage.* 3rd revised edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
6 *The Chicago Manual of Style.* 2017. 17th edition. Chicago: Chicago University Press.

Spellcheck

Make use of the spellcheck technology at your disposal. Please ensure that:

your MS Word language setting is on English (UK); and
you check your language setting each time you activate the spellchecker because MS Word tends to return to its overall default setting of English (US).

NOTE: Don't use the English (South Africa) option that MS Word offers. It could lead to inconsistencies, since SA English sometimes recognises both US and UK variants.

1.2 Spelling conventions

1.2.1 Choose 'ise'

In some instances, words have more than one correct spelling, but the University may nonetheless prefer a certain form. One such case is verbs that end in '-ise' and their related nouns and adjectives. For example, although both 'organise' and 'organize' are acceptable spellings in UK English, SU prefers the '-ise' spelling ('organise', 'organisation' and 'organisational') because this is more common in SA English.

Having said that, if an organisation's official name is written according to US spelling conventions, do not change the name in your writing, but retain that spelling.

✓ World Health Organization

✗ World Health Organisation

1.2.2 Choose the UK spelling variant

Since the University uses UK spelling, please keep in mind the differences between UK and US spelling, and choose the British English variant.

Some common examples are the UK '-our' spelling instead of the US '-or' (✓ 'colour' and 'honour'; ✗ 'color' and 'honor') and the UK '-re' spelling for nouns instead of the US '-er' (✓ 'centre' and 'metre'; ✗ 'center' and 'meter').

In some instances, the difference between UK and US spelling is unimportant, such as 'enquiry' (UK) and 'inquiry' (US), or 'towards' (UK) and 'toward' (US). Other instances of US spelling, however, need to be avoided. Examples of these are provided below.

Differences between UK and US spelling

✓ UK English		✗ US English	
ae or oe	haemoglobin leukaemia foetus oestrogen BUT 'fetus' is used in technical texts	e	hemoglobin leukemia fetus estrogen
c	sceptic mollusc	k	skeptic mollusk
e	grey	a	gray
-ence (noun) -ense (verb) Noun–verb distinction	defence, offence, pretence, licence (noun) licence (n) vs. license (v) practice (n) vs. practise (v)	-ense	defense, offense, pretense, license license (noun and verb) practise (noun and verb)
		No noun-verb distinction	
-ise or -ize In a few exceptional cases, the 's' form is the only acceptable one: advise (verb)[7] compromise revise.	civilise civilisation organise organisation realise realisation	-ize	civilize civilization organize organization realize realization
-l	appal, fulfil, distil, enrol	-ll	appall, fulfill, distill, enroll
-ll	traveller	-l	traveler

✓ UK English		✗ US English	
-mme	programme (programme for the day, academic programme) 'program' without the '-me' is only used with reference to computer software	-m	program
-ogue	analogue catalogue homologue dialogue	-og	analog catalog homolog dialog
ou	mould, moult, smoulder	o	mold, molt, smolder
-our	behaviour, colour, harbour, honour, labour, neighbour, tumour, rumour, splendour	-or	behavior, color, harbor, honor, labor, neighbor, tumor, rumor, splendor
-re Note, however, the different spelling of 'metre' (unit of measurement) and 'meter' (measuring instrument).	calibre, centre, fibre, goitre, litre, lustre, manoeuvre, meagre, metre, mitre, nitre, ochre, sceptre Further examples: reconnoitre sabre, saltpetre sepulchre sombre, spectre, theatre	-er	caliber, center, fiber, goiter, liter, luster, maneuver, meager, meter (for both unit of measurement and measuring instrument), miter, niter, ocher, scepter
s	analyse paralyse cosy	z	analyze, paralyze, cozy BUT advise, surprise, compromise, revise

[7 Burchfield, 2004:422–23, 418.]

1.3 Differences between UK and US prepositional use

Prepositions indicate the relationship between words in a sentence, such as an element that is part of a whole (the antenna **of** a radio, or a page **of** a book), place or location (**above** the desk, or **in** the study), a way of doing something (**with** a pen, **by** bus, or **on** foot), or time (**at** 17:00, in the morning).

Because of the global influence of US English, some US prepositional uses have been adopted in UK English too, such as 'to fill **out** a form' (as opposed to the UK variant 'to fill **in** a form'). Often, it is hard to identify which was originally the UK and which was the US variant (e.g. to play **in** a team vs. to play **on** a team; **at** the weekend vs. **on/during/over** the weekend; to live **in** Downing Street vs. to live **on** Downing Street).

Nonetheless, there are a few US prepositional uses that we should avoid in UK English:

✓ UK English	✗ US English
to write **to** somebody	to write somebody
different **to/from**	different **than**
to ring or call someone **on** 083 728 5421	to call someone **at** 083 728 5421
At the meeting **on** Thursday, he announced the winners.	At the meeting Thursday, he announced the winners.
(Newspapers and conversational UK English sometimes drop the preposition. It is generally best to retain it, however.)	

The US use of **amid/among/while** is now preferred in UK English, as opposed to the more old-fashioned **amidst/amongst/whilst.**

1.4 Common confusions in meaning and use

Take care to choose the right word to communicate in a clear and effective way. Here is a list of commonly confused words and their respective meanings and uses.

Commonly confused words	Respective meanings and uses	
affect and effect	'affect' as a verb means 'to influence or cause something to change' 'affect' as a noun means a 'feeling or subjective experience	'effect' as a verb means 'to bring about' 'effect' as a noun means 'the result of an influence'
among and between	'among' indicates a relationship between several items	'between' indicates the relationship of one thing to another, or to many other things Note that 'between' can also express the relationship of more than one thing to another thing, or to many other things: 'The difference between dogs and cats and wild dogs and wild cats …'
i.e. and e.g.	'i.e.' means 'that is'	'e.g.' means 'for example'
empathy and sympathy	'empathy' is the ability to understand the way another person is feeling, or their perspective	'sympathy' is a feeling of sorrow for someone else's suffering
imply and infer	'imply' means 'to suggest or to say something in an indirect way'	'infer' means 'to suppose or come to a conclusion'
advice and advise	'advice' is a noun and is pronounced with a soft 's' (as in 'ice')	'advise' is a verb and is pronounced with a hard 'z'
device and devise	'device' is a noun and is pronounced with a soft 's'	'devise' is a verb and is pronounced with a hard 'z'

1.5 Common errors and preferred forms

Spelling (following *Oxford English Dictionary*)

✓	✗
rollout	roll-out
hello	hallo (Afrikaans)
long-standing (adj) longstanding (n) [rarely used]	longstanding (adj)
NSFAS funding	NSFAS-funding
well-being	wellbeing
Wi-Fi	WiFi, wifi
focused Although the *Oxford English Dictionary* indicates both 'focused' and 'focussed' (and 'focusing' and 'focussing') as correct, **SU prefers the single 's'.**	focussed
email Although the *Oxford English Dictionary* indicates both 'e-mail' and 'email' as correct, **SU prefers the form without the hyphen.**	e-mail

> **!**
>
> NOTE: 'Email' is 'e-pos' in Afrikaans. The hyphen in 'e-pos' is **obligatory** and cannot be left out like in the English. 'Epos' means something completely different from 'e-pos'.

Word choice

✓	✗
inauguration of Rector	installation of Rector
installation of Chancellor	inauguration of Chancellor
virtual – use is limited to structures/ events that do not exist in physical or face-to-face form: virtual service desks virtual schools In all other instances, use 'online': online course online meeting	

Spelling (following *Oxford English Dictionary*)

✓	✗
align with	align to
among others	amongst others
Division of (but Centre for)	Division for
	Division Student Affairs
Division of Student Affairs	❗ (The preposition 'of' is dropped in the Afrikaans formulation 'Afdeling Studentesake', but this is not acceptable in English)
in January	during January
transition **to** and implementation **of** the code	transition and implementation of the code
in Cape Town/ the Western Cape	within Cape Town/ the Western Cape

Capitals

✓	✗
director of Employment Equity (in sentence) BUT Director: Employment Equity (below a name, bottom of correspondence or list)	Director of Employment Equity (in a sentence)
key performance areas (KPAs)	Key Performance Areas (KPAs)
responsibility centre (RC)	Responsibility Centre (RC)

1.6 Parallelism

Parallelism – also called 'parallel structure' or 'parallel construction' – is the repetition of the same grammatical forms of words, phrases or clauses in two or more parts of a sentence.

It also refers to following the same syntactical structure after each element of a correlative conjunction pair, such as 'both … and', 'either … or' and 'neither … nor', as well as the less formal 'not … nor'.

Using parallel structures in a sentence, or sentences following each other, often makes a text more readable and easier to process. Try to use parallelism to connect better with your audience.

Also see 6.6

Correct parallelism	Lacking parallelism
She likes bak**ing**, hik**ing** and read**ing** She likes **to bake**, **hike** and **read**	She likes bak**ing**, danc**ing** and **to read**
The cat ran **across the garden**, jumped **over the fence** and sprinted **down the road**	The cat ran **across the garden, jumped over the fence** and sprinted away
In **Part 1** of this guide, we will examine the basic principles of writing. In **Part 2**, we will discuss the merits of good writing.	In the **first part** of this guide, we will examine the basic principles of writing. In **Part 2**, we will discuss the merits of good writing.
He will be remembered for **both his** flippant nature and his exuberant style	He will be remembered for both **his** flippant nature and exuberant style.
He was neither **hard-working** nor **diligent**	He was neither **hard-working** nor **a stickler**

1.7 Unnecessary repetitions (tautology)

Take care not to stack up similar expressions in the same sentence. For instance, don't use 'e.g.' or 'for example' together with 'etcetera' or 'and so on' (as the one already implies the other).

✓ The event will exhibit the models of several car manufacturers, **e.g.** Ford, Opel and BMW.

✗ The event will exhibit the models of several car manufacturers, **e.g.** Ford, Opel, BMW **etc.**

NOTE: If you use 'include', it means that only some of several possibilities are mentioned. Therefore, adding 'e.g.' or 'etc.' would be tautological.

If you wish to indicate a comprehensive list, use 'entail', 'comprise', 'consist of' or similar expressions.

Other common tautologies include using 'please' together with 'RSVP', 'moment in time' (all moments are in time), and 'the reason is because' ('because' means 'for the reason that').

1.8 Incorrect or concocted forms

Sometimes, people confuse two or more distinct forms or expressions that may have similar meanings, such as these:

Correct form	Incorrect form
✓ as regards with regard to regarding	✗ with regards to in regards to
✓ between you and me	✗ between you and I

Prepositions are always followed by the objective case (me) and not the subjective case (I). A noun or a pronoun is said to be in the objective case if it functions as a grammatical object of a sentence. Example: Please pass me the pepper.

In this sentence, 'pepper' is the direct object of the sentence (what I want to be passed to me) and 'me' is the indirect object (to whom I want the pepper to be passed, i.e. 'to me').

13

1.9 'That' or 'which'?

The relative pronouns 'that', 'which' and 'who' are often used interchangeably.

'That', however, can be used only in a restrictive clause, whereas 'which' and 'who' can be used in both restrictive and non-restrictive clauses.[8]

See 6.3 for a more detailed explanation.

8 Burchfield, 2004:773-775.

A **restrictive clause** is one in which the relative pronoun ('who', 'which' or 'that') refers to a specific object, person or situation, and removing the clause would **change the meaning** of the sentence.

Example: People who/that earn higher incomes should be more heavily taxed.

In this example, the relative clause starting with 'who' or 'that' refers to specific people – those who earn higher incomes – and not to all people. If we remove the clause, the meaning changes to: '(All) People should be more heavily taxed.'

A **non-restrictive clause** is one that can be removed from the sentence **without changing the meaning.**

Example: *Agaat* by Marlene van Niekerk, which I am currently reading, is worthy of the Booker Prize.

Removing the relative clause 'which I am currently reading' will not change the meaning of the sentence; it will merely omit the information that I am currently reading the book.

NOTE: Restrictive clauses are not separated from the rest of the sentence by commas.

NOTE: 'That' cannot be used in non-restrictive clauses – only 'which' or 'who', as applicable. Non-restrictive relative clauses require commas at the start and end of the clause. The commas indicate a parenthesis or an aside.

1.10 'They' or 'their' instead of 'he/she' or 'his/hers'

Although the use of 'he', 'him' and 'his' to denote common gender is conventionally and grammatically correct, it is considered sexist.[9] Even the previously politically correct 's/he', 'him/her', 'he or she' and 'his or her' are now seen to exclude people who do not identify as male or female (transgender, genderqueer, genderfluid and other non-binary individuals) and are, therefore, not gender-neutral. Moreover, such formulations are rather clumsy,[10] producing long sentences and an overabundance of pronouns.

In these instances, the use of the plural pronouns 'their', 'them' and 'they', instead of their singular forms, is now considered acceptable.[11]

> **See 2.2.3.5 for more on this topic.**

Another option is to rephrase the sentence to 'make it plural or avoid pronouns altogether'[12] (see the final example in the box below). Consider the following examples:

> A student learns better if he can work at his own pace. (Grammatically correct, but not gender-sensitive)
>
> OR:
>
> A student learns better if he or she can work at his or her own pace. (Gender-sensitive in terms of male and female, but still binary in approach, and also a cumbersome formulation)
>
> BETTER SOLUTIONS:
>
> ⊘ A student learns better if they can work at their own pace.
>
> ⊘ Students learn better if they can work at their own pace.
>
> MORE EXAMPLES:
>
> ⊘ A student can move about campus quite easily if they have their own skateboard. (Gender-sensitive, as it embraces transgender, genderqueer, genderfluid and other nonbinary students)
>
> ⊘ They are becoming a good artist.
>
> > **NOTE:** The singular 'they' still takes a plural verb: Students can move about campus quite easily if they have their own skateboards.
>
> AVOID:
>
> ⊗ A student learns better if s/he can work at her/his own pace. (Aside from reflecting a binary approach, the use of 's/he' is cumbersome, interrupts the flow, and can be irritating if it occurs repeatedly.)

9 Burchfield, 2004:776; Ritter, RM (ed.). 2003. *Oxford Style Manual*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 105.
10 Ritter, 2003:106.
11 *Oxford English Dictionary*, 2021. The use of the 'singular they' dates back at least to the 14th century. Authors such as Shakespeare and Ruskin used it: "There's not a man I meet but doth salute me as if I were their well-acquainted friend" (*Shakespeare, Comedy of Errors*, 1594); "I am never angry with anybody unless they deserve it." (Ruskin, *Fors Clavigera*, 1877).
12 Ritter, 2003:105.

We strive for consistency in our writing

1.11 Presentation

At SU, we aim for consistency, not only in language use, but also in the look and style of official correspondence and documentation.

To help ensure consistency, here are a few house rules on aspects such as capitalisation, quotation marks, abbreviations, addresses and telephone numbers, and the indication of time. If you follow these, your writing will look professional and will not confuse your reader.

Usually, the intended reader and the level of formality of the document determine the vocabulary and style (formal or informal; active or passive). Once you have chosen a style, the next step is to ensure that it is applied consistently throughout the document.

Also see Section 2, Plain language

1.11.1 Capitals

The University prefers minimal capitalisation.

(i)   General principles

- Less is more – use capitals only when necessary.
- Avoid using capitals for emphasis; 'all caps' makes for a distracting reading experience.
- For emphasis, use italics or bold. Do not use both italics and bold for normal emphasis. However, if something in italic text (e.g. a book title or foreign-language expression) needs to be emphasised, the use of bold is acceptable.
- Use sentence case for headings, captions, figures and the titles of publications; this is becoming increasingly common. If, however, a specific publication prescribes title case, comply with that.

> ✓ **Sentence case:** Purposeful partnerships and inclusive networks
>
> ✗ **Title case:** Purposeful Partnerships and Inclusive Networks

(ii)   Capitalisation of proper nouns and placeholder nouns

Proper nouns are proper names and are capitalised for the same reason that we use capitals for a person's name and surname.

Placeholder nouns are common nouns that serve as placeholders for proper nouns. They are used for variation and concision. The use of capital letters is a short-hand way of telling the reader that, even though these words may look like ordinary nouns, they are actually doing the work of the proper noun. Usually, the word that is capitalised is one of the elements of a compound proper noun, as in 'the University' for 'Stellenbosch University'.

Proper nouns	Placeholder nouns
Stellenbosch University	the University (when referring to a particular university such as Stellenbosch University)
the Faculty of AgriSciences	the Faculty (when referring back to a particular faculty or department)
the Department of General Linguistics	the Department
Corporate Communication and Marketing Division	the Division
Language Centre	the Centre
Cape Town, Stellenbosch, Johannesburg Fourth Industrial Revolution State of the Union Address	

(iii) Capitalisation of province names

According to section 103 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, the official names of the provinces do not contain the word 'province'. The provinces are:

Eastern Cape

Free State

Gauteng

KwaZulu-Natal

Limpopo

Mpumalanga

Northern Cape

North West

Western Cape

The word 'province' does not take a capital, unless it is part of a proper name:

The Western Cape province of South Africa is famous for its wine.

Both provinces, Eastern Cape and KwaZulu Natal, were represented at the meeting.

(iv) Capitalisation of compass directions

Capitalise compass directions only when they denote a recognised geographical or political region; not when they are general descriptors.

Recognised region

✓ North West province	✗ north-west province
✓ the West End	✗ the west end
✓ the Deep South	✗ the deep south
✓ sub-Saharan Africa	✗ Sub-Saharan Africa
✓ Southern Africa	✗ southern Africa
✓ In the West	✗ In the west
✓ In the Global South	✗ In the global south

General direction

✓ the south of Australia eastern Egypt	✗ the South of Australia Eastern Egypt

(v) Capitalisation of job titles

Use initial capitalisation for job titles.

The general rule is:

- to capitalise when the reference is to a job title; and

- not to capitalise when the reference is to a job description.

Rector

Deputy Vice-Chancellor

Senior Manager: Communications

BUT

Zandi works as a language practitioner.

Xolo is a lecturer.

Sandra is the youngest professor in history.

(vi) Capitalisation of surnames consisting of separate parts

If surnames consist of two or more separate parts, both the first and the last parts are capitalised. When an **initial** or a **first name** precedes the surname, however, only the last part is capitalised.

First and last parts capitalised	First part lower case, last part capitalised
Van der Linde De la Bat	Greg van der Linde, G van der Linde Chris de la Bat, C de la Bat

When a title precedes a compound surname, the first part remains capitalised:

First and last parts capitalised	First part lower case, last part capitalised
Dr Van der Merwe	Dr J van der Merwe

If a compound surname (e.g. Van der Merwe) is used as a first (or second, third, etc.) name, the **first part** of the surname-as-name still starts with a capital letter.

First and last parts capitalised	First and last parts still capitalised
De la Bat Cohen Van Wyk Louw De Wet Botha	Charl De la Bat Cohen NP Van Wyk Louw JC De W Botha

The case of 'Mac-', 'Mc-' and 'Mac-'

'Mac' and 'Mc' are prefixes that mean 'son of', 'Mc' being an abbreviation of 'Mac'. There is no strict rule on the spelling of surnames starting with these prefixes. Spelling has tended to follow historical and family preferences, so rather check how a particular person spells their 'Mac' surname – 'MacDonald', 'McDonald', 'Macdonald', 'Mcdonald' or any other possible variation.

(vii) Capitalisation of titles of books, theses and other works[13]

The titles of books are distinguished in two ways: by writing them in italics, and by using capitalisation.

The titles of published works and works that contain subsections by other people, such as edited volumes, are generally italicised. Unpublished texts and texts that are components of a larger work are not italicised, but placed in single quotation marks.

English has no strict rule about the capitalisation of the titles of books, theses, journals, etc. The general trend is to use sentence case. However, some authors and publishers prefer title case – all words are capitalised, except for articles and prepositions (such as 'and', 'or', 'for', 'with' and 'the') or other 'small words'. Afrikaans texts tend to use sentence case (an initial capital for only the first word in the title, and for proper names).

University documents contain frequent reference to other documents such as reports, annual reports and policies. The names of these documents are not italicised, but are written in title case to make sure that their names stand out from the rest of the text:

> Senate Report on Teaching and Learning 2021
>
> Stellenbosch University Language Policy

Above all, be consistent in whatever system you apply. This is particularly important in the case of bibliographies or reference lists.

Italicise the following kinds of titles in any language:

> Books: *The girl with the dragon tattoo; Die ambassadeur; Les misérables*
>
> CDs: *Automatic for the people; Voëlvry*
>
> Newspapers, journals, magazines and radio programmes:
> *Business Day; The Big Issue; Sports Hour*

13 'Other works' would include material for workshops, CDs, journals, magazines, newspapers and films.

For more detailed information on the use of capital letters, see Section 4, Capitalisation.

1.11.2 Currency

We write the names of currencies in lower case.

However, never abbreviate the name of a currency when it is used without an amount – write it out:

> rand, dollar or franc

> ✓ The euro is the common European currency, and the dollar is doing well.

> ✕ The eur. is the common European currency, the dol. is doing well.

If necessary, use the country name as an adjective to be more precise when referring to the currency:

> The Namibian dollar is performing well against the US dollar.

When writing out numbers over a thousand, insert a thousands separator (space), e.g. 1 500, 1 000 000.

> Use a hard space to prevent the number from running over two lines.
>
> *See 12.6 on how to insert a hard space.*

1.11.3 Spaces after a full stop

We use **one** space after a full stop.

> Search for double spaces using the **Find** feature in MS Word. **Find** is on the **Home tab**, on the far right. Find double spaces by typing two spaces in the 'Find what' bar, and remove those that are incorrect.

1.11.4 Quotation marks

Keep in mind the difference between smart quotes ('…' or "…") and straight quotes ('…' or "…") – smart quotes are shaped like the numerals '6' and '9' respectively. Take care to use one style of quotation marks throughout a document.

We use **double** quotation marks for direct speech, for quoting from other sources and to indicate unpublished document titles. In almost all other instances, we use **single** quotation marks.

> *See 5.11 for further guidance on quotation marks.*

> "Multilingualism is part of South Africans' DNA," the Rector said at the recent Language Day.
>
> (As the Rector's actual words are quoted, we use **double quotation marks**.)
>
> 'Individual multilingualism' involves using all the languages that are available in one's linguistic repertoire.
>
> (Here, words defined for the purpose of a particular text are put in **single quotation marks** the first time they are used in the text.)

1.11.5 Italics, bold and underlining

Bold type and italics are tools for emphasis (although italicisation has other uses too). In most cases, think of them as being mutually exclusive, in other words use one or the other. Another good rule to keep in mind is: If everything is emphasised, nothing is emphasised. Of course, there are certain exceptions, such as bolding italicised headings.

Reserve underlining for hyperlinks. Underlining is no longer used for emphasis.

(i)   Italics

Foreign words used in English are sometimes italicised, and sometimes not, depending on how frequently they are used. Think of your readers: How familiar would they be with the word? You would not italicise 'croissant', but possibly *Schadenfreude.* 'Et cetera' and 'ad hoc' have become part of the English language and, therefore, are not italicised. If you are unsure whether a word has been incorporated into English, consult the online *Oxford English Dictionary.*

Write newspaper, magazine and book titles in italics (e.g. *Financial Mail, The Argus*). The names of paintings, plays, radio and TV programmes and ships are also italicised.

When the title of a publication is part of a longer name, such as the name of an award, do not italicise it:

Sunday Times Top 100 Companies Awards

Mail & Guardian 200 Young South Africans

(ii)   Bold

Use bold for headings and emphasis. Take care not to overuse bold.

(iii)   Underlining

Do not underline regular text. If you need to emphasise, use bold instead. Underlining diminishes readability, and in the information age, most people associate underlining with hyperlinks.

1.11.6 Abbreviations

Use abbreviations only when necessary and when they improve readability, such as when they are used in parentheses, in captions or in tables. If you do abbreviate, use abbreviations that are recognisable – consult the *Oxford English Dictionary* for common abbreviations.

(i)   With or without full stops?

The general rule for writing abbreviations without full stops is that the abbreviation normally includes the first and last letters of the full word ('St' for street). If this is not the case, the abbreviation is generally written with a full stop ('no.' for number).

However, there are some specific conventions for certain categories of abbreviations without full stops.

Full stops are not used:

- with initials;
- with titles; or
- in names of qualifications.

> EA Pritchard, T Rampedi
>
> Mr Smith, Dr Cassimjee, Prof Nxumalo
>
> BAHons, MBChB, AdvCertEd
>
> PGDip (Animal Sc) (If the name of a qualification consists of two or more elements, the elements are separated by a space only if the full form of one (or more) of the elements is used.)

For guidance on whether to write abbreviations with or without a full stop, see 7.2 and 7.3.

(ii)   Abbreviation vs full form

When you choose to abbreviate a term, introduce the abbreviation by providing it in parentheses along with the full form the first time it appears in the text.

> Gender-based violence (GBV) is still evident in our society. It is the joint responsibility of the entire University community to curb GBV.
>
> OR
>
> The Investment Committee of Council (IC) is responsible for the management of SU's investments, which may include listed and unlisted investments. The IC appoints asset managers for the University's investment funds to …

(iii)   Names of days and months

Abbreviate the names of days and months to three or four letters, except for May, June and July.[14]

> Mon. Tue. Wed. Thur. Fri. Sat. Sun.
> Jan. Feb. Mar. Apr. May June July Aug.
> Sept. Oct. Nov. Dec.

14 Burchfield, 2004:179

For more on abbreviations and acronyms, see Section 7, Abbreviations, and the Institution-specific names and abbreviations addendum at the back of the Style Guide.

NOTE: Covid-19 or COVID-19?

SU prefers writing Covid-19. Covid-19 is an acronym – a type of abbreviation that consists of a combination of letters pronounced as a word. Generally, acronyms are written with an initial capital letter only, while regular abbreviations are written and pronounced as separate letters, such as 'BBC', 'IMF' and 'NHS'.

Capitalising acronyms reduces readability, as capital letters tend to have a uniform rectangular shape, making it difficult for readers to identify them by their shape.[15] Another reason to avoid capitals is that readers often experience all caps as shouting on paper or on screen. Leading international and local newspapers follow the same principle.[16]

1.11.7 Time

At SU, we indicate time according to the 24-hour clock:

✓ 06:30
✗ 06h30, 6.30, 06-30 or 6 AM/am

✓ 14:50
✗ 14h50, 14.50, 14-50 or 2:50 PM/pm

15 Harvard University. N.d. Design for readability. [Online]. Available at https://accessibility.huit.harvard.edu/design-readability.
16 Ribbans, E. 2020. COVID or Covid? The comfort of pedantry at a time of national crisis. *The Guardian*, 19 April. [Online].
Available at https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/apr/19/covid-pedantry-national-crisis-spelling-grammar. Also see South African news outlets such as *Mail & Guardian, Media24* and *News24*.

1.12 Specific SU conventions

1.12.1 Latin terms used at Stellenbosch University

(i)   SU motto

Pectora roborant cultus recti: A sound education strengthens the spirit

(ii)   'Graduandi' and 'graduati'

The word 'graduation' is derived from the Latin word 'gradus', which means 'a step'. The related verb is 'graduare', which means 'to take a degree'.

•   *Graduandi*

'Graduandus' is the present participle derived from 'graduare' and is used to refer to a person who is about to graduate. Therefore, the University uses the term for students who have completed the requirements for, but have not yet been awarded, a particular degree. The plural Latin form is 'graduandi'. The University uses the Latin forms mostly in Afrikaans. In English, we often use the corresponding words, 'graduand' (singular) or 'graduands' (plural).

•   *Graduati*

The past participle of the Latin verb 'graduare' is 'graduatus' (used as a masculine noun) and 'graduata' (used as a feminine noun). It refers to a person who has successfully completed a degree programme and has been awarded a degree certificate as proof. The plural Latin form is 'graduati'. The University often uses the corresponding English words 'graduate' (singular) or 'graduates' (plural), while the Latin forms are more often used in Afrikaans (although Afrikaans equivalents do exist and are also widely used).

(iii)   Alumnus/alumni and alumna/alumnae

Another Latin term that is used frequently in our context is 'alumni', which refers to students who obtained a qualification at the institution concerned. The corresponding English term is 'graduates'. 'Alumni' is the plural form of the Latin noun and can be used for a group of men or a group of people of unknown gender or various genders.

The singular forms are 'alumnus' (masculine noun) and 'alumna' (feminine noun). The plural of 'alumna' is 'alumnae'.

NOTE: The full name of the SU organisation SWAN is 'Stellenbosch Women Alumnae Network'. This is an official name, so the apparent tautology ('alumnae' already indicating female) must not be corrected.

(iv)   Datum/data

'Data' (facts or information) is the plural form of the Latin term 'datum' (one fact or single piece of information). 'Data' is commonly used in various contexts, whereas 'datum' tends to be restricted to academic and scientific writing. Therefore, in academic writing, especially in the fields of science, mathematics and finance, 'data' should always be treated as plural:

> We often find that no **data have been fabricated.**
>
> Most of the **data** concerning shock and vibration on airplanes **are classified.** [17]

In more general writing, where the singular 'datum' is seldom used, 'data' is sometimes used as a plural noun, and at other times as a singular (uncountable) noun. Many English speakers treat it as a singular mass noun, in which case it takes the singular form of the verb.[18]

> The **data has** already been entered into the system.
>
> When we receive the data, we can start to analyse **it.**
>
> BUT
>
> There are very few data in the set.

Whichever form you choose, remember to be consistent.

1.12.2 Other words and terms often used in the Stellenbosch University context

(i)   Council and Senate

When we refer to the University Council and Senate, no determiner is used:

> Senate decided …
>
> The report is due for submission to Council by …

(ii)   Stellenbosch University

We speak of Stellenbosch University (SU) in English (no determiner), in accordance with the convention in English. In Afrikaans, however, we say '**die** Universiteit Stellenbosch (US)' (using the definite article 'die'), in accordance with the convention in Afrikaans.

17 *Oxford English Dictionary*, 2021.
18 *Oxford English Dictionary*, 2021.

(iii)   The deputy vice-chancellors' designations

Use a colon to indicate the name of the relevant responsibility centre:

Abbreviation	Designation
DVC: L&T	Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Learning and Teaching
DVC: RIPS	Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research, Innovation and Postgraduate Studies
DVC: SITP	Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Social Impact, Transformation and Personnel
DVC: SGCA	Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Strategy, Global and Corporate Affairs

NOTE: At the beginning of 2021, the Rectorate decided that SU should use 'Deputy Vice-Chancellor' to refer to the designation of Vice-Rector, as 'Deputy Vice-Chancellor' is more commonly used in the English-speaking world.

The SU Statute makes provision for both, but for the sake of consistency, only 'Deputy Vice-Chancellor' is to be used. However, since the title 'Viserektor' is well established in the South African higher education sector, SU will continue using it as the Afrikaans equivalent for 'Deputy Vice-Chancellor', and not 'Adjunkvisekanselier'.

(iv)   Yearbook

The University Yearbook is a collection of annual faculty publications containing official information on academic programmes, the University's policies and rules, student fees and bursaries. In Afrikaans, this collection is known as the 'Jaarboek'.

(v)   Almanac

The University Almanac contains all the significant dates of the academic year. In Afrikaans, it is known as the 'Almanak'.

Section 2

Plain language and inclusive writing

The art of
writing clearly,
concisely and
directly.

2. Plain language and inclusive writing

2.1 Plain language

2.1.1 What is plain language?

According to the International Plain Language Federation,[19] "[a] communication is in plain language if its wording, structure, and design are so clear that the intended audience can easily find what they need, understand what they find, and use that information".[20]

Plain language is the art of writing clearly, concisely and directly.

It strives for simplicity, not in the sense of dumbing down the text, but of eliminating clutter, such as formulations that add little or no value to the text, jargon and bureaucratic language.

It avoids overly complicated sentence structures and excessive use of the passive voice.

It focuses on getting the message across accurately, effectively and with empathy, focusing on the reader's communicative needs instead of the writer's – your – personal style.

Two important South African acts, the National Credit Act (No. 34 of 2005) (NCA) and the Consumer Protection Act (No. 68 of 2008) (CPA), have been instrumental in promoting and establishing plain language practice.[21]

Plain language ensures that our writing meets readers' needs. It encourages us to ask critical questions about our own writing, and to take action to make our writing as accessible as possible to our intended audience. We could start by considering the questions asked in the checklist below.

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19 The Federation, established in 2007, is a joint project of three organisations – Clarity, the Center for Plain Language, and the Plain Language Association International (PLAIN).
20 International Plain Language Federation. N.d. Plain language definitions. [Online]. Available at https://www.iplfederation.org/plain-language/.
21 Cornelius, E. 2015. Defining 'plain language' in contemporary South Africa. *Stellenbosch Papers in Linguistics*, 44:1–18; James, N. 2008. Defining the profession: placing plain language in the field of communications. Clarity conference, Mexico City, November 2008. According to section 64(2) of the NCA, a document is in plain language "if it is reasonable to conclude that an ordinary consumer

of the class of persons for whom the document is intended, with average literacy skills and minimal credit experience, could be expected to understand the content, significance, and import of the document without undue effort, having regard to-
(a) the context, comprehensiveness and consistency of the document;
(b) the organisation, form and style of the document;
(c) the vocabulary, usage and sentence structure of the text; and
(d) the use of any illustrations, examples, headings, or other aids to reading and understanding".

2.1.2 Plain language checklist

The following checklist[22] is handy to determine where content stands in terms of plain language. The answers to the questions in the checklist will help you identify aspects in your content that may need some refining. Are you up for the checklist challenge?

Checklist

Purpose

☐ Is the purpose obvious or stated early and clearly?

Content

☐ Is the information accurate, relevant and complete, anticipating readers' questions and answering them?
☐ Are essential technical terms explained or defined?
☐ Is a contact point stated for readers who want to know more?

Structure

☐ Is the information well organised and easy to navigate, with appropriate headings and subheadings?
☐ If there is a contents page, are its headings consistent with those in the text?
☐ Is there appropriate use of illustrations, diagrams and summary panels?

Style and grammar

☐ Is the style appropriate for the audience, with a good average sentence length (say 15 to 20 words), plenty of active-voice verbs, and reasonably short paragraphs?
☐ Is the document free of pomposity, verbosity and officialese (no 'aforesaids', 'notwithstandings', 'herebys', 'commencements' and 'inter alias')?
☐ Is the text grammatically sound and well punctuated?
☐ Is capitalisation consistent in text and headings?

Layout

☐ Does the document look good?
☐ Is the type easily readable and is there enough space between lines of type?
☐ Is there a clear hierarchy of headings and spaces?

22 As cited in Cornelius, 2015. The checklist is used by the Plain Language Commission in the United Kingdom to assess writing against the requirements of the "Clear English Standard".

2.1.3 Pointers for using plain language

There is no paint-by-numbers brief for plain language, or an ultimate set of instructions to achieve plain language text. Asking the above questions is a good starting point to sensitise yourself to your audience's needs. In this section, we share some general suggestions on plain language when you create content. Ultimately, let common sense be your guide.

Know your audience

• Remind yourself who the target readers are, and adapt the text to their needs instead of satisfying your personal style preferences. Remember that what may be unfamiliar technical language to one audience may be completely familiar to another. Audiences and different contexts may call for different ways of writing plain language. The plain language approach is to write for the benefit of a particular audience. Therefore, know your audience and tailor your style of writing accordingly.

• Remind yourself of the purpose of the text and be guided by that.

Focus on the content

• Identify the main message clearly and ensure that it is not buried in detail. Eliminate words and details that add little value. Be ruthless about cutting clutter.

• Structure your document so that the most important facts are presented first. Check that the structure and paragraphs are logically arranged.

• Ask yourself whether your choice of words is appropriate, and whether the sentence structure is clear and easy to follow.

Use design to strengthen your content

• Pay as much attention to design and layout as to language.

• Never forget the power of white space and spacing – this can declutter a page and improve readability.

• Use headings, with surrounding white space, as signposts for the reader.

• Where possible, use bulleted lists.

Harness the mechanics of language

• Do not dress up the text with long words just to sound impressive. Use short, familiar words where they match the meaning.

  See 6.9 for some examples.

• Use the active rather than the passive voice.

• Use 'you' to address the reader directly.

Which one of these sentences will motivate you to pay your bills?

✓ Please pay your bill before leaving this office.

This sentence is succinct and direct, leaving no doubt in readers' minds as to what they need to do. This is achieved by using the active voice and addressing readers directly.

✗ Bills are to be paid before the office may be vacated.

Here we have two passive constructions. The readers are not directly addressed, so there is no sense of immediate action being required.

33

- Think twice about using nominalisations. Try to use the adjective or verb instead:

Reconsider the nominalisation	Rather use	Example sentences
Agreement	Agree	He was in agreement about … ⟶ He agreed that …
Arrival	Arrive	Her arrival is soon. ⟶ She will arrive soon.
Confirmation	Confirm	Could I please have confirmation from you? ⟶ Could you please confirm?
Explanation	Explain	The explanation he offered was that … ⟶ He explained that …
Investigation	Investigate	They launched an investigation into … ⟶ They investigated whether …
Recommendation	Recommend	Your recommendation of … ⟶ You recommended …
Undertaking	Undertake, do, promise	The undertaking was to … ⟶ They undertook to …

As abstract nouns, nominalisations –

- are less specific than their verbal or adjectival forms, which makes the meaning of the sentence less clear;

- hide agency, i.e. who is responsible for the action;

- sap the energy of the sentence; and

- generally make for longer sentences.

Consider this example as a further illustration of the above:

⊗ The results from the data collection were used for the **formulation** of questions.

In the above sentence, we are not sure who gathered the data or formulated the questions; the sentence also has no sense of immediacy or relevance. Compare the sentence with the following:

✓ We gathered data to **formulate** questions.

Now we know who collected the data, and the reason for collecting the data is immediately clear.

- Avoid jargon or unfamiliar words, but keep your specific readers in mind. In other words, if you are writing for people who are knowledgeable in a particular field, it would be appropriate to use the technical, or other, terms with which they are familiar.

- Keep your average sentence length to between 15 and 20 words, but vary the length of individual sentences between 10 and 35 words. This adds interest and emphasis, and avoids monotony.

- As a final step, carefully check the text for spelling, grammar and punctuation errors.

›› This is where you would use the spellchecker – but only after making sure that you have set the proofing language to English (United Kingdom).[23]

See our tip on spellchecking in 1.1.

23 SU prefers the UK English spellchecker to the SA English spellchecker, as the latter sometimes allows US variants.

2.2 Inclusive language

When we write, one of the questions to ask ourselves is whether we are not inadvertently excluding certain readers.

2.2.1 What is inclusive writing?

Inclusive writing is writing that considers and addresses all potential readers.

Therefore, it avoids words or expressions that are, for example, gender-specific, such as 'man' or 'mankind', or may be offensive to certain groups.

Inclusive writing demonstrates awareness of diversity, sensitivity to cultural differences, and respect for all – in short, it is empathetic and aware. This makes it a sensible companion to plain language.

2.2.2 Why is inclusive writing important?

If people feel excluded or unacknowledged in our messaging or communication, they are less likely to pay attention. As Devon Thomas states:[24]

> To be seen and acknowledged is a human desire. Marginalized groups of all types are used to erasure, but that doesn't mean that invisibility is by choice. The act of being seen and being named is empowering; it confirms the basic right to exist. When outdated or hurtful language is used, it's belittling and painful. Respect often begins with what seem like very small steps, such as use of proper language. Whether it's gender identity, ethnic identity, or disability, inclusion is the basis for fuller, richer descriptors for the wide range of human experience.

2.2.3 Pointers for using inclusive language

Below we share some aspects to keep in mind for writing inclusively.

2.2.3.1 Some general inclusive principles to remember

- Put people first.
- Use universal phrases.
- Recognise the impact of your language, especially in the contexts of race, disability and mental health.
- Avoid describing people as victims or using emotionally charged terms that suggest helplessness, such as 'afflicted with,' 'suffering from,' 'stricken with' and 'maimed'. Rather use descriptive words or phrases.

> ✓ People who experience emotional challenges ...
> ✓ Students with physical disabilities ...

- When working with marketing material, choose neutral adjectives and adverbs that provide accurate descriptions of individuals and any (medical) conditions.
- Use gender-neutral language.
- Ask if you are unsure.

2.2.3.2 Age

- Avoid words and expressions such as 'the aged', 'elder(s)', 'the elderly' and 'seniors', as such terms evoke negative stereotypes.[25] Use 'older people' or 'older adults', the latter particularly in research contexts.

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24 Thomas, D. 2020. Reflections on inclusive language and indexing. *Key Words*, 28(4):14–18.

25 Lundebjerg, NE, Trucil, DE, Hammond, EC & Applegate, WB. 2017. When it comes to older adults, language matters: *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society* adopts modified American Medical Association style. *Journal of American Geriatric Society*, 65(7):1386–1388.

2.2.3.3 Disability[26]

Be careful not to conflate individuals and any (medical) condition they may have.

·   Use 'disabled' as an adjective rather than a noun.

✓   Special arrangements will be made for disabled students.

    OR

✓   Special arrangements will be made for students with disabilities.

✗   Special arrangements will be made for the disabled.

·   Avoid the use of 'differently abled', which is no longer acceptable.

·   Be careful when using a label to identify a particular disability. Consider this information when you do use a label:

'Blind'

Using 'blind' or 'partially sighted' may be acceptable as descriptors for people with visual impairment, but will depend on the level of impairment. If you are unsure, ask. However, avoid using 'blind' as a noun.

✓   Blind people constitute 5% of the population in the Western Cape.

✗   The blind constitute 5% of the population in the Western Cape.

A print-disabled person is "a person who cannot effectively read print because of a visual, physical, perceptual, developmental, cognitive, or learning disability".[27] The noun referring to the disability is 'print disability', and the adjective 'print-disabled' is hyphenated. Avoid the use of 'print-disabled' as a noun.

26 Also see National Center on Disability and Journalism. 2021. Disability Language Style Guide. [Online]. Available at https://ncdj.org/style-guide/.
27 Reading Rights Coalition. 2013. The definition of "print disabled"? [Online]. Available at https://web.archive.org/web/20131024195135/http://readingrights.org/definition-print-disabled.

The Afrikaans term that the Disability Unit uses for print disability is 'drukmedia-gestremdheid' (noun), 'drukmediagestremdhede' (plural), and 'drukmediagestremd' (predicative adjective) or 'drukmediagestremde' (attributive adjective).
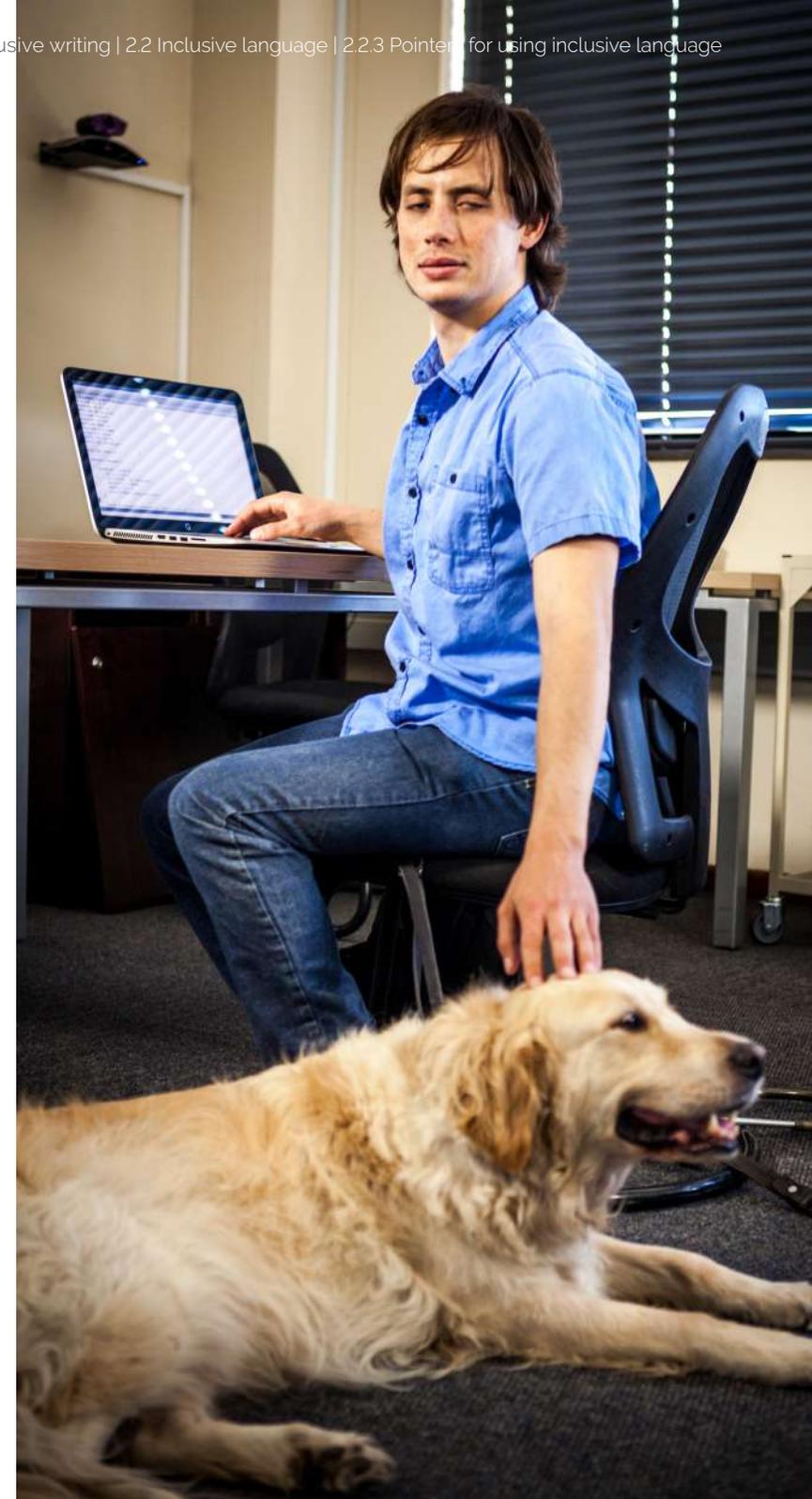
'Deaf' and 'deaf'

Use 'Deaf' (with a capital 'D') to refer to people who have been deaf all their lives or since before they learned to talk. The Deaf Federation of South Africa (DeafSA) prefers the use of 'Deaf' to 'hearing impaired', and uses 'Deaf' as a noun to indicate that the person is part of the Deaf community – a social grouping that includes those who use sign language, and not a medical grouping that denotes a disability.[28]

> ✓   At the University's Language Day, SA Sign Language interpreting was available to Deaf participants.[29]

We do not use the capital 'D' form to refer to deaf people who do not use sign language as a medium of communication. In this instance, the descriptors 'hearing impaired' or 'hard of hearing' would also be acceptable.

- Avoid euphemistic descriptions such as 'physically challenged' or 'special'.

- 'Disabled' and 'handicapped' have different meanings. A disability is a functional limitation or restriction of an individual's ability to perform an activity. A handicap is an environmental barrier that limits or prevents full participation or entrance. Inaccessible entrances are one example of a handicap.[30]

> ✓   There are designated parking areas for people with disabilities [OR: disabled people].
>
> ✗   There are designated parking areas for handicapped people.

28 Also see The Deaf Health Charity. N.d. Sign Health. [Online]. Available at https://signhealth.org.uk/resources/learn-about-deafness/deaf-or-deaf/
29 Lundebjerg et al., 2017.
30 Also see section on inclusive language in University of Colorado Boulder. 2014. Editorial Style Guide. [Online]. Available at https://www.colorado.edu/brand/how-use/text-tone/editorial-style-guide.

> ≫   If you are unsure when writing about this topic, consult the Disability Unit.

2.2.3.4 Race and cultural diversity

Generally, it is unnecessary to refer to race or ethnicity. In specific instances where race must be mentioned, note the following:

- Any reference to a particular racial group should serve a purpose in the text. An example would be the need to highlight a change in student demographics at Stellenbosch University.

- Let the context be your guide in assessing whether references to race are unnecessary or discriminatory.

- Provide context for the reference to race.

- Avoid making assumptions about race. The term 'African' may refer specifically to a 'black African' individual, or it may be a broader term that includes several racial groups. If you are unsure, consider speaking to the Transformation Office or a representative in the Corporate Communication and Marketing Division.

- Do not make assumptions about people's religion based on their ethnicity.

- When used as descriptors of race, the terms 'black', 'white' and 'coloured' (or 'persons of colour') should be used as adjectives, not nouns,[31] and should not be capitalised.

> ✓ Iconic black dancers have changed dance history.

- SU prefers 'coloured' to 'brown', particularly in the phrase 'black, coloured, Indian and Asian (BCIA) students':

> ✓ The policy also offers management an instrument to help ensure that diversity objectives with respect to black, coloured, Indian and Asian (BCIA) students at undergraduate level can be achieved.

31 University of Colorado Boulder, 2014.

Why do we capitalise 'Indian' and 'Asian', for example, but not 'black' and 'coloured'?

When referring to a person of Indian or Asian descent, we capitalise the words 'Indian' and 'Asian' because they are derived from proper nouns, namely India and Asia. This is a rule of capitalisation in English.[32,33]

There is, however, ongoing debate about whether to capitalise 'black' and 'coloured'. If they are used as physical descriptors, the norm would be to use lower case. However, many argue that these adjectives, when used in relation to people, are more than physical descriptors and refer to a specific cultural group. They prefer the use of upper case. There are cogent arguments[34] for and against capitalisation. Currently, Stellenbosch University recommends the use of lower case,[35] but will respect the writer's preferences or the subject of the piece of writing.[36]

'Black', 'brown' and 'coloured' as well as 'white' are historically created racial identities, which can make their use contentious for some.

> Until his untimely death in 1997, Patrick Petersen was a leading light in the black Afrikaans writers' movement, seeking to reclaim Afrikaans from white or Afrikaner writers.

32 Burchfield, RW (ed.). 2004. *Fowler's Modern English Usage.* 3rd revised edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 129.
33 Waddingham, A (ed.) 2014. *New Hart's Rules: the Oxford Style Guide.* 2nd edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 105.

34 *The Guardian.* 2021. *Guardian and Observer* style guide. [Online].
Available at https://www.theguardian.com/guardian-observer-style-guide.
35 Appiah, KA. 2020. The case for capitalizing the 'B' in Black. *The Atlantic*, 18 June. [Online]. Available at https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/06/time-to-capitalize-blackand-white/613159/.
36 *The Guardian*, 2021.

2.2.3.5 Sex and gender

Sex is a biological term (a person may be biologically male, female or intersex), whereas gender is generally considered a social and cultural construct. Gender may also be based on individual performance. For example, an individual may be biologically male, but identify as female in a particular culture (i.e. be engendered female).

- Where possible, use 'male' and 'female' as adjectives rather than nouns.

> ✓ Male respondents reported that they had trouble identifying the left-handed isotope.
>
> ✗ Males reported that they had trouble identifying the left-handed isotope.

- Do not use male pronouns ('he' or 'his') when you are referring to people in general. The easiest way to make a document gender-neutral is to use plurals (*see 1.10*).[37]

When using plural nouns becomes tricky, the 'singular they' can be used.[38] According to the *New Hart's Rules:*[39]

[s]ingular they has become the pronoun of choice to replace he and she in cases where the gender of the antecedent – the word the pronoun refers to – is unknown, irrelevant, or non-binary, or where gender needs to be concealed.

> ✓ Police officer**s** should always know where **their** firearms are.
>
> ✓ Some**one** has moved my cheese and if I find out who **they** are, **they** will be very sorry.

- Avoid the awkward 'he/she' (or 's/he') and 'his/her'. If the singular form must be used, use both pronouns, joined by 'and' or 'or', whichever is applicable (*also see 1.10*).

37 Quinion, M. N.d. Gender Neutral Pronouns. [Online]. Available at http://www.worldwidewords.org/articles/genpr.htm. The author provides a useful summary of the various options available.
38 *The Chicago Manual of Style* Online. N.d. Pronouns. [Online]. Available at https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/qanda/data/faq/topics/Pronouns/faq0018.html. "Though some writers are comfortable with the occasional use of *they* as a singular pronoun, some are not, and it is better to do the necessary work to recast a sentence or, other options having been exhausted, use *he* or *she*."
39 Waddingham, 2014. .

> ✓ A police officer should always know where his or her firearm is.
>
> ✓ If a student is ill, he or she should notify the lecturer immediately.

- Avoid the sexist use of gender-specific titles. If you know a person's sex, you can use gender-specific language, but in most cases, this is unnecessary.

> ✓ We need to appoint a new chairperson [OR chair OR presiding officer].
>
> ✗ We need to appoint a new chairman.
>
> ✓ Joan Nkunzi is the chairperson [OR chair OR presiding officer] of the committee
>
>   OR
>
> ✓ Joan Nkunzi is the chairwoman of the committee.

- Sometimes, individuals prefer non-gender-specific titles, in which case you would opt for 'chair', as in the above examples. At Stellenbosch University, we prefer 'chair'.

- If gendered titles have to be used, be consistent. Do not single out one sex, unless it serves a purpose.

> ✓ As chairman of SCOPA, Themba Godi emphasised that greater accountability was needed from Maggie Maunye and Tisetso Magama, respectively chairwoman of the Portfolio Committee on Home Affairs and chairman of the Portfolio Committee on International Relations and Cooperation.
>
> ✗ As chairman of SCOPA, Themba Godi emphasised that greater accountability was needed from Maggie Maunye and Tisetso Magama, respectively chairwoman of the Portfolio Committee on Home Affairs and chair of the Portfolio Committee on International Relations and Cooperation.

- Be both sensitive and sensible: some terms may not cause offence.

> manhandle,
>
> manhole (consider access hole),
>
> manhunt

2.2.3.6 Sexual orientation

- As suggested in other sections of this guide, reference to sexual orientation should serve a particular purpose in a text.

> In constantly questioning heteronormativity, Denise de Ville seeks to further gay and lesbian liberation.

- The term 'homosexual' in the gay community is generally frowned upon and no longer used. Its use also has negative connotations, as being the negative component in the binary pair 'heterosexual-homosexual'. The use of the binary 'gay' or 'lesbian' (both as adjectives instead of nouns, i.e. 'gay man' or 'gay woman') is also problematic at times, and the terms are only used when a person identifies as gay or lesbian. 'Queer' is the more accepted word, as in 'queer', 'queer person', 'queer body', 'LGBTQIA+', 'LGBTQIA+ individuals' and 'LGBTQIA+ community'. Stellenbosch University's Equality Unit tends to use 'LGBTQIA+ person/individual/community'.

2.3 In conclusion

Plain language and inclusive writing are two distinct, but complementary, concepts. The plain language movement strives for lucidity and, where possible, simplicity in writing. The proponents of inclusive writing argue for non-discriminatory written work. Combined, these concepts make for powerful yet sensitive communication.

Along with the information on Stellenbosch University's brand personality, tone of voice and messaging anchors (see the SU Brand Manual for more), we can employ the guidelines in this section to produce inspiring content to connect with our stakeholders in a meaningful way.

Section 3

Science communication

Scientific and
academic writing
that communicates
effectively

3. Science communication

In the editorial of a special journal issue of the *Journal of Science Communication*, Joubert, Davis and Metcalfe[40] say the following about science communication:

> In a world where we increasingly look towards science and technology to find answers that will help us secure a fair and sustainable future, it is imperative that people become empowered to make informed decisions about issues rooted in science. To achieve this, science communicators must make science-related information engaging and relevant. In short, it is about making people care. That is why we need to go beyond presenting facts and evidence, towards creating emotional connections between scientists and publics.

This section explores scientific and academic writing from the perspective of producing effective communication that will inform people (the various 'publics') about the advantages, disadvantages and costs of decisions taken by, for example, governments, policymakers and corporates, and the effect of those decisions on society. Society increasingly relies on science and technology for advancement, which means that public communication about science and technology is essential to the functioning of contemporary democracies.[41]

While a discussion of science communication may be beneficial for your academic writing, this is not the focus here. Useful resources for academic writing are nonetheless provided later in this section.

When we speak of 'science communication' in this section, we take it to include not only the natural, formal and applied sciences, but also all the social sciences (e.g. economics, education, arts, sociology and history). The increasingly interdisciplinary nature of scholarly research and the importance of related ethical and philosophical questions position the scholar as a public intellectual, whose role is to define 'the interesting and important questions of our times'[42] and communicate these to the public. Because of the risks we face in terms of a sustainable future and the dangers posed by current and future pandemics, it is so critically important to communicate relevant scientific information or applicable research results to people in a way that empowers them to participate in debates and, where feasible, influence policy directions.

40 Joubert, M, Davis, L & Metcalfe, J. 2019. Storytelling: the soul of science communication. *Journal of Science Communication*, 18(05):E1.
41 Davies, SR, Halpern, M, Horst, M, Kirby, DA & Lewenstein, B. 2019. Science stories as culture: experience, identity, narrative and emotion in public communication of science. *Journal of Science Communication*, 18(05):A01; Joubert, M. 2018. Country-specific factors that compel South African scientists to engage with public audiences. *Journal of Science Communication*,17(04):CN04; Brockman, J. 1996. Introduction: The Emerging Third Culture. [Online]. Available at https://www.edge.org/conversation/the-emerging.
42 Brockman, 1996.

3.1. Public/publics

In an effort to define 'public', Burns, O'Connor and Stocklmayer have said: "The simplest and most useful definition of **the public is every person in society.**"[43]

Although the 'public' is not a homogeneous group, it is possible to speak to various groups (publics) who may share certain interests, knowledge and other relevant factors. For the purposes of science communication, Burns and colleagues[44] propose the following six generally accepted, overlapping public groupings:

Scientists: in industry, the academic community and government.

Mediators: communicators (including science communicators, journalists and other members of the media), educators, and opinion-makers.

Decision-makers: policy makers in government, and scientific and learned institutions.

General public: the three groups above, plus other sectors and interest groups. For example, school children and charity workers.

Attentive public: the part of the general community already interested in (and reasonably well-informed about) science and scientific activities.

Interested public: … people who are interested in but not necessarily well informed about science and technology.[45]

The aim of science communication is to ensure that the public, governments, legislators, policymakers and decision-makers have a clear and accurate understanding of scientific issues. The 2019 White Paper on Science, Technology and Innovation specifically articulates the need to "support a science-literate and science-aware society": [46]

> One of the prerequisites for an effectively functioning NSI [national system of innovation] is a society that is aware of the value and potential dangers of science, is able to evaluate the products of science, uses the processes of science in their daily lives (e.g. asking questions, collecting and analysing evidence, and evaluating possible results), and engages in debate on science-related matters of public interest.

43 Burns, TW, O'Connor, DJ & Stocklmayer, SM. 2003. Science communication: a contemporary definition. *Public Understanding of Science*, 12:183–202.
44 Burns et al., 2003.
45 Burns et al., 2003. The points made are drawn from various scholars in the field. Burns and colleagues go on to refer to another three commonly used terms: the 'lay public', the 'science community' or the 'science practitioners'. The first term refers to non-experts in a particular field, including other scientists. The second and third terms refer to 'people directly involved in some aspect of the practice of science'.
46 Paragraph 5.7. Republic of South Africa. 2019. *White Paper on Science, Technology and Innovation.* Pretoria: Department of Science and Technology.

3.2. The plain language connection

Because it is so important to make scientific knowledge more accessible, science writers have increasingly adopted plain and inclusive language in their writing.[47]

> **See Section 2, Plain and inclusive language**

This does not mean that we avoid the specialised and technical wording of scientific writing by default. Instead, it is about ensuring that the meanings of scientific concepts are clearly explained in a way that is appropriate for the intended audience.

In an article on the plain language movement in the *American Medical Writers Association (AMWA)* Journal, Locke et al. point out that plain language does not mean dumbing down a scientific text:[48]

> Don't think plain language is dumbing down; it's reaching out to an expanded audience – an urgent need in our scientifically bereft society. Fewer than 50% of surveyed adults understand that the earth orbits the sun yearly, only 21% can define DNA, and a mere 9% know what a molecule is.

According to Whiteman,[49] it is important that scientists use plain language:

… not only to reach the public; but also to reach one another. Indeed, scientific information conveyed in plain language invariable [sic] reaches bigger scientific audiences than information conveyed in technical language.

In this regard, Whiteman cites the example of the *Cleveland Clinic Journal of Medicine,* which dramatically increased its readership (to become a nationally successful journal with the best readership growth trend and advertising growth trend in its market) by replacing its previously "dense, long-winded, jargon-filled style" of writing, and incorporating the principles of plain language, along with "the liberal use of white space, eye-catching side-bars, easy-to-understand graphics, succinct article summaries, attention-grabbing article titles, everyday language, conciseness, clarity, and short regular features".

47 Locke, J. 2003. The plain language movement. *American Medical Writers Association Journal*, 18(1): 5–8.
48 Locke, JN, Whiteman, L & Mitrany, D. 2001. Plain language in science: signs of intelligible life. *Science Editor*, 24(6):194.
49 Whiteman, L. N.d. Scientists need plain language. [Online]. Available at https://www.plainlanguage.gov/resources/articles/scientists-need-plain-language/.

3.3. Science communication and storytelling

Scholars in science communication[50] suggest storytelling as an effective tool when communicating about science, arguing that stories help people understand, process and recall science-related information:

> Stories typically have a beginning, a middle and an end, a structure that is also known as a 'narrative arc'. The unexpected twists and turns that characterize a good storyline, build tension and keep the attention of readers, listeners and viewers. Another key characteristic of a story is that, at the end, the plot is resolved and something changes (Storr, 2019). It is through understanding the reasons for this change that stories impart meaning and can change the way people see the world. Once communicators understand and tap into this aspect of storytelling, stories can become versatile tools to help people make sense of the world around them, including issues and developments rooted in science.

Cormick[51] asks what science has taught us about storytelling and the impact of stories. Referring to studies carried out by various scholars, he argues that good narratives, or framing information in stories, have been shown to:

increase people's likelihood of remembering information;

reduce counter-arguing;

make people feel the experience being described was their own;

be much more convincing than just data; and

increase engagement when communicating science to non-expert audiences.

Drawing on neuroscience, Cormick explains that stories tap "into the parts of our brains that process information more efficiently when it is presented in a narrative format, especially when that information has social relevance".

50 Joubert et al., 2019.
51 Cormick, C. 2019. Who doesn't love a good story? What neuroscience tells us about how we respond to narratives. *Journal of Science Communication*, 18(05):Y01.

3.4. Understanding science communication through the frame of culture

Based on cultural theory, Davies and colleagues argue that it is useful to view science stories as an integral part of culture, "as storytelling or narrative, as ritual, and as collective meaning-making".[52] Understanding science communication within the frame of culture allows one to focus on experiential and emotional aspects – on creating shared meanings that are "deeply connected to the nature and ideologies of contemporary societies".[53]

They then identify four possible ways of doing this: "by mobilising ideas about experience; by framing science communication through identity work; by focusing on fiction; and by paying attention to emotion". In other words, the scholars suggest using well-established aspects of cultural theory such as "experience, narrative, identity and affect" to conceptualise science communication as fundamentally no different from other kinds of storytelling.[54]

Understanding science communication within the frame of culture also shifts the focus from the mere dissemination of information to the quality of the communication and the different contexts in which it is experienced

Too often, scientific knowledge is locked up in professional journals. Effective science communication requires recognizing the differences between how scientists have traditionally been taught to communicate and how the rest of the world communicates.

If you want your work to be relevant to audiences beyond your field of research – from journalists, to policymakers, to members of your community, or others – you need to think differently about how you communicate.[55]

52 Davies et al., 2019
53 Davies et al., 2019
54 Davies et al., 2019
55 Compass Message Box. 2020. Based in science. [Online]. Available at
https://www.compassscicomm.org/leadership-development/the-message-box/.

3.5. Plain language, storytelling techniques and cultural framing

Try these techniques when you write about science for
more general audiences:[56]

Overall pointers

→ Do not dumb down or omit technical terms.

→ Define and explain technical terms clearly and plainly.

→ Build on the information that the reader or particular public already knows, and lead up to the new information.

→ Contextualise the scientific issue within the broader context of culture and of the public grouping for whom you are writing. Context is important.

→ Tell the story of the scientific issue.

→ Highlight key points and 'new' findings in call-out or summary boxes, if the publication allows this.

Specifics

→ Concentrate on writing the opening and conclusion in plain language.

→ Have a clear, specific opener that gives context, rather than opening with a broad generalisation.

→ Use short sentences.

→ Use the active voice.

→ Present the conclusion in clear, concise language so that it is easy to understand your results or take-home message.

3.6. Pointers for opinion editorials

SU nurtures thought leaders who offer an informed opinion on issues of the day and share their expert views with the public. One of the ways to do this is through opinion pieces published in print and/or online newspapers. Although publishing an opinion piece may be easier than publishing an academic paper, opinion pieces do have to meet certain general requirements. Here are a few things to consider if you are writing an opinion piece.

56 Adapted from Locke, 2003; Locke et al., 2001; Cormick, 2019.

Ensure topicality

Before you start to write an opinion piece, you need to be able to answer the following questions in the affirmative:

○ Does the piece link to the news of the day or address an important issue that should be brought to readers' attention?

○ Will the piece increase readers' knowledge and understanding of the issue?

○ Will the article stimulate debate about a certain local, national or international matter?

Write about what you know, and stick to your field of expertise

○ Include information that shows the reader that you know what you are talking about.

○ Base your arguments on facts.

○ Keep to the central theme of the article. This will avoid conflating ideas, which will simply confuse editors and readers.

○ If you have more to say, rather write follow-up pieces, such as a series of three articles that address different yet related issues. This will prevent you from creating opinion pieces that are too long. Opinion pieces are usually 800 to 1 300 words in length.

Capture the attention of the editor (and the reader)

○ It is important that your piece stands out and has something original to say. One of the best ways to achieve this is to capture the attention of the editor and the reader in the first few sentences. This is the so-called 'hook' that makes someone want to read the rest of the article.

○ Set the appropriate tone to make for an interesting read right from the start. Remember, you need to compete for readers' attention, since there is so much to read out there.

Make your writing clear and accessible

○ If you write in a way that the reader will understand, this will improve your chances of having your opinion piece published.

○ Aim for consistency, clarity of thought, unity and coherence, as this will help keep the reader engaged.

○ Try to steer clear of academic jargon. Where you need to use academic terminology, add an explanation that is comprehensible to the lay person.

○ Avoid acronyms and other abbreviations, as many readers may not know what they mean.

○ Be careful not to use clichés.

○ It sometimes helps to use references, especially when mentioning specific academic papers and books. In the case of online newspapers, hyperlinks may be added.

For more guidance and inspiration, visit the following links:

How to write an op-ed article

How to write an op-ed or column

Op-ed writing: tips and tricks

Writing and submitting an opinion piece

Influencing public policy: an analysis of published op-eds by academics

From apes to whistleblowers: how scientists inform, defend, and excite in newspaper op-eds

3.7. Science communication and scholarly writing

Science communication is about making knowledge accessible. Albert Einstein is famous for saying:

If you can't explain it simply, you don't understand it well enough.

In many respects, the same applies to scientific writing.

If you are a researcher, you will have to decide how far you wish to push the boundaries of accepted scientific writing. Whether you choose to adopt some or all of the principles of plain language and science communication, you will nonetheless have to follow the requirements for academic journals and books.

Students, in turn, will need to adhere to the guidelines for theses, dissertations and research assignments.

Stellenbosch University has extensive resources for staff and students in relation to research. Here are links to some of them:

- Division of Research Development resources: http://www.sun.ac.za/english/research-innovation/Research-Development/resources
- Fundamentals of data visualisation: https://clauswilke.com/dataviz/index.html
- Guidelines on formatting a thesis: http://www.sun.ac.za/english/research-innovation/Research-Development/formatting-your-thesis-or-dissertation
- Library guidelines on referencing: https://libguides.sun.ac.za/c.php?g=743000

Additional resources for scientists and science communicators:

- COMPASS: Compass is an excellent starting point for any scientist wanting to talk about their research. See the Message Box in particular.
- The American Association for the Advancement of Science's Theory of change for public engagement with science

Section 4

Capitalisation

Less is more –
only use capitals when
really necessary

4. Capitalisation

4.1 In general

The University prefers minimal capitalisation. Less is more – only use capitals when really necessary.

(i) Avoid using capitals for emphasis. For emphasis, use italics or bold. Try not to mix italics and bold; however, if content in italic text needs to be emphasised, the use of bold is acceptable.

(ii) Use sentence case for headings, captions, figures and the titles of publications; this is becoming increasingly common. If, however, a specific publication prescribes title case, comply with that.

✓ **Sentence case:** Purposeful partnerships and inclusive networks

✕ **Title case:** Purposeful Partnerships and Inclusive Networks

(iii) A capitalised word retains its initial capital when it becomes a word element after a hyphen

sub-Saharan Africa

pro-European

(iv) A colon is not followed by a capital if the section after the colon follows the normal sequence of the first part of the sentence, unless the text after the colon starts with a proper name or forms a separate, full sentence.[57]

We need the following fishing equipment: rods, nets, hooks and sinkers.

It was more than a meeting: it was an opportunity to bond and to strategise.

Three of the top players will participate: Novak Djokovic, Rafael Nadal and Roger Federer. As the saying goes: All's well that ends well.

57 Burchfield, 2004:159

4.2 Proper names

(i) Capitalise the name of any type of recognised geographical region.

> Cape Town, the Promised Land, the Wine Route

(ii) Capitalise compass directions only when they denote a recognised geographical or political region; not if they are general descriptors.

Recognised region

✓	✗
North West province	north-west Province
the West End	the west end
the Deep South	the deep south
sub-Saharan Africa	Sub-Saharan Africa
Southern Africa	southern Africa
Western nations	western nations
in the Global South	in the global south

General direction

✓	✗
the south of Australia	the South of Australia
eastern Egypt	Eastern Egypt

(iii) If surnames consist of two or more separate parts, the first as well as the last part are capitalised. When an **initial** or a **first name** precedes the surname, however, only the last part is capitalised.

First and last parts capitalised	First part lower case, last part capitalised
Van der Linde	Greg van der Linde, G van der Linde
De la Bat	Chris de la Bat, C de la Bat

(iv) When a title precedes a compound surname, the first element remains capitalised:

First and last parts capitalised	First part lower case, last part capitalised
Dr Van der Merwe	Dr J van der Merwe

(v) If a compound surname (e.g. Van der Merwe) is used as a first (or second, third, etc.) name, the first part of the surname-as-name still starts with a capital letter.

First and last parts capitalised	First and last parts still capitalised
De la Bat Cohen Van Wyk Louw De Wet Botha	Charl De la Bat Cohen NP Van Wyk Louw JC De W Botha

NOTE: We write 'Frederik Van Zyl Slabbert Institute for Student Leadership Development' (an institute at Stellenbosch University). 'Van Zyl' was Frederik's middle name (and not part of his surname) and, therefore, should start with a capital. The abbreviated form is 'FVZS Institute for Student Leadership Development'.

The case of 'Mac-', 'Mc-' and 'Mac-'

'Mac' and 'Mc' are prefixes that mean 'son of', 'Mc' being an abbreviation of 'Mac'. There is no strict rule on the spelling of surnames starting with these prefixes. Spelling has tended to follow historical and family preferences, so rather check how a particular person spells their 'Mac' surname – 'MacDonald', 'McDonald', 'Macdonald', 'Mcdonald' or any other possible variation.

(vi) Capitalise the names of departments, divisions, faculties and so forth, and the words 'department', 'college', 'office' and 'school' when they form part of the official name.

When such nouns are used as general denominators or in the plural form, they take lower case.

The Department of Political Science hosted the seminar.

[BUT: Their political science department has a good reputation.]

He was on his way to Political Science, which is in the adjacent building.

The Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences is one of the largest faculties on campus.

The faculties of Arts and Social Sciences, Economic and Management Sciences, and Medicine and Health Sciences have the largest student numbers.

NOTE: In Stellenbosch University publications, Stellenbosch University is referred to as 'the University' (capitalised 'U'). To avoid confusion with other institutions, either write out the other institution's name in full or use its abbreviation.

In addition, when words such as 'department', 'division', 'school' and 'centre' are used on their own to refer to a particular department, they are capitalised. In casual references (i.e. where the word functions as a general descriptor instead of a placeholder), do not capitalise words such as 'department' when they stand alone.

The Department of Journalism offers several postgraduate programmes. However, the Department has no undergraduate offering.

The Faculty of Theology is fifty years old this year. The Faculty is proud of what it has achieved in this time.

The Laser Research Institute is part of the Faculty of Science. The Institute offers training in laser physics.

(vii) Do not capitalise the names of academic subjects and disciplines (except for language subjects, which are proper nouns and, therefore, must be capitalised). The same goes for cultivars, animal breeds, plant varieties[58] and agricultural products.

> She has a journalism class tomorrow.
> He is a physiology expert.
>
> cabernet, raisin blanc
> collie, jersey cow, merino
> valencia (orange), hubbard squash

NOTE: Names that refer to a specific academic programme or module are capitalised.

> He takes Advanced Xhosa this semester.
> She enrolled for Chemical Engineering 305.

(viii) Write the names of conditions and syndromes in lower case.

> measles, rubella, diabetes mellitus, muscular dystrophy, acquired immune deficiency syndrome

(ix) The names of conditions and syndromes are capitalised when the name starts with an acronym or proper name. The generic part of such names (e.g. 'disease', 'syndrome') remains in lower case.

> Covid-19
> German measles
> HIV/AIDS [BUT: the HI virus] Alzheimer's/Alzheimer disease

(x) Trade names, being proper names, are usually capitalised. Faded trade names (i.e. where the connection with the person with whom, or the entity with which, the term was initially linked has faded away) are written in lower case.

> tippex (for any correctional fluid)
> sellotape (for any adhesive tape)
> kreepy or kreepy krauly (for any pool cleaner)

When faded trade names are used as verbs, the derived verb also takes lower case.

> tippexed
> googled
> facebooked

58 For information on the correct naming of algae, fungi and plants, see International Association for Plant Taxonomy. 2018. *International Code of Nomenclature for algae, fungi, and plants* (Shenzhen Code). [Online]. Available at https://www.iapt-taxon.org/nomen/main.php?page-title.

4.3 Job titles

(i) Job titles are capitalised when they are closely linked to the incumbent's name.

> the President of the Republic of South Africa, Cyril Ramaphosa
>
> the Secretary-General of the United Nations, António Guterres

(ii) In formal contexts, job titles can be capitalised even when they appear without the incumbent's name.

> Prof Wim de Villiers, Rector of Stellenbosch University, will deliver a speech at the opening ceremony. The Rector will be delivering another speech later that day at an event where the rectors of two other universities will also be present.

(iii) Job titles usually appear in lower case when they follow a personal name, are used instead of a name, or are used in apposition before a name (i.e. where the job title and personal name identify each other).

> Jean Harlowe is a director of one of the biggest companies in South Africa.
>
> The councillor was not invited to the event.
>
> Former deputy minister Imelda Burns will be admitted later today.

(iv) In formal contexts, job titles may be capitalised even when they follow a personal name.

> Colin Samuels, Director of Marketing

Section 5

Punctuation

Punctuation aids the reader in understanding the writer's intended message

5. Punctuation

If you use punctuation in the right way, you gently guide your readers to understand exactly what you mean. Use as little punctuation as you can without obscuring the meaning of the sentence.

This section gives some guidance on punctuation – from the ampersand to the slash, and everything in between.

How many spaces?

Use only one space after full stops, commas, semicolons, colons, exclamation marks, question marks and quotation marks.

Should punctuation be formatted?

Do not italicise, bold or underline punctuation marks such as commas and full stops that immediately follow italicised, bold or underlined text. Also, when a full sentence appears in brackets, do not italicise, bold or underline the full stop or the parentheses.

✓ **Please note**: The University will close over the Easter weekend.

✗ **Please note**: The University will close over the Easter weekend. (The semicolon after 'note' should not be in bold.)

✓ She referenced a previous book of hers (*The healthy eater* [1976]) in her new book.

✗ She referenced a previous book of hers *(The healthy eater [1976])* in her new book.

(Neither the round nor the square brackets should be in italics; all should be Roman (or normal) type.)

5.1 Ampersand

The ampersand (&) combines two elements, and usually means 'and'. Where possible, however, rather write out 'and' in running text. As a rule, the ampersand does not serve as an abbreviation for 'and' in ordinary communication.

The ampersand is used in the following instances:

(i)   In some abbreviations

> O&M – organisation and methods
>
> L&T – learning and teaching

(ii)   When it forms part of the registered name of a company or publication

> Mail & Guardian and its abbreviated form: M&G
>
> I&J
>
> Victoria & Alfred Waterfront and its abbreviated form: V&A Waterfront

(iii)   In citations given in parentheses, when this is the referencing style of a particular publication

> (Lotz & Foster 2021)

5.2 Apostrophe

The main functions of the apostrophe are to indicate possession, and to indicate that letters have been omitted (contractions). Apostrophes[59] are rarely used to form plurals.

(i)   Take care not to use an apostrophe with the possessive pronoun 'its'. 'It's' is the contraction of 'it is'; it does not indicate possession.

> ✓   Its name is Butch – not very original.
>
> ✗   It's name is Butch – not very original.

(ii)   Do not use apostrophes to create plurals of names, abbreviations (with or without full stops), numbers and words that are not usually used as nouns.

✓	✗
SMSs	SMS's
CVs	CV's
BAs	BA's
the 70s	the 70's
chs (chapters)	ch.'s

(iii) In more informal contexts, apostrophes may be used to replace the decade in dates, provided that the century is clear.[60]

> The Beat Generation of the '60s

59 The information in this section is adapted from Waddingham, 2014.
60 *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 2017.

(iv) Although apostrophes are generally not used for plurals, there are exceptions, for example to form the plural of single letters:

> Mind your p's and q's.
>
> The word 'better' has two t's.
>
> Vowels include a's and i's.

This does **not** apply to capital letters or numbers:

> ✓   He passed matric with straight As.
>
> ✗   He passed matric with straight A's.

(v)   Where the apostrophe is used in contractions, place it in the position corresponding to the missing letter or letters.

> I'm
>
> can't
>
> mustn't
>
> dos and don'ts (dos is not a contraction, therefore no apostrophe)

> When deciding whether to use contractions, consider the degree of formality you wish to maintain in your writing. Contractions are not appropriate for reports or official documents. However, when you want to connect with your reader at a more informal level, contractions could be a very useful tool to make your text more accessible.

(vi) Apostrophes imply 'of', i.e. possession (or genitive case).

> He has six years' experience.
>
> In a month's time, we will launch the programme.
>
> CEO's salary
>
> MPs' assistants

The apostrophe would be incorrect in the following instance:

> ✗ She completed her studies three years' ago.
>
> BUT
>
> ✓ She completed her studies three years ago.

(vii) Omit the possessive 's' after singular nouns ending in an 's' or 'z' sound when combined with 'sake'.[61]

> For goodness' sake
>
> for appearance' sake

(viii) In the case of proper names ending in 's' or 'z', the University prefers the possessive form without the 's'.[62]

> James'   Sostenes'
>
> Jesus'   Katz'

---

61 Greenbaum, S, Leech, G, Quirk, R & Svartvik, J. 1985. *A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language.* London & New York: Longman. 321.
62 Greenbaum et al., 1985:321.

(ix) When a name or term is italicised, do not italicise the possessive 's'.

> *The Sunday Independent*'s staff
>
> *Dracula*'s exploration of imperialism

(x) Use the possessive 's' after the last of a set of linked nouns sharing possession.

> Laurel and Hardy's comedies
>
> Rice and Lloyd-Weber's musicals

5.3 Brackets

We use brackets (or parentheses) when we want to add additional information without interrupting the flow of the sentence. Take care to use **a pair** of brackets – many writers insert an opening bracket, but forget the closing one.

There are different types of brackets:

- Square brackets […]
- Parentheses or round brackets (…)
- Angled brackets <…>
- Braces or curly brackets {…}

(i) Use brackets instead of the forward slash or solidus (/) when adding one or more letters to a word to indicate an alternative form.

> ✓ actor(s)
> ✗ actor/s

(ii) A complete sentence in brackets starts with a capital letter and ends in a full stop when the bracketed section stands on its own.

> Squeals of laughter echoed through the streets. (It was holiday time.)

(iii) When the bracketed content forms part of another sentence, the sentence inside the brackets **does not** start with a capital letter or end with a full stop.

> Squeals of laughter echoed through the streets (it was holiday time).
>
> Squeals of laughter (it was holiday time) echoed through the streets.

(iv) Where only part of a sentence appears in brackets, insert the full stop after the closing bracket.

> Squeals of laughter echoed through the streets (as usual during holiday time).

(v) Use square brackets for bracketing inside round brackets.

> The results compare favourably with similar or existing technology. (This measurement is done [as far as possible, we have to concede] according to local and international standards.)

(vi) In scientific writing, square brackets are used to indicate additions and changes to quotations.

> "Coal is the dirtiest fossil fuel and the IEA [International Energy Agency] has made clear that if it is not rapidly phased out, the world has no hope of staying within 1,5 °C of global heating."

5.4 Colon

We use the colon to point ahead in writing: from a premise to a conclusion, from a cause to an effect, from an introduction to a main point, or from a general statement to an example. The colon also introduces direct speech.

(i)   The general rule is to use capitals after colons in the following instances only:

•   If the word following the colon is a proper noun.

> The man warned: **Chuck Norris** takes no prisoners.

•   If the colon follows a formal salutation or brief instruction.

> Please note: **T**he deadline for entries is 21 May 2006.
>
> Warning: **H**ot surface
>
> May I have your attention: **A** blue Fiat, CA 12345, seems to have acquired a new owner.

•   If the material following the colon is a full sentence or a phrase expressing a complete thought.

> Shop closed temporarily: **W**e are taking stock from Monday to Wednesday this week.

(ii) Do not use a capital when the material following the colon does not form a full sentence.

> She packed interesting snacks: **b**lue cheese, crackers, figs and chocolates.

(iii) The colon should not precede linking words or phrases in the introduction to a list.

> ✓ Her study focused on two authors, **namely** Coetzee and Fugard.
>
> ✗ Her study focused on two authors: **namely** Coetzee and Fugard.

(iv) The colon should follow linking words **only** where the colon introduces a main clause.

> She used **this** example: Of the three central characters in *Wuthering Heights,* the younger Catherine is the most appealing.

(v)   Do not use a colon to introduce a statement or a list that completes the sentence.

> ✓ Other sites worth visiting include Kirstenbosch Gardens, Cape Nature Reserve and Fish River Canyon.
>
> ✗ … include: Kirstenbosch Gardens, Cape Nature Reserve and Fish River Canyon.
>
> ✓ During our holiday, we went to Hout Bay, Kommetjie and Cape Town.
>
> ✗ During our holiday, we went to: Hout Bay, Kommetjie and Cape Town.

(vi) Do not put spaces before or after the colon in mathematical equations.

> ✓ The ratio between students and learners is 10:5.
>
> ✗ The ratio between students and learners is 10 : 5.

5.5 Comma

Commas help structure sentences – essentially, they are separators. They often help separate complete ideas, descriptive phrases and adjacent items, and may be used before and after most transition words ('however', 'thus', 'therefore', 'also', 'nevertheless'). Use commas sparingly, however.

There are four types of commas: the listing comma, the joining comma, the gapping comma, and bracketing commas:[63]

- A **listing comma** can always be replaced by the word 'and' or 'or'.

- A **joining comma** must be followed by a connecting word such as 'and', 'or', 'but', 'yet' or 'while'.

- A **gapping comma** indicates an ellipsis (i.e. where you have decided not to repeat words already contained in the sentence).

- **Bracketing commas** always come in pairs and indicate a weak interruption or aside that could be removed from the sentence without removing critical information.

(i) Do not insert a comma between subject and verb, or between verb and object – even after a long subject – where there would be a natural pause in spoken language in any event.

✓ Those who have the largest incomes and who have amassed the greatest personal savings should be taxed most.

✗ Those who have the largest incomes and who have amassed the greatest personal savings, should be taxed most.

✓ A driver who has drunk too much at a party and then leaves may soon end up in a very sobering situation.

Ask yourself: Can the comma be replaced by 'and' or 'or'?

63 Trusk, L. 1997. Guide to Punctuation. [Online]. Available at https://www.sussex.ac.uk/informatics/punctuation/comma/summary.

If you are uncertain about a comma, ask yourself the following:

- Can the comma be replaced by 'and' or 'or'?
- Is it followed by a connecting word such as 'and', 'or', 'but', 'yet' or 'while'?
- Does it help to avoid repetition?
- Does it form one of a pair of commas setting off an aside that could easily be removed from the sentence?

If the answer to these questions is 'No', remove the comma.

Instead of adding a comma before 'should' and 'may' in the sentences above, consider rephrasing (if the context allows it).

Those who make and save the most should be taxed most.

A driver may soon end up in a sobering situation if they have drunk too much before leaving the party.

(ii) Bracketing commas that isolate additional information work in pairs.

Insert a comma before **and** after the additional information (a descriptive clause, phrase or word). If the words between the parenthetical commas were to be removed, the meaning of the sentence should not change.

> She moved to Dalsig in Stellenbosch, from Northcliff, Johannesburg, to be closer to her family.
>
> There was something about the car, despite its obvious sportiness, that did not appeal to the client.

(iii) Use a comma where the same word appears twice in succession only if a comma would facilitate reading or avoid ambiguity.

> All the money that he had, had been used for food.
>
> We agreed to move on, on the understanding that we would not be followed.

Even where the structure does not require a comma, use one to eliminate ambiguity.

> However, much as I would like to, I cannot agree.
>
> She greeted the official who approached her, and smiled.
>
> With the vehicle moving, the passenger jumped out.

(iv) Use a comma to indicate that there is a grammatical ellipsis in the sentence.

> Jupiter is the largest planet and Pluto, the smallest.

(v) There are two types of listing commas: the simple listing comma and the serial or Oxford comma.

- The **simple listing comma** places commas between each word in the list, but not before the final 'and' or 'or':

> A vegetarian will eat eggs, milk and cheese, whereas a lactovegetarian will not eat eggs, milk or cheese.

- The **serial or Oxford comma** inserts a comma before the final 'and':

> She asked for pens, pencils, rubbers, and rulers.

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At Stellenbosch University, we prefer to use the simple listing comma, and **not** the serial or Oxford comma, unless the latter is required by publishers, for instance, or where it will help provide clarity:

○ If the 'and' is part of a series of three or more phrases (groups of words) as opposed to single words:

> The aspects with the most material impact on the institution's environmental resource conservation are water and paper usage, and the responsible management of our waste stream.

○ To prevent ambiguity or misunderstanding:

> I'd like to thank my colleagues, Yeki and Zola.
>
> I'd like to thank my colleagues, Yeki, and Zola.

In the first sentence above, without the Oxford comma, the speaker seems to be thanking two colleagues, who are named Yeki and Zola. By adding the Oxford comma, it becomes clear that the speaker is thanking colleagues, along with two other people named Yeki and Zola.

(vi) Commas are not used in dates, but can be used to indicate specific (official) days and dates.

> Sunday 1 May
>
> BUT: Workers' Day, Sunday 1 May

(vii) No comma is necessary between two adjectives where the first adjective describes a unit formed by the second adjective and the noun.

> A traditional political party
>
> endangered wild dogs

The same rule applies when the second adjective describes colour.

> They all had long blond hair.
>
> She bought a lovely red car.

5.6 Dash

For a dash, we use the en dash (–) with one space on either side, and not the em dash (—) or a hyphen (-).

✓ She studied him carefully – unknown to him – and then pounced.

✗ She studied him carefully - unknown to him - and then pounced.

A dash indicates a strong pause and emphasises material following the pause. In effect, a dash allows you to redefine what was just written, making it more explicit. The dash is also used to clarify sentence structure, to express a more definite break in sentence structure than commas, and to draw more attention to the enclosed phrase than brackets would:

> The agreements to establish a University Technology Fund – the first investment fund in Africa dedicated to university inventions – were signed in February.
>
> SU has positioned itself as a world-class multilingual South African university – one of only a few in this category – which is sorely needed in a country with 11 official languages.
>
> The quality of our researchers ensures that our impact is far-reaching, with our current number of research chairs now at 51 – nearly double the number we had five years ago.
>
> Foremost among these is the ICT Council project – an investment of R218 million in ICT from 2014 to 2018.
>
> Resilience is the capacity of a system – be it an individual, organisation or an economy – to deal with change and continue to develop.

How to create an en dash (–): Insert the en dash on a desktop keyboard by holding down the Ctrl key while pressing the minus symbol, which is usually located in the upper right-hand corner of the keyboard, on the same line as the Num Lock key (Ctrl + -). You could also use Alt + 0150, or insert the en dash via the Insert tab > Symbol.

Having said this, take care not to overuse the en dash. Its primary function is to set off important or parenthetical information. Often, other punctuation marks can perform the function of the dash. Ask yourself whether the parenthetical information warrants a dash, or whether commas will do:

> The thief, often seen in the area, had escaped with the loot – a whole bagful.
>
> **OR** The thief – often seen in the area – had escaped with a whole bagful of loot.
>
> **OR** The thief, often seen in the area, had escaped with a whole bagful of loot.

(i) The en dash without spaces either side (***see the tip in 5.9***) is used as a substitute for 'to' in certain cases. Note that if the dash is used for this purpose along with the percentage sign, the '%' after the first set of numerals should be omitted.

✓ A range of 3–5%

✗ A range of 3%–5%

In the example above, the en dash is preferred to the hyphen, which may be difficult to read.

(ii) The en dash cannot replace 'to' in the phrase 'from x to y':

✓ It ranged **from** 3% **to** 5%.

✗ It ranged **from** 3–5%.

(iii) Do not use the en dash after 'between', as it cannot replace 'and':

✓ It was somewhere **between** 3% **and** 5%.

✗ It was somewhere **between** 3–5%.

5.7 Ellipsis

The ellipsis (…) is used to indicate that words have been omitted.

(i) Insert a space on either side of the ellipsis.

> He knew that some officials … and members of parliament would be present.

(ii) The ellipsis may also be used to indicate that part of a word has been omitted.

In such cases, there must be no space between the ellipsis and the last letter of the word.

> "I'll be d…!" he shouted.

(iii) The ellipsis is also used to indicate when a complete sentence is followed by omitted material.

Close the punctuation mark at the end of the sentence as usual, and then insert a space and the ellipsis. In the example below, the ellipsis indicates that at least one full sentence has been omitted.

> All that could be heard was the loud roar. … At least one person did not survive the attack.

To insert an automatically generated ellipsis in MS Word, **see 12.7**

Sentences ending in a question or exclamation mark retain the punctuation mark required, whether they precede or follow the ellipsis:

> But how …?
>
> But how had it happened? … they had indeed been able to …!

(iv) Square brackets can be used along with an ellipsis to indicate that a writer or editor has omitted part of a quote.

> The fact is, Lady Bracknell, […] my parents seem to have lost me … I don't actually know who I am […]. I was … well, I was found.[64]
>
> The spirit of our American radicalism is destructive and aimless […]. On the other side, the conservative party […] is timid, and merely defensive of property. […] It does not build, nor write, nor cherish the arts, nor foster religion, nor establish schools.[65]

64 Ritter, 2003:198.
65 *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 2017.

5.8 Full stop

We use a full stop to indicate the end of a full sentence, i.e. a sentence that makes a statement.

> The University received substantial support, for which we are immensely grateful.

(i) Do not use full stops in main headings, subheadings or other headings.

(ii) Do not follow a full stop by another full stop. If the sentence ends in an abbreviation with a full stop, its full stop also serves to mark the end of the sentence.

> The report was compiled by Ernst & Young Inc.

(iii) Stellenbosch University does not use full stops with titles.

> Prof
>
> Dr
>
> Mx
>
> Ms
>
> Mrs
>
> Mr

5.9 Hyphen

A hyphen is, essentially, a joiner. It makes the relationship between two or more words obvious to your reader. It is a short horizontal line (-), usually used without spaces on either side, and differs from an en dash (–) and an em dash (—) in both shape and function. (**See 12.8.**)

Reasons for using hyphens include the following:

(i)   To show that two word elements belong together as one word, such as concepts consisting of a noun and a single letter

> T-shirt
>
> X-ray

(ii)   To make it easier to read words that have prefixes or suffixes

> pre-crash
>
> non-investment
>
> self-assessment
>
> president-elect
>
> bold-type

Over time, these hyphens may disappear from common use, and the two elements may be written as one word.

> cybercrime
>
> cybergeek
>
> email
>
> cybercrash

NOTE: The prefixes and suffixes of some words, such as 'cyber', are sometimes hyphenated, and sometimes not. If you are unsure, check the hyphenation in the *Oxford English Dictionary*.

(iii)   Where words are so frequently linked that they become seen as one concept

> cyber-attack
>
> cyber-bully
>
> cyber-romance
>
> decision-making

(iv) Where two or more nouns or adjectives are used together, and the reader could misinterpret the meaning – the hyphen helps to avoid confusion

> omni-channel approach
>
> socio-economic development
>
> top-down
>
> bottom-up
>
> over-indebtedness
>
> ever-increasing

(v) To make the relationship between words explicit by joining two or more of them in fixed compounds[66]

> anti-inflammatory
>
> son-in-law
>
> four-year programmes
>
> first-year student (but in the first year of study)
>
> three-month-old baby
>
> short-haired dog
>
> one-quarter[67]

(vi) To avoid confusion and ambiguity[68]

Unhyphenated	Hyphenated
a foreign stamp collector (who is a foreigner)	a foreign-stamp collector (who collects stamps from foreign countries)
thirty odd people (thirty people who are unusual or strange)	thirty-odd people (approximately thirty people)

(vii) Where two or more modifiers form a unit and precede a noun

> a well-drawn outline
>
> up-to-date records
>
> a long-standing agreement

NOTE: Compound modifiers that follow a noun are NOT hyphenated.

> The outline is well drawn.
>
> The records are not up to date.
>
> This is an agreement of long standing.

66 Ritter 2003:198; *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 2017.
67 Ritter, 2003:198; *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 2017
68 Burchfield, 2004:370.

(viii) Where prefixes may cause confusion or mispronunciation

re-entry

de-ice

non-effective

vice-chancellor

(ix) Where prefixes are used with names and dates

anti-Darwinism

mid-December

pre-1980s

mid-nineteenth century

(x) For spelt-out numbers above 20 where we need to use them, such as at the beginning of a sentence

twenty-two

eighty-seven

three hundred and forty-three

(xi) For writing out fractions

one-third

five-eighths

(xii) To indicate omitted units common to a series, known as the hanging or suspended hyphen

first-, second- or third-year students

upper- and middle-class citizens

(xiii) To indicate the meaning 'and', 'or', 'until', 'between' or 'from … to' in compounds

✓ owner-builder ('and')

✗ owner/builder

✓ advisor-client relationship ('between')

✗ advisor/client relationship

✓ the Stellenbosch-Strand road ('from … to')

✗ the Stellenbosch/Strand road

For the correct use of the forward slash, see 5.13.

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(xiv) For word division, i.e. to break a word at the end of a line

In English, word division is generally determined either by pronunciation or by derivation.[69] Dictionaries may indicate different divisions for the same word. For the sake of consistency, Stellenbosch University recommends that staff and students follow the word divisions of the online *Oxford English Dictionary*.

> *For technical tips on using hyphenation for word division in MS Word, see 12.8*

RULES OF THUMB FOR WORD DIVISION:

- Do not divide single-syllable words.

- Do not divide words at the ends of more than two consecutive lines.

- Do not divide a word leaving only one letter before the dividing hyphen.

- Do not divide a word leaving only one or two letters at the start of the next line after the dividing hyphen.

- Take care that the dividing hyphen does not obscure the meaning of a word. For instance, 're-cover' as a divided word could mean either 'recover' (recuperate) or 're-cover' (cover for a second time).

- Pronunciation may result in different divisions for the same word in print, depending on its meaning in context. For example, 'divide' as a noun may have no divisions, but as a verb, it may be divided 'di-vide'.

69 *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 2017.

When the hyphen is difficult to read, as in an indication of range, use the en dash rather than the hyphen.

✓ LU2–LU5

✗ LU2-LU5
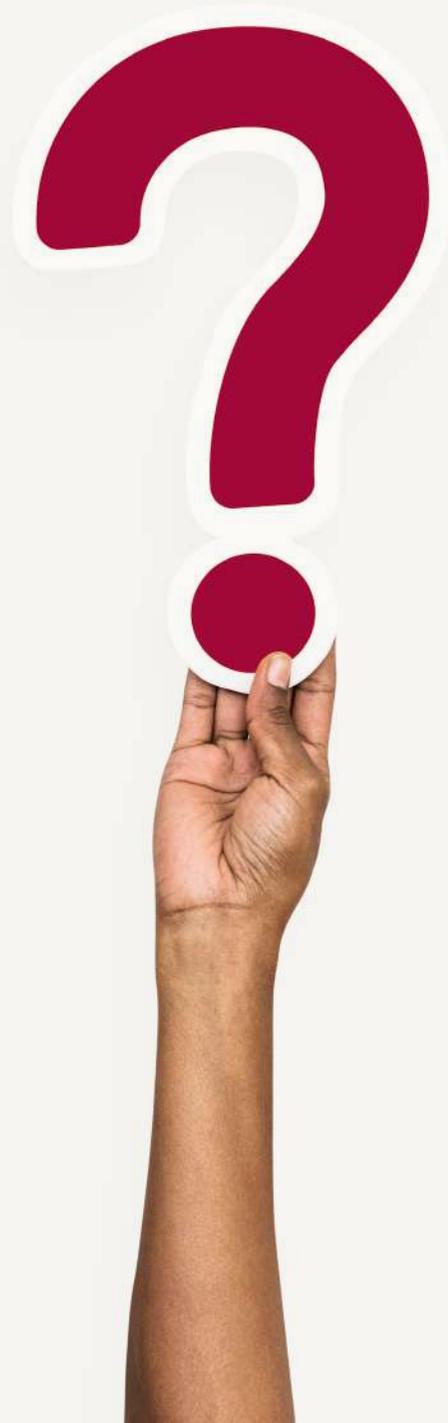
5.10 Question mark

A question mark is used to indicate a direct question.

(i) Content that follows a question mark starts with a capital letter …

> Would you like chocolate? Cake? Cream?

… except when a question is contained within another sentence:

> The concern Is it possible? is likely to cause many sleepless nights.

(ii) The first words of questions contained within another sentence may or may not be capitalised themselves, depending on the intended impact, and on the formality of the context.

> This prompts the question, Can this be allowed to continue?
>
> She wondered, why not?

(iii) Place the question mark where the question ends in a sentence.

> The concern Is it possible? is likely to cause many sleepless nights.

(iv) Avoid the double question mark (??) and the interrobang (?!) in professional writing, as these are used to add incredulity to a question.

5.11 Quotation marks

We use quotation marks to indicate that the words we write are not our own, or that words are used in a different manner than usual.

(i)   Double quotation marks are usually reserved for direct speech, for quotations from other sources, and for titles, as set out in *1.11.4.*

(ii) Single quotation marks are used when words are meant ironically or carry a particular significance, when words are referred to as words themselves, when words are used out of context, and when words may be unfamiliar to the reader.

> Irony: The question is whether the 'wonderful' plan worked out.
>
> Words referred to as words themselves: 'Affect' and 'effect' are often confused.

(iii) Words defined for the purposes of a particular text are used with quotation marks the first time they are used, and then appear without quotation marks in the remainder of the text:

> The expression 'generic black' is employed as an umbrella term in this document. [Later] Generic black students must form a certain percentage of the student profile.

(iv) Stellenbosch University prefers single quotation marks within double ones for quotations within quotations.

> "I suggest," she said, "that you embrace the theory of 'no pain, no gain' when working on that six-pack."

(v)   Use single, not double, quotation marks in newspaper headlines and headings in newsletters.

> Stormers told to 'win back the supporters'

(vi) Put the final (terminal) punctuation inside the quotation marks when the quoted material forms a complete sentence or question. This is in line with general UK English usage.

Do not duplicate the terminal punctuation by putting another mark outside the quotation mark.

> ✓ He asked, "Would that be all right?"
> ✗ He asked, "Would that be all right?".
>
> ✓ She remarked, "I suggest that you focus on your immediate environment."
> ✗ She remarked, "I suggest that you focus on your immediate environment.".

(vii) When the quoted material does not form a complete sentence or utterance, put the terminal punctuation outside the quotation marks.

> She remarked that I should focus on my "immediate environment".

NOTE: The symbol for measurement in inches is " (the double prime), which may also be indicated by straight (not smart) double quotation marks.

The symbols for arcminutes and arcseconds (subdivisions of the measurement for degrees of angles) are ' and " respectively (the single and double prime), which may also be indicated by straight (not smart) single and double quotation marks:
40° 11' 15"

Note the difference between straight quotation marks ('...' or "...") and smart quotation marks ('...' or "..."). The latter are in the shape of the numerals 6 and 9. Choose one type and use it consistently throughout your document. See **12.5** for how to set your computer to produce either straight or smart quotation marks automatically.

5.12 Semicolon

The semicolon is used to structure components that belong together, helping the reader to see the relationship between components clearly and at first glance.

Therefore, we would use a semicolon to link (in a single sentence) two independent clauses that are closely related.

> I have an early meeting tomorrow; I cannot go out tonight.

(i) When a sentence already has several commas, use a semicolon instead of a comma to indicate a stronger division.

> They were allowed to proceed, even without the required documents, to the next destination; but having encountered some resistance, they changed their minds.

(ii) When an unbulleted list consists of long items, semicolons help keep the sentence structure clear.

> Semicolons are very helpful: they provide strong breaks; they don't break up the structure of a sentence; and they are useful stepping-stones.

(iii) In a list where the items themselves contain commas, use a semicolon to clarify the internal hierarchy of the items.

> Those present included Trafalgar High, Cape Town; Paul Roos Gymnasium, Stellenbosch; and Windsor Senior Secondary, Port Elizabeth.

5.13 Slash/stroke/solidus

The (forward) slash or solidus is used mainly to separate alternatives (**not** as a replacement for 'and' or 'or') and is usually neither preceded nor followed by a space.

> solidus/slash/forward slash/slant/oblique
>
> and/or

(i)   Take note that using a slash can cause ambiguity.

> pink daisies/roses (may refer to pink daisies or pink roses OR to pink daisies or roses of any colour)
>
> executive members/consultants (may refer to consultants who are also executives OR to consultants who are not)

Sometimes, spaces are inserted on either side of the slash in an effort to clarify the meaning.

> pink daisies / roses
>
> executive members / consultants

Simply changing the sequence of the items can also avoid any ambiguity and obviate the need for additional spaces.

> roses/pink daisies
>
> consultants/executive members

(ii) The slash forms part of certain abbreviations.

> a/c (account)
>
> c/o (care of)
>
> 24/7 (twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week)

(iii) Do not use a slash instead of a full stop in abbreviations in general.

- ✓ PO Box
- ✗ p/o box

- ✓ BA degree
- ✗ B/A degree

- ✓ HO building
- ✗ H/O building

(iv) Use a slash to indicate a financial year that extends over more than one calendar year.

> 2021/2022 year of assessment
>
> OR
>
> 2020/21 year of assessment

(v) Do not use a slash to indicate the meaning 'and', 'until', 'between' or 'from … to', except in the above case.

Section 6

Grammar

Grammar is essential
for communication.
It makes texts easier,
clearer, and more
enjoyable to read.
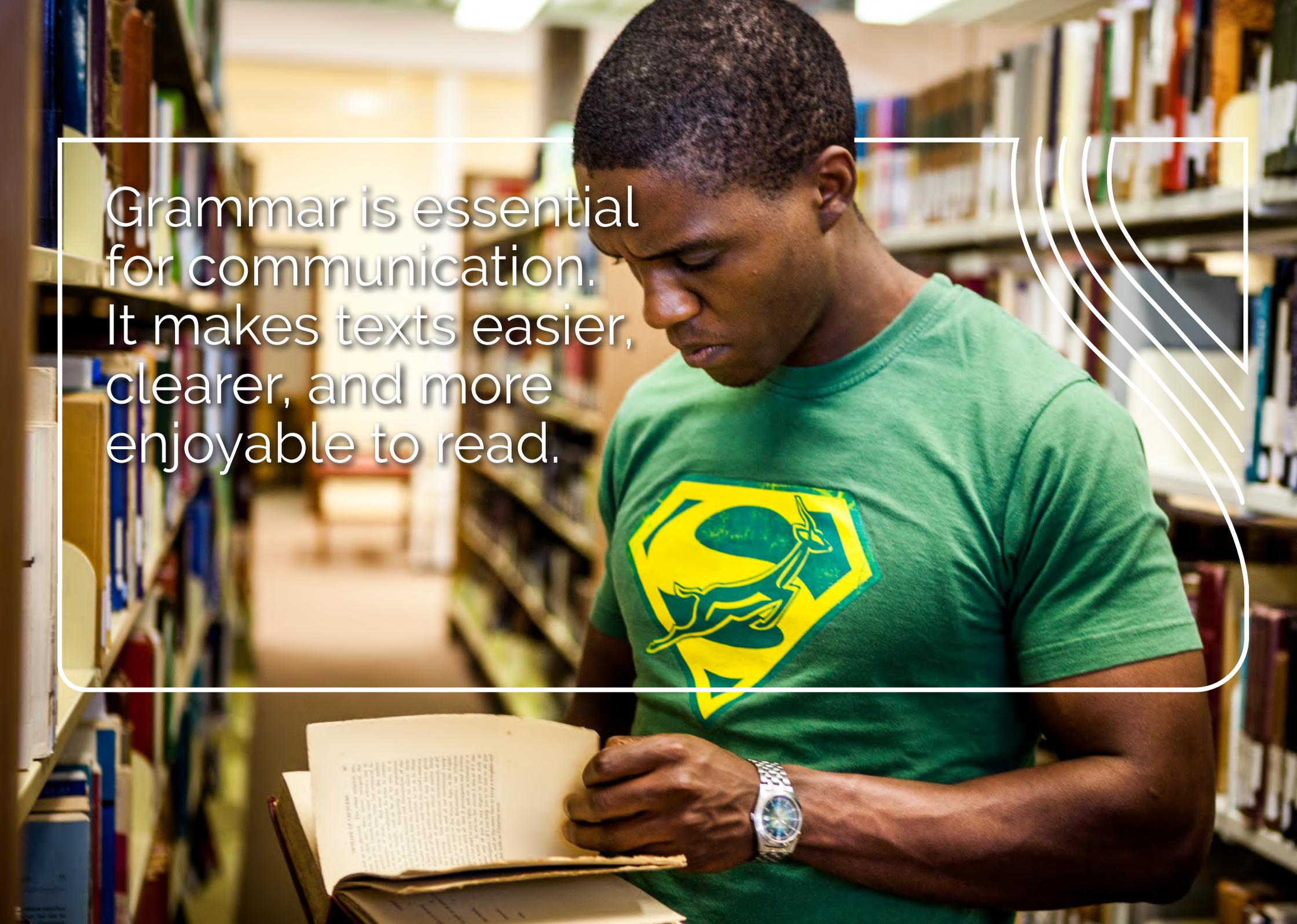
6. Grammar

In this section, we consider some of the grammatical issues that writers may struggle with. The section includes tips on pronouns, the use of 'that' and 'which', phrases that belong together, the use of 'amount' and 'number', subject-verb agreement (concord) and compound adjectives.

6.1 Pronouns

6.1.1 Strive for gender neutrality in pronoun use

The exclusive use of 'he'/'him'/'his' or 'she'/'her'/'her(s)' as pronouns of common gender to refer to a person of unspecified sex is considered sexist and misleading.

- ✗ The driver is required to clean his car windows.
- ✗ The driver is required to clean his/her car windows.
- ✗ The book will be of value to the student nurse preparing for **her** examinations. (Not all nurses are female.)

Even the previously politically correct 's/he', 'him/her', 'he or she' and 'his or her' exclude people who do not identify as male or female (transgender, genderqueer, genderfluid and other non-binary individuals) and are, therefore, not gender-neutral. Such formulations are

70 Ritter, 2003:106.
71 In fact, the use of the 'singular they' dates back at least to the 14th century. *Oxford English Dictionary*, 2021.

also rather clumsy,[70] producing long sentences and an overabundance of pronouns, and should be avoided. When there is no way of knowing whether the person is male, female or non-binary, the best solution is to **use the plural form**.

- ✓ Drivers are required to clean their car windows.
- ✓ The book will be of value to student nurses preparing for their examinations.

Today,[71] the use of the **singular 'they', 'their'** and **'them'**, instead of singular pronouns, is considered acceptable.

> *Also see 1.10 and 2.2.3.5*

6.1.2 Avoid confusion of subject and object forms of pronouns

- ✓ It was up to Michael and **me**.
- ✗ It was up to Michael and **I**.

Remember that object pronouns ('me', 'him', 'her', 'us', 'them') follow verbs and prepositions. Subject pronouns ('I', 'he', 'she', 'we', 'they') usually precede verbs.

Another useful test in the case of a compound subject, as in the example above, is to leave out the first subject:

- ✓ It was up to … me.
- ✗ It was up to … I.

6.1.3 Incorrect use of reflexive pronoun instead of personal pronoun

✓ The task was undertaken by the manager and **me**.

✗ The task was undertaken by the manager and **myself**.

NOTE: A reflexive pronoun is used where the subject and the direct object are the same entity (in other words, when the noun or pronoun is doing something to or for itself).

Some verbs can only be used reflexively. To 'perjure', for example, can only be reflexive, since one can only perjure oneself.
Other verbs can be used either reflexively or non-reflexively, for example 'shave':

> He shaved (himself).
> OR
> He shaved the patient.

Reflexive pronouns, in contrast, are more frequently used incorrectly, such as in the following example:

✗ Please forward the information to myself.

✓ Please forward the information to me.

The reflexive pronoun may be used to reinforce the subject, as in:

> I myself have done the very same thing.

In this case, you are emphasising that you are speaking about yourself, not about someone else. However, we do not recommend this use.

6.1.4 Clarity about the antecedent of the pronoun

The antecedent of a pronoun is the noun that is later replaced by the pronoun.

> Dr Ndlovu asked Sarah why she had not handed in her assignment.

If you use 'it', 'this' or 'which', make sure that the antecedent of the pronoun is clear, as in:

✓ The teacher addressed the students at the assembly. It was the right time for such a talk.

✗ The teacher addressed the students at the assembly. It took place at the right time.

✓ The official's comment was on record. Management acknowledged it. (i.e. the comment)

✗ The official's comment was on record, which was acknowledged by management.

The following example would be a case of a misrelated antecedent:

✗ In **Kgositsile's** poetry, **he** uses the aural sensory mode to structure …

Here, the pronoun 'he' is probably meant to refer to 'Kgositsile', but 'Kgositsile' is only present in the sentence as a possessive noun, 'Kgositsile's'. You can replace 'Kgositsile's' by the possessive pronoun 'his', but not by the subject pronoun 'he':

> In Kgositsile's poetry, his use of the aural sensory mode to structure …
> OR
> In his poetry, Kgositsile uses the aural sensory mode to structure …

6.2 Gerunds

A gerund is the present participle of the verb (the verb form ending in '-ing') that serves as a noun. The modifiers of a gerund require the possessive case:

✓ I would appreciate **your** attending the meeting.

✗ I would appreciate you attending the meeting.

✓ It is dependent on **his** signing the document.

✗ It is dependent on him signing the document.

NOTE: An example of a Latin present participle that is still widely used at tertiary institutions is 'graduandi', which refers to students who are eligible to graduate, but have not yet had their degrees officially conferred on them. The English equivalent of 'graduandi' is 'graduand'.

6.3 The use of 'that', 'which' and 'who'

The relative pronouns 'that', 'which' and 'who' are often used interchangeably. 'That', however, can only be used in a restrictive clause, whereas 'which' and 'who' can be used in both restrictive and non-restrictive clauses.[72]

What is a restrictive clause?

A restrictive clause is one in which the relative pronoun ('that' or 'which') refers to a specific object, person or situation, and the clause is **not** separated by commas from the rest of the sentence. Therefore, the clause is **essential to the meaning of the sentence.** Say, for instance, Shireen tells Anthea: 'My colleague owned the car that was involved in the accident, and now feels nervous to drive it.' In this example, Shireen wants Anthea to know that the car involved in the accident belonged to her colleague, which is the reason for her being nervous to drive the car. If you take away the relative clause 'that was involved in the accident', the main clause – 'My colleague owned the car, and now feels nervous to drive it' – will no longer carry the same meaning, and certainly will not show the link between her colleague's nervousness to drive the car and the reason for that nervousness. In the above example 'that' could easily be replaced by 'which', as in the following sentences:

The bicycle **that** I was riding yesterday was a racing bike.

OR

The bicycle **which** I was riding yesterday was a racing bike.

72 Burchfield, 2004:773-775.

In the above examples, 'that' and 'which' are used to refer to a specific bicycle (the one the speaker was riding the day before), and not to any other bicycle that the speaker might sometimes use. If you remove the relative clause 'that I was riding yesterday', the person you are addressing will not know which bicycle was a racing bike. It is essential to the meaning of the sentence (in other words, restrictive).

The same applies to the use of 'that or 'who', for example:

> People that have higher incomes should be more heavily taxed.
>
> OR
>
> People who have higher incomes should be more heavily taxed.

Here, 'that' and 'who' are used to refer to specific people (those who earn higher incomes), and not to all people. If you remove the relative clause 'that have higher incomes' or 'who have higher incomes', the reader will think that the sentence refers to all people. The relative clause is essential to the meaning of the sentence and, therefore, restrictive.

To recap: In restrictive clauses, there is no comma before 'that', 'which' or 'who' or at the end of the relative clause, unless it marks the end of the sentence.

HOWEVER

If the relative clause can be removed from the sentence without detracting from the meaning, the clause is non-restrictive. 'That' cannot be used in non-restrictive clauses – you must use either 'which' or 'who', whichever is applicable, with commas around the relative clause.

Imagine Shireen tells Anthea: 'My colleague owns a Mercedes sports car, which she plans to sell, and says that it is an excellent car.'

Now Anthea immediately knows which type of car Shireen is talking about – a Mercedes sports car. The fact that the car is about to be sold is additional information, and not an essential part of the message.

To decide when to use punctuation around the clause, you must decide whether the information in the clause is essential to understanding the full meaning of the sentence (restrictive) or is simply information that could be left out (non-restrictive) and not critical to the meaning of the sentence.

AS A RULE OF THUMB:

Non-restrictive: If the information provided in the relative clause is like a parenthesis, simply additional information and not essential to the meaning of your sentence, use 'which' and set off the phrase or clause with a comma.

Restrictive: When the information provided in the relative clause is essential to the meaning of your sentence, use 'that' or 'which' and do **not** use commas to set off the phrase or clause.

Restrictive clause

- ✓ People who/that earn higher incomes should pay more tax.
- ✗ People, **who earn higher incomes**, should pay more tax.
- ✗ People should pay more tax.

- ✓ The bicycle **that/which** I was riding yesterday was a racing bike.
- ✗ The bicycle, which I was riding yesterday, was a racing bike.
- ✗ The bicycle was a racing bike.

Non-restrictive clause

- ✓ My colleague owns a Mercedes sports car, which she plans to sell, and says that it is an excellent car.
- ✗ My colleague owns a Mercedes sports car which she plans to sell and says that it is an excellent car.
- ✓ My colleague owns a Mercedes sports car and says that it is an excellent car.

6.4 The use of 'for example' and 'et cetera' (or 'etcetera')

'For example' ('e.g.') and 'et cetera' ('etc.') are often used unnecessarily in sentences that already contain words that mean the same thing. It is important to avoid this kind of repetition (tautology):

- ✓ The event will exhibit the models of several car manufacturers, **e.g.** Ford, Opel and BMW.
- ✗ The event will exhibit the models of several car manufacturers, **e.g.** Ford, Opel, BMW, etc.
- ✓ I absolutely detest vegetables **such as** onions, cabbage and squash.
- ✗ I absolutely detest vegetables **such as, for example**, onions, cabbage and squash.

In embedded lists that end in 'etc.', do not add a comma after 'etc.':

- ✓ Prof Tim Noakes believes one should cut out sugar, bread, rice, pasta, etc. when following the Banting eating plan.
- ✗ Prof Tim Noakes believes one should cut out sugar, bread, rice, pasta, etc., when following the Banting eating plan.

NOTE: If you use 'include', it means that only some of several possibilities are mentioned. Therefore, adding 'e.g.' or 'etc.' would be tautological (repetitive).

If you wish to indicate a comprehensive list, use 'entail', 'comprise', 'consist of' or similar expressions.

6.5 The use of 'first' and 'firstly'

Use 'first' and 'firstly' only when listing items or points. 'Firstly' used in this way replaces 'first' in its adverbial sense. If you use 'first', ensure that you follow up with 'second', 'third', and so on. If you use 'firstly', follow up with 'secondly', 'thirdly', and so on.

There are three good reasons for not buying the house: Firstly, it is outside our price range; secondly, it is too small; thirdly, it is too near to the shopping mall.

OR:

There are several reasons why I consider the house to be too expensive: First, it is in a bad location; second, it has a damp problem, and third, it is too small for your needs.

Don't use 'firstly' to substitute 'first' in any of its other adverbial uses:

- ✓ When he first arrived there, he hated the public transport system.
- ✗ When he firstly arrived there, he hated the public transport system.

6.6 Parallelism

Using parallel structures in a sentence or consecutive sentences makes the writing more readable and the text easier to process.
By **'parallelism'** we mean having matching forms of words, phrases or clauses in a sentence, especially:

→ phrases joined by a coordinating conjunction ('and', 'but', 'or', 'nor', 'for', 'so', 'yet');

→ sentences that contain recognised pairs ('both … and', 'neither … nor', 'not … nor');

→ formulations that contain other recognised pairs ('on the one hand … on the other hand', 'firstly, secondly, thirdly … finally', 'not only … but [also]'); or

→ sentences that echo each other.

Recognised pairs are phrases that belong together and are always used together such as: 'either … or', 'neither … nor', 'on the one hand … on the other hand', 'firstly, secondly, thirdly … finally', and 'not only … but [also]'.

Correct parallelism	Lacking parallelism
She likes bak**ing**, hik**ing** and read**ing** She likes to bake, hike and read	She likes bak**ing**, danc**ing** and **to read**
He likes play**ing** soccer and runn**ing** He likes to play soccer and **to run**	He likes soccer and running
The cat ran **across the garden**, jumped **over the fence** and sprinted **down the road**	The cat ran **across the garden**, jumped **over the fence** and sprinted **away**
In **Part 1** of this guide, we will examine the basic principles of writing	In the **first part** of this guide, we will examine the basic principles of writing
In **Part 2** we will discuss the merits of a good writer	In **Part 2**, we will discuss the merits of a good writer
He will be remembered for **both his** flippant nature **and his** exuberant style	He will be remembered for both **his** flippant nature and exuberant style
He was neither **hard-working** nor **diligent**	He was neither **hard-working** nor a **stickler**
He was not only **intelligent** but [also] **hard working**	He was not only intelligent but also a hard worker
Not only did **he go out** of his way to help, but he **also provided** the tools to work with	Not only did **he go out** of his way to help, but **the workshop** was fully equipped
You can choose **between going** to the farm and working on the land **or taking** a holiday in Mauritius	You can choose **between going** to the farm or **you can choose** to take a holiday

NOTE: When a clause with 'neither' or 'nor' is used after a **negative** clause, we invert the subject and the verb after 'neither' and 'nor':
He had not done any studying at home, neither **had he** brought his books to class to study there.
BUT
He had neither done any studying at home, nor brought his books to class to study there.

6.7 Phrases that belong together

As mentioned in 6.5, certain pairs should always be used together:

> either … or
>
> neither … nor
>
> on the one hand … on the other hand
>
> firstly, secondly, thirdly … finally
>
> not only … but also
>
> between … and

One of the most misused pairs is 'on the one hand … on the **other hand**', as 'on the other hand' is frequently used on its own to highlight a contrast with a preceding statement or thought. In such instances, rather replace it with 'in contrast to' or a similar phrase.

6.8 Difference between 'among' and 'between'

The difference between '**among**' and '**between**' is often confusing. Conventionally, '**among**' expresses a relationship between several items, whereas '**between**' is thought to express the relationship of only one thing to another thing. This is not entirely correct.

In fact, you can use '**between**' for any number of elements, provided that all the elements are separate and distinct.

> He had to choose **between** a bicycle, a train set, a pair of sneakers, and a new backpack for his birthday present.[73]

You can also use '**between**' for multiple one-to-one relationships:

> Negotiations **between** the member states collapsed last night.[74]

However, if you view the member states as a group and not as distinct members, you would have to use '**among**':

> There was not much unity **among** the member states.
>
> She was happiest when she was **among** her friends.

Summary of the difference between 'among' and 'between'		
'among' and 'between'	'among' expresses a relationship between several items	'between' expresses the relationship of one thing to another thing OR one thing to many other things OR many things to many other things 'The difference between dogs and cats and wild dogs and wild cats is that …'

73 Ticak, M. N.d. Between vs. among – what's the difference? [Online]. Available at https://www.grammarly.com/blog/between-among/.
74 *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 2017.

93

6.9 Wordiness

Try to avoid wordiness in writing. The following examples provide some suggestions on how to avoid using more words than necessary to convey your message effectively.

the question as to whether	whether
he is a man who	he
owing to the fact that	since/because
he has been engaged in the study of	he has studied
it will be seen from consideration of the data in Table 2 that	Table 2 shows that
at an earlier date	previously/earlier
in the modern period of time	today/in the modern era
of course	(omit)
it is interesting to note that	(omit)
the great majority of	most
during the course of	during/while
it would appear that	apparently
it is admitted that	clearly
it is possible that the cause is	the cause may be
it has long been known	(omit)
have the capacity to	can/is able to or say what it is that the person or thing is responsible for, e.g. 'manages'
has a responsibility for	is responsible for or say what it is that the person or thing is responsible for, e.g. 'manages'
if this is not the case	if not
until such time as	until
whether or not	whether
a number of	several
adequate number of	enough
as a consequence of	because
despite the fact that	although
due to the fact that	because/since/as
during the month of may	in may
give consideration to	think about/consider
make an application	apply
make a complaint	complain
in the light of/in view of	because of
it should be noted that	note that/remember that
not accessible	inaccessible

6.10 The use of 'amount' and 'number'

'Amount' refers to things that are uncountable or counted in bulk (to mean 'quantity', usually with nouns that have no plural). 'Number' refers to things that are counted individually.

✓ She donates large amounts of money, but has a small number of friends.

✗ There was a large amount of people at the gathering.

NOTE: 'Number' in the sense of 'a number of + plural noun' normally requires a **plural verb**.

A number of banks have been victims of computer fraud.

'Number' in the sense of '**the** number of + plural noun' normally requires a **singular verb**.

The number of MPs has increased.[75]

6.11 The subjunctive mood

The English subjunctive is a special verb form used to express something that is unlikely to happen, desired or imagined. Some people consider its use to be rare, but it is quite common in US English and does retain a certain elegance. It is normally used in more formal documents and writing, and may be dropped in less formal communication.

Present subjunctive

You will recognise the present subjunctive from certain set phrases that we frequently use:

God **bless** you!

God **help** us!

Heaven **help** us!

Heaven **forbid** that it should happen to me.

Suffice it to say he escaped with only a caution.

NOTE: The present subjunctive has no '-s' in the third personal singular and is the same for both the singular and plural persons of the verb ('I', 'you', 'he', 'she', 'we', 'you', 'they'). The present subjunctive is used in subordinate (dependent) clauses that follow verbs "expressing a desire, a demand, a recommendation, or a resolve" and are linked to the main clause by '**that**':[76]

I only ask that he **cease** behaving in this extraordinary manner.
It is vital that they **be** stopped at once.
Is it really necessary that she **work** all hours of the day?
I demand that he **do** something to make up for this.[77]

75 Burchfield, 2004:534.
76 Collins. 2021. How do you use the present subjunctive in English? [Online]. Available at https://grammar.collinsdictionary.com/easy-learning/how-do-you-use-the-present-subjunctive-in-english.
77 Collins. 2021. What is the subjunctive in English? [Online]. Available at https://grammar.collinsdictionary.com/easy-learning/what-is-the-subjunctive-in-english.

Past subjunctive

You will recognise the past subjunctive from certain set phrases that we frequently use:

> If your father **were** alive, he would help you.
>
> If I **were** rich, I would buy a Ferrari.
>
> I wish I **were** taller.
>
> If only he **were** here now![78]

It is also used after 'as if', 'as though' and similar expressions to express doubt or improbability:

> You talk to him as if he **were** your slave!
>
> Some people behave as though dogs **were** human.

The use of the past subjunctive is less common than the present subjunctive, and many people replace the past subjunctive with the ordinary past form of the verb. However, the past subjunctive is used in more formal writing.

6.12 Subject-verb agreement: collective nouns

In general, subject-verb agreement requires that a singular noun (such as 'management', 'board' or 'staff') take a singular verb, and that a plural subject (such as 'media' – a controversial example) take a plural verb.

However, in the case of collective nouns, UK English is flexible (more so than US English, which tends to insist on the singular).

Collective nouns are singular when we think of the group, and plural when we think of the individuals that make up the group.

Generally, we instinctively use a **plural verb** when a prepositional phrase with a **plural object** follows the collective noun.

This is demonstrated in the example below, where the prepositional phrase 'of samples' follows the collective noun 'majority':

> The **majority of samples** *were extracted* from regular biopsy procedures.

Nevertheless, it would be equally correct to say:

> The **majority of samples** *was extracted* from regular biopsy procedures.

78 Collins. 2021. How do you use the past subjunctive in English? [Online]. Available at https://grammar.collinsdictionary.com/easy-learning/how-do-you-use-the-past-subjunctive-in-english

The following examples show how the verb changes from singular to plural depending on whether we view the collective noun as a cohesive group or as a group of individuals:

A dozen eggs **is** probably enough.

A dozen friends **are** coming over this afternoon.

The staff make**s** certain decisions around here.

The staff **are** all on holiday.

The majority usually win**s**.

The majority **were** wearing masks.

When in doubt, trust your instincts.

A NOTE ON 'DATA':

Being the plural form of the Latin term 'datum', 'data' should be treated as a plural noun in academic writing or writing relating to science, mathematics and finance. However, in more general writing, 'data' is sometimes used as a plural noun, and at other times as an uncountable noun.[79] Elsewhere, it seems that most English speakers treat it as a singular mass noun. Remember to be consistent whichever form you choose.

79 Soanes, C & Stevenson, A (eds). 2008. *Concise Oxford English Dictionary*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
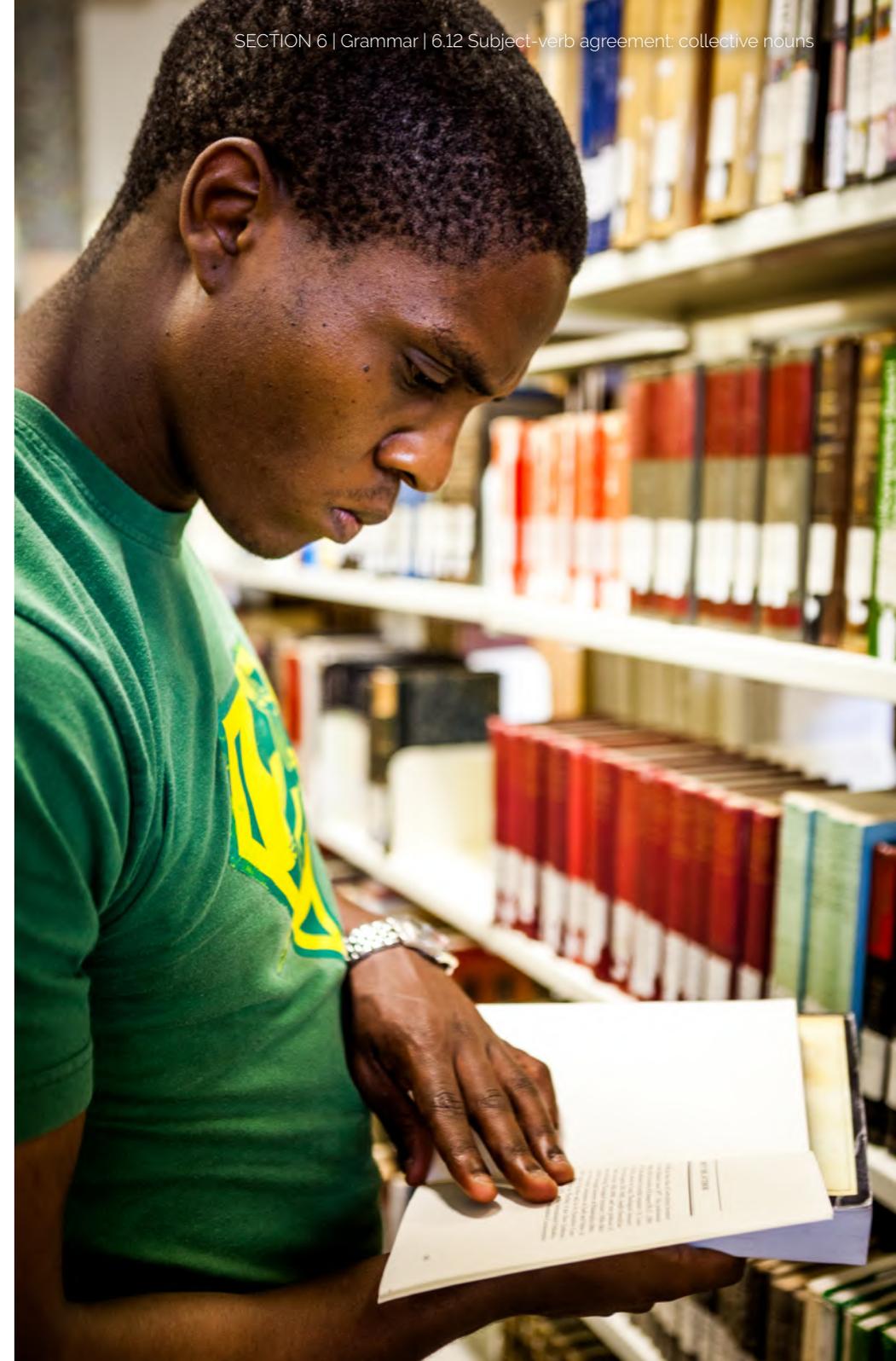
6.13. Plural forms of compound nouns

How does one form the plural of a compound noun such as 'Attorney General', 'passer-by' or 'mother-in-law'?

Compound words formed by a noun and an adjective, or by two nouns connected by a preposition, generally form their plurals by changing the key word in the compound. Here are some examples:

Singular	Plural
Attorney General	Attorneys General
brother-in-law (father-in-law, mother-in-law, sister-in-law, son-in-law, etc.)	brothers-in-law (fathers-in-law, mothers-in-law, sisters-in-law, sons-in-law, etc.)
commander-in-chief	commanders-in-chief
court martial	courts martial or court martials
cul-de-sac	cul-de-sacs or culs-de-sac
gin and tonic	gins and tonic
fleur-de-lis	fleurs-de-lis
Governor General	Governors General
Lord Chancellor	Lord Chancellors
man-of-war	men-of-war
passer-by	passers-by
Poet Laureate	Poets Laureate or Poet Laureates
point-to-point	point-to-points

Section 7

Abbreviations

We abbreviate words
or phrases to save time,
effort or space.

7. Abbreviations

7.1 In general

(i) Preferably write out words in full in running text. Sometimes, however, abbreviations help improve the readability of the text, such as when they are used in parentheses, in captions or in tables.

(ii) If you do abbreviate, use abbreviations that are **recognisable.**
'Authoritative' dictionaries (Oxford, Cambridge, Chambers, Collins, etc.) provide the best indication of commonly recognised abbreviations.

(iii) For guidance on whether to write abbreviations **with or without a full stop**, see *7.2 and 7.3.*

(iv) **Do not carry over** part of an abbreviation to the next line.

(v) **A hyphen** is used in an abbreviation only if the full form also takes a hyphen.

> Anglo-Ir. (Anglo-Irish)

(vi) Be careful of **redundancy**.

> HI virus
>
> HIV virus – where the 'V' of 'HIV' already stands for virus

(vii) Do not use the **endings '-nd', '-st', '-rd' or '-th'** with a date, unless no month is mentioned or you are quoting another source.

> ✓ They will arrive on the 16th.
> ✗ They will arrive on 16th May.
> ✓ Her date of birth is 22 May 1987.
> ✗ Her date of birth is 22nd May 1987.

(viii) **Names of days and months** are abbreviated to three or four letters, except for May, June and July.[80]

> Mon. Tue. Wed. Thur. Fri. Sat. Sun.
> Jan. Feb. Mar. Apr. May June July Aug. Sept. Oct. Nov. Dec.

The plural forms of abbreviations do not take an apostrophe, irrespective of whether or not they are written with a full stop in their singular form.

Full form	Abbreviation (singular form)	Abbreviation (plural form)
Captain	Capt	Capts
Saint	St	Sts
editor	ed.	eds
chapter	ch.	chs
short message service	SMS	SMSs
non-governmental organisation	NGO	NGOs

7.2 Abbreviations without full stops (excluding initialisms and acronyms)

The general rule for writing abbreviations without full stops in UK English is that the abbreviation normally includes the first and last letters of the full word, such as 'St' for Saint (or street). If this is not the case, the abbreviation is generally written with a full stop, such as 'no.' for number. Plurals do not take apostrophes.

However, there are some specific conventions for certain categories of abbreviations without full stops, as you will see below.

Singular	Plural
Ms	Mss
Miss	Misses
Mrs	Mmes
Mx	Mxes[81]
Mr	Messrs
Dr	Drs
Prof	Profs

(i) Academic degrees and other qualifications

> BAHons
>
> DTh
>
> MBChB

If the name of a qualification consists of two or more elements, spaces are inserted between the elements only if the full form of one (or more) of the elements is used:

> AdvCertEd
>
> BUT
>
> PGDip (Animal Sc)

NOTE:

✓ LF Ackerman

✗ L.F. Ackerman

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[81] Although there is insufficient evidence of an established plural of 'Mx', 'Mxes' "has some currency". Merriam-Webster. 2021. How do you pluralize 'Mr.' and 'Mrs.'? [Online]. Available at https://www.merriam-webster.com/words-at-play/how-to-pluralize-mr-mrs-miss-honorifics-usage.

(ii) Metric symbols

- Also remember to insert a space between the figure and the symbol, and do not add an 's' for plural forms.

> 45 ml
>
> 5 kg
>
> 15 °C

- The international SI symbol for 'litre' is a capital 'L' or a lowercase 'l'. Because the small letter 'l' may be confused with the number 1, however, the symbol 'ℓ' is generally used.

(iii) Symbols for chemical elements

> Na
>
> Fe
>
> Cl

To ensure that the figure and symbol do not become separated when the sentence flows over to the next line, insert a hard (non-breaking) space between them.

How to insert a hard space: Press and hold the Ctrl and the Shift keys, and then press the space bar.

(iv) Currency symbols

There is no space between the figure and the symbol.

> 50c
>
> R12,50
>
> US$10

In South Africa, we use the decimal comma.

In most financial and accounting texts, the comma is used as the thousands separator (e.g. R1,500,000.00). Do not use the comma as a thousands separator in any other type of text. See Numbers and digits 9.1(x) for more on this.

Abbreviations for monetary amounts may appear with or without a full stop. The University prefers the form **without the full stop**:

> R4 m OR R4 m.

7.3 Abbreviations with full stops

(i) Write **regular** abbreviations in **lower case**, with no spaces between the letters of a word group.

> etc. (et cetera – and others)
>
> i.e. (id est – that is)
>
> e.o. (ex officio – in official capacity)
>
> e.g. (exempli gratia – for example

A NOTE ON LATIN ABBREVIATIONS:

- **Avoid** Latin abbreviations as far as possible, except for those that are in general use, such as 'e.g.', 'etc.' and 'i.e.'.

- In **academic texts**, Latin abbreviations such as 'cf.' (confer or compare) and 'et al.' (and others) are more acceptable. Nonetheless, in general content, we prefer the English equivalents.

- **Well-known Latin expressions** such as 'et al.', 'e.g.', 'etc.', and 'i.e.' need not be italicised.

(ii) When the **abbreviation is followed by a figure**, add a space.

> p. 5
>
> pp. 12–15

(iii) When the **abbreviation is followed by a figure** that turns the abbreviation into a **proper name**, it starts with a capital.

> ch. (chapter) – Ch. 5
>
> gr. (grade) – Gr. 6

(iv) The plural forms of abbreviations with full stops do not take an apostrophe. They are also written without the full stop because, technically, they become contractions (abbreviations without full stops) when one includes the last letter of the plural word:

> ch. – chs (chapter – chapters)
>
> ed. – eds (editor – editors)

(v) When an abbreviation contains more than one full stop, put the 's' after the final one when creating a plural.

> E.T.A. (estimated time of arrival)
>
> E.T.A.s

(vi) Although the abbreviation for telephone number (tel.) is usually written with a full stop, the University prefers to leave out the full stop when used with a colon.

> tel.
>
> BUT in combination with colon:
>
> tel:

This principle may also be applied in other instances where an abbreviation is usually concluded by a full stop, but when a colon follows the full stop.

(vii) A few abbreviations have irregular plurals (e.g. 'Messrs' as plural for 'Mr'). In some cases, the irregular plurals stem from the Latin convention of doubling the letter to create plurals:

ff. (folios, or following pages)

pp. (pages)

ll. (lines)

MSS (manuscripts)

7.4 Initialisms and acronyms

(i) Initialisms

Initialisms are widely recognised abbreviations of nouns that are formed by taking the initial letters of a group of words. Each letter is pronounced separately, e.g. 'SABC', 'FBI', 'CD' and 'IQ'.[82]

Initialisms are written in all capitals, without full stops or spaces. The use of capital letters serves to distinguish initialisms from ordinary words.

> ANC, MP, SMS, HIV, TRC, SAB, USA, CV

(ii) Acronyms

Acronyms too are formed from the initial letters of a series of words or, occasionally, from the initial syllables of words, but are pronounceable as words according to normal English word patterns.[83] Examples include 'Covid-19', 'Aids', 'Unesco', 'laser', 'scuba' and 'radar'.[84]

Because of the dynamic nature of language, some abbreviations later become acronyms, and the **use of upper or lower case** may vary from one writer to the next. More than one form may be acceptable, provided that one form is used consistently in a particular text. 'COVID-19' is an example of an acronym that became familiar and widely known within a relatively short space of time. Its use is so widespread that the University has come to prefer the form '**Covid-19**', partly for reasons of readability.[85]

> *Also see the note in 1.11.6.*

82 Burchfield, 2004:18.
83 *Oxford English Dictionary*, 2021.
84 Burchfield, 2004:17–18.
85 Capitalising acronyms reduces readability, as capital letters tend to have a uniform rectangular shape, making it difficult for readers to distinguish them by shape. Also, readers often experience all caps as 'shouting'.

> acquired immune deficiency syndrome (Aids or AIDS)
> Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu or COSATU)
> South African Revenue Service (Sars or SARS)
>
> BUT
>
> 'Absa' (Amalgamated Banks of South Africa) is written only with an initial capital.[86]

(iii) If an **acronym** is **not immediately recognisable** or not that well known, capitalise it to avoid confusion with a regular word.

> CAD – computer-aided design
> GET – general education and training
> WHO – World Health Organization
> SMSs – NOT: 'SMSes' or 'SMS's' BUT: SMSed and SMSing[87]

> **NOTE:** We retain the 'z' in the World Health Organization's name, since it is a proper name. The same applies to other proper names containing 'z' forms or other US English variants, such as 'center'.

(iv) Foreign-language abbreviation

Many **foreign organisations or political parties** that have an established English translation of their full names prefer to keep their foreign-language abbreviation. Where possible, however, translate the full names of foreign organisations or political parties into English.

86 Policy of Absa's office for language
87 *Collins English Dictionary*, 2021

FIT – the International Federation of Translators (in French, the Fédération Internationale des Traducteurs)

… the International Association of Football Federations (FIFA)

BUT

Sometimes it may be necessary to provide the foreign full form in addition to the English:

the German Industry Standard (DIN – Deutsche Industrie-Norm)

(v) Abbreviation in parentheses

When you encounter a term that is commonly abbreviated or that you want to abbreviate, write it out the first time you use it and provide the **abbreviation in parentheses** (as shown below). You may then switch to using the abbreviated form on its own.

South African Bureau of Standards (SABS)

Stellenbosch University (SU)

computer-aided translation (CAT)

information and communication technology (ICT)

NOTE: If you choose to use abbreviations, do so **consistently** throughout the text. In long documents, the full term may be repeated a few times, such as at the beginning of every chapter or section. If a **term appears only once**, do not provide the abbreviation or acronym, unless the abbreviated form is more common than the full term.

Use the Find function in MS Word to check that you have used an abbreviation consistently.

If the **abbreviated form is more common than the full form**, mention the abbreviation or acronym first, followed by the full form in parentheses.

DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid)

OBE (outcomes-based education)

7.5 Definite or indefinite article?

(i) Definite article[88]

Acronyms are generally **NOT preceded by the definite article ('the')**.

NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization)

SANParks (South African National Parks)

STIAS (Stellenbosch Institute for Advanced Study)

UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization)

Initialisms generally **DO take the definite article** if their full forms do.

- **With the** definite article

the FBI (full form: the Federal Bureau of Investigation)

the SANDF (full form: the South African National Defence Force)

- Without the definite article

SAA (full form: South African Airways)

88 Zwicky, A. 2007. Language Log. (An)arthrous abbreviations. [Online]. Available at http://itre.cis.upenn.edu/~myl/languagelog/archives/004923.html; Nichol, M. 2011. Daily Writing Tips. Initialisms and acronyms. [Online]. Available: http://www.dailywritingtips.com/initialisms-and-acronyms/; Writing Tips Plus. 2021. Acronyms and initialisms. [Online]. Available: https://www.noslangues-ourlanguages.gc.ca/en/writing-tips-plus/abbreviations-acronyms-and-initialisms#articles

Variations do occur, especially in the case of media corporations. Such variations seem to coincide with British and American usage.

> **British**
>
> the BBC (the British Broadcasting Corporation)
>
> the OED *(the Oxford English Dictionary)*
>
> **American**
>
> NBC (even though 'the National Broadcasting Company' does take the definite article)

General exceptions

- Initialisms that refer to educational institutions generally DO NOT take the definite article.

> UCT – even though 'the University of Cape Town' does take the definite article
>
> CPUT – even though 'the Cape Peninsula University of Technology' does take the definite article

- Initialisms that refer to substances, methods or conditions generally DO NOT take the definite article.

> DDT [substance] was banned in the USA in 1972.
>
> The unit provides training in CPR [method].
>
> ADHD [condition] is often diagnosed when children start school.

NOTE: If an abbreviation, whether an acronym or an initialism, is used as an adjective (that is, not as a noun), it is NOT preceded by the definite article:

> All NATO [adjective] agencies were represented.
> All CIA [adjective] agents must attend the meeting.
> BUT
> The CIA [noun] guards its reports closely.

(ii) Indefinite article ('a' or 'an')

The choice between 'a' and 'an' before an abbreviation is determined by the pronunciation of the word following the indefinite article; not by the spelling. Apply the normal rule: Use 'an' before abbreviations starting with a vowel sound, and before a silent 'h'.

> an MP privilege
>
> an RSA flag
>
> an SMS campaign
>
> an HIV report

The same rule applies to numbers written in numerals instead of words:

> an 11 kV cable

Section 8

Addresses and telephone numbers

A few simple rules to help you write any address

8. Addresses and telephone numbers

8.1 Addresses – in general

(i) The street number precedes the street name. The same rule applies to an apartment number, which precedes the name of the apartment building

> 23 Andringa Street
> 7 Academia Court

(ii) An office or floor number is written as follows:

> Room 14, Administration Building
> Fifth floor, Kruinsig

(iii) Write out ordinals for numbers one to nine ('first' up to 'ninth'), but use figures for higher numbers (10 and up) along with the correct two-letter abbreviation ('10th').

> ***Also see 8.3 for guidance on abbreviations in addresses.***

- ✓ 18 Second Street
- ✗ 18 2nd Street
- ✓ 18 22nd Street
- ✗ 18 Twenty-second Street

In English, the street number or unit number precedes the street name or complex name. However, in Afrikaans, it is the other way around.

> English: 7 Academia Court, 23 Andringa Street
> Afrikaans: Academia Court 7, Andringastraat 23

(iv) Where different places have the same name, do not add the province to the address on the envelope. The postal code is sufficient for the letter to reach the correct destination. The province may, however, be included in a sentence.

> She lives in Heidelberg, Western Cape, where she practises as a doctor.
> *(Note the second comma, after 'Western Cape'.)*

(v) When a specific street name is mentioned, UK English uses the preposition 'in', while US English uses 'on'.[89]

> A shop in Dorp Street (UK English)
> A shop on Dorp Street (US English)
> BUT:
> In both UK English and US English, 'on' is used in the phrasing 'on the corner of'.

> **NOTE:** At SU, we use UK English. For more about this preference, see ***Conventions 1.1***

89 Burchfield, 2004:384; Crystal, D. 2000. *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 311.

(vi) As regards the use of 'at' or 'in' with reference to a place, a specific place generally takes 'at', while a country, province or wider area generally takes 'in'.

Cities may be regarded as wider areas (therefore requiring 'in'), as well as specific stopping points on a journey (requiring 'at').[90]

> They met at the North Pole.
>
> A plane landed at Oliver Tambo Airport.
>
> He grew up in Peru.
>
> They are holidaying in Gauteng.
>
> He lives in the Boland.
>
> They live in Cape Town.

NOTE: The difference in meaning between 'at' and 'in' in the example below.

> She is at Stellenbosch (i.e. she is a faculty member or a student at Stellenbosch University)
>
> She is in Stellenbosch (i.e. she is visiting or living in Stellenbosch town)

8.2 Capitalisation

(i) Although the proper names of streets, roads, avenues, etc. are capitalised, 'streets', 'roads', 'avenues', etc. take lower case when used in the following sense:

> 41 Ninth Street
> His office is located on the corner of Brink and Rule streets.

(ii) For capitalisation of the proper names of South Africa's nine provinces, see *Conventions 1.11.1 (iii)*.

90 Burchfield, 2004:76.

8.3 Abbreviations

(i) The words 'Street', 'Avenue' and 'Boulevard' may be abbreviated, but only when preceded by a street name and number.

> 18 Crozier St.
>
> The office is located in Crozier St.

(ii) Use the correct two-letter abbreviation ('th' or 'nd') for '10th' and higher numbers, but write out 'first' up to 'ninth'.

> ✓ 18 Second Street
> ✗ 18 2nd Street
> ✓ 18 10th Street
> ✗ 18 Tenth Street

(iii) The abbreviation for 'corner' in a street address is 'cor.', but the abbreviation is not used in a full sentence.

> cor. Crozier and Andringa streets
>
> BUT
>
> The building is on the corner of Crozier and Andringa streets (Full form in a sentence)

(iv) The abbreviation for 'care of' is 'c/o', but the abbreviation is not used in a full sentence.

> c/o Mr Ian Smith
>
> 26 Champagne Crescent
>
> BUT
>
> Please send the letter care of Mr Ian Smith, 26 Champagne Crescent.

8.4 Punctuation

(i) In a sentence, the different elements of an address are separated by commas.

> Our office is at 7 Bosman Street, Stellenbosch.

(ii) When the full address is stated in a sentence, the postal code is not preceded by a comma.

> Send the applications to: SU Language Centre, Private Bag X1, Matieland 7602.
>
> Their postal address is 28 Bird Street, Stellenbosch 7600.

(iii) If the address appears on separate lines, such as on an envelope or at the top of a letter, no commas or full stops are used.

> Ms CA Adams
>
> PO Box 1621
>
> BELLVILLE
>
> 7530

8.5 Telephone numbers

(i)   The area code, the first three digits and the last four digits of a phone number are grouped together and separated by a space. The spacing between the numbers is the same for landline and cell numbers. Do not use parentheses or hyphens.

> 011 975 6503
>
> 082 413 8467

(ii) Toll-free numbers may be grouped differently.

> 0800 40 30
>
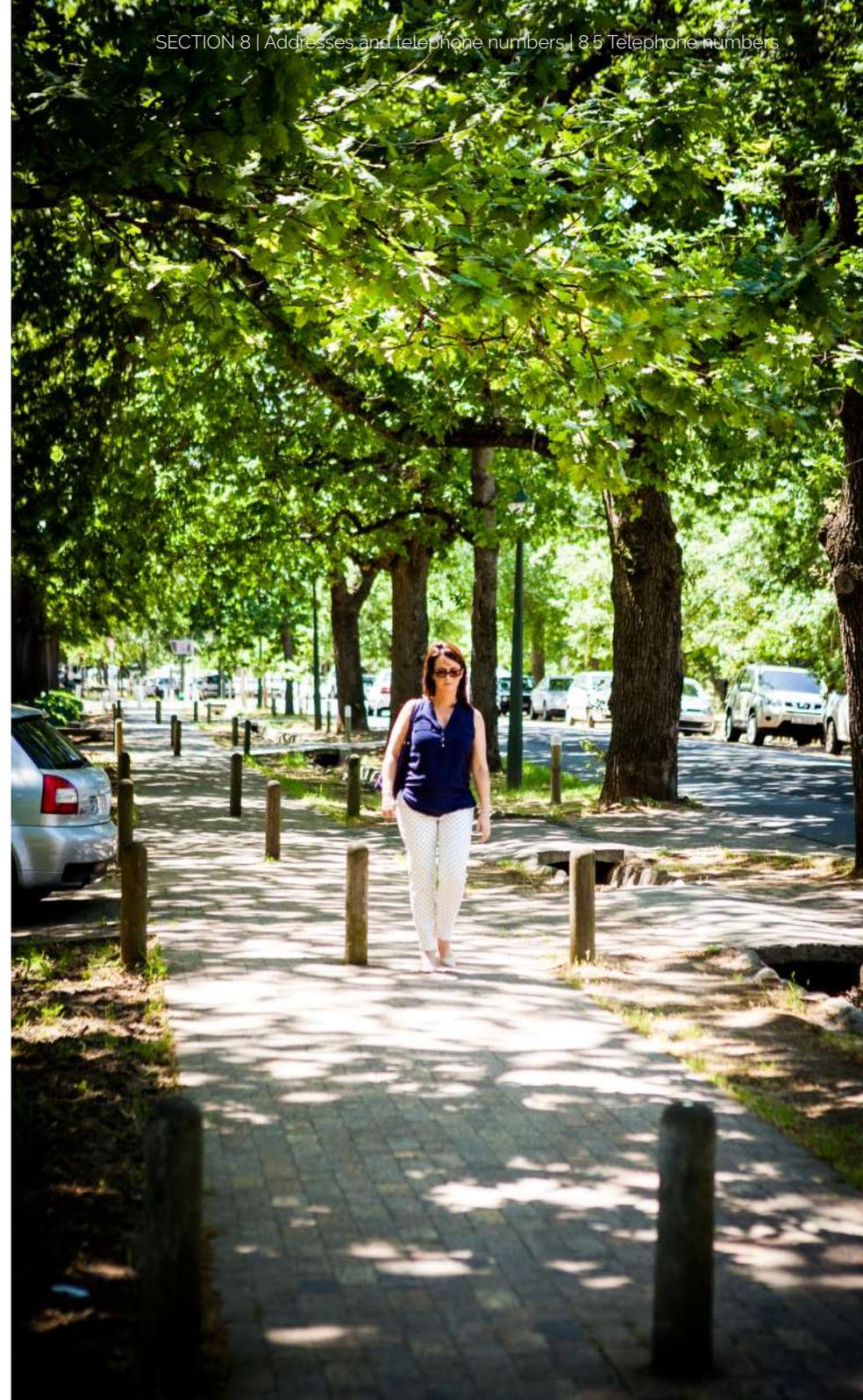> 0800 220 224

(iii) Extensions are written as follows:

> 021 423 6625 ext. 456
>
> OR   use the full form of the word 'extension'

(iv) If your writing is aimed at an international audience or reader(s), put the code for South Africa (+27) first, followed by the area code without the zero.

> +27 11 975 6503

Section 9

Numbers and digits

Guidelines
for
numbers

9. Numbers and digits

9.1 General

(i) When using numbers in a text, write out in full numbers one to nine as well as numbers used figuratively. (In Afrikaans, numbers one to ten are written out in full.) Also see **Section 8**, Addresses and telephone numbers, for other uses of numbers.

> ✓ We have two children.
>
> ✗ We have 2 children.
>
> ✓ I've told you a thousand times.
>
> ✗ I've told you a 1 000 times. [figurative use]

(ii) When two sets of numbers are used together, it is sometimes clearer to use words for one and numerals for the other.

> **Forty 9-page documents**
> **(This refers to 40 documents, each comprising nine pages.)**

(iii) For the sake of consistency, where numbers both below and above nine appear in the same sentence, either write out all or use numerals for all. The format is normally determined by the form that appears first, but may also be influenced by numbers that appear in the rest of the sentence or paragraph (i.e. context). Try to keep the text as reader-friendly as possible.

>> In English, we write: 'one' to 'nine', '10', '11' …
>>
>> In Afrikaans, we write: 'een' to 'tien', '11', '12' …

Determined by first form	Determined by context
There were eight students in one class and eleven in the other. Although 25 students had initially enrolled, only 7 completed the course.	Acocks' original 7 biomes have been extended to 9 continental biomes and 2 on the Prince Edward Islands, and his 79 veld types to 435.

(iv) Never begin a sentence with a numeral – either write out the number in words or rephrase the sentence.

> ✓ Eleven learners were excluded. OR The number of exclusions was 11.
>
> ✗ 11 learners were excluded.
>
> ✓ Eighty per cent of households have pets.
>
> ✗ 80% of households have pets.

> **NOTE:** 'Per cent' may also be spelt 'percent',[91] provided you do so throughout your document.

91 *Collins English Dictionary*, 2021.

(v) Rephrase a sentence to avoid spelling out cumbersome numbers at the beginning of the sentence.

> ✓ A total of 20 300 people attended the concert.
>
> ✗ Twenty-thousand three-hundred people attended the concert.

(vi) A percentage written out in full must be followed by the words 'per cent' or percent, not the symbol '%'.

> ✓ Exclusions have fallen by five per cent.
>
> ✗ Exclusions have fallen by five %.
>
> ✗ Exclusions have fallen by 5 per cent.

(vii) Do not insert a space between a numeral and the percentage symbol.

> 80%

(viii) When 'to' is being used as part of a ratio, it is usually best to write it out.

> ✓ They decided by 30 votes to 12 to put the matter to the general assembly, which voted 27 to 19.
>
> ✗ They decided by 30:12 votes to put the matter to the general assembly, which voted 27:19.

(ix) Write out 'million' and 'billion', unless they appear in a table, and use a hard space to separate the figure from the word.

> *See 12.6 on how to insert a hard space.*

> R8 million

NOTE: In UK and South African English, 'billion' used to mean a million million (10^{12}), while 'milliard' meant a thousand million (10^9). This usage has become outdated, however.

UK and South African English have adopted the American usage of 'billion', meaning a thousand million (10^9).[92]

Since the word 'milliard' has become almost obsolete, both 'biljoen' and 'miljard' in Afrikaans are translated as 'billion'.[93]

92 Soanes & Stevenson, 2008
93 Geldenhuys, JDU & Viljoen-Smook, EE. 2009. *Business Dictionary*. Cape Town: Pharos.

(x) Numbers and monetary values are indicated as follows (i.e. with hard spaces and no commas as thousands separators):

- ✓ 1 359
- ✗ 1,359
- ✓ 125 359
- ✗ 125,359
- ✓ R7,50
- ✓ R1 777,99
- ✓ R147 777,99

In South Africa, we use the **decimal comma.**

The comma is used as a **thousands separator** in most financial and accounting texts (e.g. R1,500,000.00). Refrain from using the comma in this way in any other type of document.

NOTE: If you use numbers and figures in a table, ensure that the column is **right-aligned.**

Number of letters	1 789
Number of words	560
Number of symbols	90

9.2 Currency

(i) There is no space between a currency symbol and the figure.

> R88,90
>
> US$45

(ii) Use currency symbols when you refer to amounts – this is the most accessible way to communicate amounts to your readers.

> R8,50
>
> US$45
>
> €500

NOTE:

'US' is added only if it is necessary to distinguish the US dollar from another country's monetary unit, such as the Zimbabwean dollar (Z$3 000).

In addition to currency symbols, there are currency codes – three-letter alphabetical codes – for all the different national currencies, such as ZAR for the South African rand, and USD for the US dollar.

These three-letter codes are meant for international banking and electronic data interchange. You do not have to use them in more general documents – ordinary currency symbols will suffice.

9.3 Punctuation

(i) Use a hard space as the thousands separator in general texts.

> *See 12.6 on how to insert a hard space.*

> The school has 1 500 learners.

(ii) Use common fractions or percentages rather than decimals where possible

> ✓ Three-quarters of the staff are women.
>
> ✓ Women make up 75% of the staff.
>
> ✗ Women make up 0,75% of the staff.

(iii) Fractions of less than one are usually written out, with hyphens between each word element, whereas fractions larger than one are usually written as numerals.

> ✓ A tenth of children are bullied at school.
>
> ✗ One-tenth of children …
>
> ✓ Her new job meant a salary increase of 1,5 times her original salary.

(iv) At Stellenbosch University, we indicate time according to the 24-hour clock:

> ✓ 06:30
>
> ✗ 06h30, 6.30 or 06-30
>
> ✓ 14:50
>
> ✗ 14h50, 14.50 or 14-50

If you need to use the 12-hour clock for some reason, time is indicated as follows:

> 10 am/AM
>
> 5 pm/PM

There is no zero before a single digit when you use the 12-hour clock:

> 9:50 am/AM

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Section 10

Bullets and numbers in lists

Bullets provide the reader with easy reference to quick information

10. Bullets and numbers in lists

10.1 List items: grammatical structure

Use parallel grammatical structures for each listed item.
For example, if the first item in your list starts with a verb, all subsequent list items should also start with a verb.

(i)   You could, for example, start list items with verbs in their infinitive form (to + base form of verb).

> The lessor commits to:
> * provide house and gate keys
> * **do** regular maintenance work
> * respond promptly to requests

(ii)   In the following example, the first listed item starts with a present participle ('-ing' form) of the verb, whereas the remaining two listed items start with the infinitive form. This is not ideal – the verbs should either be all in the infinitive or all in the participial form.

> The lessor commits to:
> * **providing** house and gate keys
> * **do** regular maintenance work
> * **respond** promptly to requests

(iii)   In the example below, all the list items start with a noun. That is a good start, but the first list item is a passive construction, whereas the remaining two listed items are active constructions. Take care to ensure parallelism in this regard as well, as illustrated in the second example below.

> At the open day –
> * tours were given of academic departments
> * experts gave short talks
> * students could visit the residences

> At the open day –
> * academic staff gave tours of their departments
> * experts gave short talks
> * students could visit the residences

10.2 List logic

Ensure that your bulleted or numbered lists are consistent, logical and easy to read.

(i) Numbered lists (as opposed to bulleted lists) are appropriate in the following instances:

- When the sequence in which the information is communicated is relevant, or the items indicate steps that must be carried out in a certain order.

> Method:
>
> 1. Sift the dry ingredients into a mixing bowl.
>
> 2. Melt the butter and add slowly to the dry mixture.
>
> 3. Whip the egg whites until they form soft peaks.

OR

- When the sequence of the information indicates the relative importance of the items.

> For a hike of this kind, you need:
>
> 1. sturdy shoes
>
> 2. a cap
>
> 3. sunscreen

OR

- When the items need to be easy to locate for purposes of cross-referencing, e.g. in the Stellenbosch University Yearbook.

> All students who obtain admission to the examination (see par. 8.2.7 for examination admission) in a module are free to choose whether they want to write the first or the second examination in a module, provided that the decision to write the first examination is irreversible once the student has reported for the first examination.

(ii) Number sublevels up to level three only; for subsequent levels, use Roman numerals or letters.

> 1.
>
> 1.1
>
> 1.1.1
>
> 1.1.1(i) OR
>
> 1.1.1(a)

(iii) Readability and the text type determine whether (and how) lists are punctuated. Often, the mere fact that items are presented as a list fulfils the function usually performed by punctuation marks. In such instances, punctuation may be omitted. For complex or formal texts, in contrast, punctuation is often necessary to make the texts more reader friendly.

> *See 10.5 on the punctuation of list items.*

10.3 Introductory elements

(i)   An introductory element helps contextualise a list. The list follows immediately on the introductory element. If the introductory element and the respective list items *do not form a continuous full sentence*, the introductory element is followed by either a colon or no punctuation at all.

> The vendor should commit to the following:
>
> - provide full training
> - do regular maintenance work
> - respond promptly to requests

> Sports that are not included in the evaluation
>
> - soccer
> - cricket
> - swimming

(ii) If the introductory element and the respective list items *do form a full sentence*, either in combination or on their own, the introductory element is followed by either a colon or a dash, or no punctuation at all. (In the examples below, the semicolons themselves could be replaced with commas.)

- Introductory element followed by a colon:

> Punctuate this type of sentences by:
>
> - putting a semicolon after each item;
> - putting a semicolon after the second-to-last item; and
> - concluding with a full stop.

- Introductory element followed by no punctuation:

> Punctuate this type of sentences by
>
> - putting a semicolon after each item;
> - putting a semicolon after the second-to-last item; and
> - concluding with a full stop.

- Introductory element followed by a dash:

> At the open day –
>
> - academics gave tours of their departments
> - experts gave short talks
> - students could visit the residences

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10.4 List items: capitalised or lower case?

(i) Capitalise the list items in the following instances:

- When every item in the list forms an independent full sentence.

> Plans for this year include the following:
>
> - Lose two kilos.
> - Neaten the garden regularly.
> - Wash the car and the dog every fortnight.

OR

- When there is no introductory element that precedes the list.

> - Use spaces to group the digits of telephone numbers.
> - Remember to include the area code.
> - Do not use parentheses for the area code.
> - Do not use hyphens.

NOTE: In the above cases, the bulleted sentences should end in a full stop.

(ii) Write the list items in lower case when the introductory element and each list item form a continuous full sentence.

> At the open day –
>
> - academic staff gave tours of their academic departments
> - experts gave short talks
> - students could visit the residences

(iii) List items may be **either capitalised or in lower case** in the following instances:

- When each list item consists of a single word or concept.

> These are some of the percussion instruments:
>
> - triangle   OR   - Triangle
> - bass   - Bass
> - drum   - Drum
> - tambourine   - Tambourine

OR

- When each list item consists of a phrase that does not form a full sentence, either independently or together with the introductory element.

> We offer the following cardiovascular exercises:
>
> - aerobics in the main hall/Aerobics in the main hall
> - rope jumping in the studio/Rope jumping in the studio
> - cycling sessions in the gym/Cycling sessions in the gym

10.5 List items: punctuation

(i)   Where each list item forms an independent full sentence, or if there is no introductory element that precedes the list:

- Every item in the list ends in a full stop.

  Plans for this year include the following:

  - Lose two kilos.

  - Neaten the garden regularly.

  - Wash the car and the dog every fortnight.

  - Enjoy weekends together as a family.

OR

- Neither the list items nor the final item in the list is concluded by any punctuation at all.

  Ways to relax include:

  - Go for a long walk

  - Read as much as possible

  - Play with the cat

(ii)   Where the introductory element and each list item form a continuous full sentence:

- Every item in the list ends in a semicolon – except for the last item, which ends in a full stop. The second-to-last item is followed by 'and'.

  Punctuate this type of sentences by:

  - putting a semicolon after each item;

  - putting a semicolon after the second-to-last item; and

  - concluding with a full stop.

OR

- Neither the list items nor the last item of the list is concluded by any punctuation at all.

  At the open day –

  - academic staff gave tours of their departments

  - experts gave short talks

  - students could visit the residences

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(iii) Where each list item consists of a single word or concept, or of a phrase that does not form a full sentence (either independently or together with the introductory element), neither the list items nor the final item of the list is concluded by any punctuation at all.

> These are some of the percussion instruments:
>
> | | | | |
> |---|---|---|---|
> | · | triangle | OR | · Triangle |
> | · | bass | | · Bass |
> | · | drum | | · Drum |
> | · | tambourine | | · Tambourine |

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Section 11

Legislation and case law

Notes on the preferred legal writing style

11. Legislation and case law

11.1 Useful resources

11.1.1   Juta's authors' guide for the *South African Law Journal*, SALJ House Style: Editor's Guide[94]

11.1.2   House Style for Articles and Notes[95] in *Industrial Law Journal* on Juta's website

11.1.3   *Stellenbosch Law Review*'s Editorial Policy and Style Guide,[96] in particular 3.1.5 (referring to judges), 4.4 ('Cases') and 4.5 ('Legislation')

11.1.4   The web page of the Law Library at the University of Cape Town (UCT), among others the link Writing Guide for Law Students,[97] which contains the Research, writing, style and referencing guide (2016)

11.1.5   The link to Juta Law Online Publications from Stellenbosch University Library's home page: Find > E-databases > J > Jutastat – Law databases,[98] which gives access to legislation, law reports, journals and other relevant sources

11.1.6   *Government Gazettes*[99]

11.1.7   Web pages that provide **the official names** and **numbers** as well as the **contents** of legislation: Acts Online[100] and South African Government Online[101] (under the "Documents" tab)

11.1.8   The Law Report Extracts[102] section at Juta Law Online, which is a collection of flynotes and headnotes – a reliable source for mining terminology

94 Juta. N.d. SALJ House Style: Editors' Guide. [Online]. Available at http://blogs.sun.ac.za/iplaw/files/2018/02/SALJ-Style-Guide.pdf.

95 Juta. N.d. House style for articles and notes in the *Industrial Law Journal*. [Online]. Available at https://juta.co.za/media/filestore/2018/06/ilj-style-guide.pdf.

96 Stellenbosch Law Review. 2011. Stellenbosch Law Review – Editorial policy and style guide. [Online]. Available at http://blogs.sun.ac.za/iplaw/files/2018/02/Stellenbosch-Law-Review-Style-Guide.pdf.

97 UCT Faculty of Law. 2016. Research, writing, style and referencing guide. [Online]. Available at http://www.lib.uct.ac.za/sites/default/files/image_tool/images/516/documents/Research%20Writing%20Style%20and%20Referencing%20Guide%20for%20Law%20Students%202015%20Update%20Final_0.pdf.

98 Juta Law Online Publications. N.d. Jutastat e-publications: NXT 4 Help. [Online]. Available at https://jutastat-juta-co-za.ez.sun.ac.za/nxt/gateway.dll?f-templates&fn-default.htm&vid-Publish:10.1048/Enu

99 Government Gazette of South Africa. 2021. Green Gazette. [Online]. Available at http://www.greengazette.co.za

100 Acts Online. 2021. [Online]. Available at http://www.acts.co.za

101 South African Government. 2021. [Online]. Available at http://www.info.gov.za/view/DynamicAction?pageid-544

102 Juta Law Online Publications. N.d. Jutastat e-publications: What's new. [Online]. Available at https://jutastat-juta-co-za.ez.sun.ac.za/nxt/gateway.dll?f-templates&fn-default.htm&vid-Publish:10.1048/Enu

11.2 Acts: titles and numbers

11.2.1 The **title and number** of an act may be written in any of the three ways below.[103] Along with the *Stellenbosch Law Review, Industrial Law Journal* and UCT guidelines, we prefer the first option:

> Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995
>
> OR
>
> Labour Relations Act, No. 66 of 1995, OR
>
> Labour Relations Act (No. 66 of 1995)

11.2.2 Since 1997/1998, all South African legislation is published in English and translated into one of the other official languages. The English text, therefore, is considered the primary text for all legislation promulgated since then.

11.2.3 Some acts come to be known by their abbreviated English titles, even in other languages. In such cases, provide the full official title along with the abbreviation at the first instance where your content refers to the act.

> POPIA – Protection of Personal Information Act
>
> PAIA – Promotion of Access to Information Act
>
> RICA – Regulation of Interception of Communications and Provision of Communication-related Information Act

11.2.4 Note the use of upper case and lower case when referring to legislation.[104]

> The constitution of another country
>
> BUT:
>
> the South African Constitution[105]
>
> (Also see *11.4.2* on the SA Constitution.)

> South African legislation on divorce is being reviewed
>
> (Since this is a reference to legislation in general, there is no capitalisation)
>
> BUT:
>
> The Divorce Act 70 of 1979 states that …
>
> (Here we refer to a specific act, hence the use of initial capital letters)

103 The first example is how acts are referred to in Juta's law reports (see 11.1.5 above) and in the South African law journals *Industrial Law Journal, Acta Juridica* and *De Rebus*. This form is prescribed by *Stellenbosch Law Review* (4.5.1 in their *Editorial Policy and Style Guide*; see 11.1.3 above) and UCT's *Research, Writing, Style and Referencing Guide* (see 11.1.4 above).
104 *Stellenbosch Law Review*, 2011:3.4.1
105 *Stellenbosch Law Review*, 2011:3.1.1

To check the correct official title of an act, search a reliable source *(see 11.1.5 and 11.1.7 above)* using the act number or the year of publication.

11.3 Legislation: subsections

11.3.1   Use 'article' and 'section' with care. The Afrikaans word '*artikel*' is translated as 'section' in a legal context. Also note that the lower-case form is standard.

11.3.2   There are no spaces between the numbers or other descriptive elements that identify a section.[106]

> section 14(11)
>
> section 14B
>
> section 1(*a*)
>
> section 14(1)(*b*)(ii)
>
> section 14(1)(*b*A)

11.3.3   When subparagraphs are indicated by means of **lower-case letters**, such letters (but not the brackets around them) are italicised. Watch out for lower-case letters that **function as Roman numerals** instead of letters; they are not italicised.[107]

> See subparagraph (ii) of paragraph (*c*).
>
> Ignore subparagraphs (xvi) and (x), and subsection (3).

11.4 Acts in a list of references

11.4.1   In a list of references, acts are not arranged alphabetically according to the first word of the act's official name, but under 'R' for 'Republic of South Africa (RSA)' or under 'S' for 'South Africa (SA)'.[108] Choose one form ('R' or 'S') and use it consistently, also ensuring that the in-text references and the entry in the reference list match precisely (e.g. that an in-text reference stating 'SA' is not linked to a reference list entry under 'Republic of South Africa' but to an entry under 'South Africa').

> Republic of South Africa (RSA). 1997. *Higher Education Act 101 of 1997*. Pretoria: Government Printing Works.
>
> OR
>
> South Africa (SA). 1997. *Higher Education Act 101 of 1997*. Pretoria: Government Printing Works.

---

106 UCT Libraries: Brand van Zyl Law Library. 2006. Standard Citation Conventions. [Online]. Available at http://www.iapo.uct.ac.za/sites/default/files/image_tool/images/60/resources/stdcitconventions.pdf; UCT Faculty of Law, 2016 (see 11.4 above). Also see the journals *De Rebus, Acta Juridica* and *Industrial Law Journal*.
107 Juta. N.d. House style for articles and notes in the *Industrial Law Journal*, p. 11, (https://juta.co.za/media/filestore/2018/06/ilj-style-guide.pdf)
108 Hofstee, E. 1996. *Constructing a Good Dissertation* [*Online*]. Available at http://www.exactica.co.za/dn/exactica-book-harvard-referencing.pdf; Sieberhagen, A & Bijl, J. 2004. *Citation and Bibliographic Reference Guide*. Pretoria: Tshwane University of Technology (2004:27).

11.4.2   Since the 1996 Constitution was approved by the Constitutional Committee, it is not an act of Parliament. Therefore it is not numbered like other acts of Parliament, and should not be referred to as 'Act 108 of 1996'.[109]

For in-text references, choose either of the forms below and use it consistently:

> Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (RSA 1996) OR
>
> Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (SA 1996)

For the list of references, choose either of the forms below and use it consistently:

> Republic of South Africa (RSA). 1996. *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa.* Pretoria: Government Printing Works.
>
> OR
>
> South Africa (SA). 1996. *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa.* Pretoria: Government Printing Works.

11.4.3.   White papers, Law Commission papers, etc. are to be cited as follows:[110]

> *The White Paper on Energy Policy* (GN* 3007 in GG** 19606 of 17 December 1998).
>
> The 'National Policy on HIV/AIDS for Learners and Educators' (published in GG 20372 of 10 May 1999).
>
> South African Law Commission Issue Paper 20 (Project 123) *Protected Disclosures* (2002) para 3.
>
> South African Law Commission Discussion Paper 107 (Project 123) *Protected Disclosures* (2004) para 56.
>
> South African Law Commission (Project 123) *Report on Protected Disclosures* (2007).
>
> *GN = Government Notice*
> *GG = Government Gazette*

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109 Citation of Constitutional Laws Act 5 of 2005; *Stellenbosch Law Review*, 2011:4.5.2 (in their *Editorial Policy and Style Guide* (see 11.1.3 above).
110 Juta. N.d. SALJ House Style: Editors' Guide, p. 8-9 (http://blogs.sun.ac.za/iplaw/files/2018/02/SALJ-Style-Guide.pdf)

11.5 Case law[111]

11.5.1 Contesting parties' names appear in italics, with spaces between the various elements of the case number.[112]

> *Avex Air (Pty) Ltd v Borough of Vryheid 1973 (1) SA 617 (A)*

11.5.2 The constituent elements of a citation are:

> *Avex Air (Pty) Ltd v Borough of Vryheid* = contesting parties
>
> 1973 (1) = the year and the volume of the SA law reports
>
> SA = a South African case
>
> 617 = the page where the case is mentioned for the first time
>
> A = Appeal Court

NOTE: Under the new constitutional dispensation, the former Appellate Division (abbreviated 'A' in English as well as Afrikaans)[113] has been replaced by the Supreme Court of Appeal, which is abbreviated 'SCA' (Afr. HHA).[114]

Only the **name** of the case is cited in the main text. Particulars such as year, volume, page number and court should be set out in an accompanying footnote. Where a footnote refers to a case that is also referred to in the preceding footnote, cite only the specific page or paragraph of the judgment in the following footnote.

Where a text refers to the same case regularly, the full case reference needs to appear only at the first citation. Thereafter, only the specific page number or paragraph of the judgment is cited.

The convention is not to use prepositions such as 'on' or 'at' with the page number(s), but to include paragraph references where they are available.[115]

> 846A, 223B-D or 331C-332D

You may use an abbreviated version of the case name in the main text (e.g. 'the Tao Ying case'), but not in footnotes.[116]

11.5.3 Leave the names of the parties untranslated.

> *Pretorius Bemarkers v Kaapstad Munisipaliteit*
>
> *[NOT: Pretorius Marketers v Cape Town Municipality]*

11.5.4 When quotations from law reports are translated (e.g. for use in class notes), a statement to that effect must be added in brackets at the end of the translated quotation.

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111 Juta. N.d. House style for articles and notes in the *Industrial Law Journal*, 3.1, p. 7; *Stellenbosch Law Review*, 2011:4.4.1 and 4.4.2 (in their Editorial Policy and Style Guide, see 11.1.3 above); UCT Faculty of Law, "Cases", p. 34; and Juta Law Online Publications. N.d. (see 9.1.5 above).
112 Juta Law Online Publications. N.d. (see 11.1.5 above), *Stellenbosch Law Review*, 2011 (see 11.1.3 above) and UCT Faculty of Law, 2016 (see 11.1.4 above). Also see *Acta Juridica and De Rebus*
113 *Stellenbosch Law Review*, 2011: 4.4.1, p. 13.
114 *Stellenbosch Law Review*, 2011:p. 14; UCT Faculty of Law, 2016, p. 34.
115 *Stellenbosch Law Review*, 2011:p. 14; UCT Faculty of Law, 2016, p. 34.
116 *Stellenbosch Law Review*, 2011:4.4.2 in their *Editorial Policy and Style Guide*.

Section 12

Software tips and cheat sheets

Helpful
software
features

12. Software tips and cheat sheets

In this section, we share some tips about software features that people are often unsure of, or when a 'recipe' to do something could really be helpful. The MS Word tips apply specifically to MS Word 365. If you are using another version of MS Word, follow the principles and see where that takes you, or use a search engine to look for instructions for your version of the software, or start by searching on the Microsoft Support homepage.

MS Word tips include using **Track Changes**, anonymising reviewers' comments, using **Find**, inserting comments, formatting quotation marks, and creating special characters. We also touch on using **Styles**, and we share our 'cheat sheet' for inserting page numbers, including how to combine Roman and Arabic numerals for reports and theses. In addition, we share the shortcut to using **Find** in PDFs, and explain how to take a screenshot.

12.1 Using the track changes function

Track Changes in MS Word is a good way to keep track of changes made to an existing document so that you can decide which changes to accept and which to reject. The function also records who has made specific changes by identifying reviewers by their MS Word usernames.

12.1.1   Switching on Track Changes

Click on the Review tab on the Office ribbon (at the top of the MS Word window), and then on **Track Changes.**

OR

Hold in the **Shift** key and the **Ctrl** key, and press **E** on the keyboard.

To check whether **Track Changes** is activated in a specific document, type something. If it displays as underlined, in another colour or marked in some other way, the function is switched on.

12.1.2   Switching off Track Changes

Click on the **Review** tab on the Office ribbon (at the top of the MS Word window), and then on **Track Changes.** If the function is activated, the button will be highlighted. To switch it off, click on **Track Changes** again.

OR

Hold down the **Shift** key and the **Ctrl** key, and press E on the keyboard.

12.1.3   Working with Track Changes switched on

When Track Changes is activated, all inserted text will display as underlined text

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in a different colour. Depending on the MS Word settings on the computer, deleted text will either be indicated as such in the margin or be displayed in a different colour and with a line striking it through.

To reverse a change and revert to the original text, right-click on the change, and then click on **Reject Change.**

12.1.4 To show and/or accept the tracked changes of only one reviewer

(i) Click on the **Review** tab on the Office ribbon (at the top of the MS Word window).

(ii) Click on **Show Markup.**

(iii) In the drop-down menu, hover over **Specific People:** It will show, in a side menu, the reviewers who have made tracked changes. Click on **All Reviewers** (uncheck the box) to hide the tracked changes made by all reviewers.

(iv) Click on **Show Markup** and hover over **Specific People** again, and re-check the box next to only the listed reviewer whose tracked changes you want shown.

(v) If you want to accept this reviewer's tracked changes, click on the **Review** tab on the Office ribbon (at the top of the MS Word window), click on the dropdown pointer at the bottom of the **Accept** button, and then on **Accept All Changes Shown.**

12.1.5 To hide tracked changes while reviewing a document

If you wish to record changes to a document, but you don't want to see the changes being marked, you can choose to hide them. This functionality is especially handy if you want to read through a document without being distracted by the various coloured insertions and deletions. Visible tracked changes often make it hard to spot extra spaces between words or punctuation marks, for instance.

To hide all tracked changes in a document:

(i) Click on the **Review** tab on the Office ribbon (at the top of the MS Word window).

(ii) Open the drop-down list next to the **Track Changes** button. (**All Markup** will be the option highlighted by default for the drop-down list.)

(iii) Select **No Markup**. No changes will be lost; you can always return to the **All Markup** view.

12.2 Anonymising an MS Word document

Many a reviewer has battled to anonymise their input when wishing to review articles anonymously. Here's how:

(i) Click on the **File** tab on the Office ribbon (at the top of the MS Word window).

(ii) Click on **Info.** In the area that opens, click on **Check for Issues**, which will open a drop-down list.

(iii) In this drop-down list, click on **Inspect Document.** In the dialogue box, select only **Document Properties and Personal Properties** by ensuring that only the box next to it is checked.

(iv) Click on **Inspect**. After the document inspection has been completed, the results will be displayed.

(v) Click on **Remove All**, next to **Document Properties and Personal Properties.** This process is irreversible, so make sure that you keep a copy of the original.

(vi) Now save the document as a new file to remove all contributors' identifying information. After saving, tracked changes will now be attributed to one generic name, such as 'Author', thus removing all distinction between different contributors.

12.3 Using the find feature

Find is on the **Home** tab, on the far right. This is a particularly handy feature to check the following:

(i)   Double spaces. Type two spaces in the **Find what** bar to find all double spaces in a document, and remove those that are incorrect.

(ii) Words, abbreviations or character combinations that are frequently typed incorrectly or have been used inconsistently in a text. For example, an Afrikaans-speaking person may easily type 'of', 'die', 'met' and 'van' (instead of the English equivalents 'or', 'the', 'with' and 'of'). A spell checker will not flag these, however, because they appear to be correct English words.

(iii) References. In a list of references as well as the corresponding in-text references, use **Find** to ensure consistency in referencing style.

As a keyboard shortcut, hold in the **Ctrl** key and press **F**. The **Find** box will open. To access more advanced find options, hold in the **Ctrl** key and press **H**.

NOTE: In Acrobat's pdf-viewing software, the **Ctrl + F** shortcut also opens the **Find** box.

12.4 Inserting comments

If you are working jointly on a document, you can insert a comment to the other author(s) at appropriate places in the text using MS Word's comment function.

12.4.1 Inserting a comment

Highlight the piece of text to which the comment refers. Click on the **Review** tab on the Office ribbon (at the top of the MS Word window), and then once on **New Comment**. A small block will appear in the right-hand or left-hand margin (depending on the MS Word settings on the computer). Type in your comment.

OR

Select the particular word or sentence, right-click on it and choose **New Comment** at the bottom of the drop-down list. Try to formulate each comment in such a way that it can function as a self-contained, precise remark.

12.4.2 Deleting an existing comment

Right-click on the comment block, and then on **Delete Comment.**

12.5 Formatting quotation marks

12.5.1 Ensuring the single quotation mark used in the Afrikaans determiner ''n' is displayed correctly

(i) The regular way to get ''n' to display correctly:
- Hold down the **Alt** key.
- Make sure that **Num Lock** is on and type in the code 0146 on the numerical keys (usually on the right-hand side of the keyboard).

> **NOTE:** On some laptops, press the **Fn** (Function) key together with the **Num Lock** key to activate **Num Lock**. Use the letter keys that also function as numerical keys to type in the code, for instance m = 0; j = 1; u = 4; o = 6.

- Release **Alt** and type **n.**

(ii) A shortcut to get ''n' to display correctly:
- Hold down the **Ctrl** key.
- Press the key for the single or double quotation mark (usually next to **Enter** on the keyboard) twice.
- Release **Ctrl.**
- Press **n.**

A similar method can be used to produce letters with diacritical marks and other symbols:

To type any vowel with a circumflex above it:

Hold in **Ctrl** and **Shift**, press the **6/^** key, release all three keys and then type the vowel.

12.5.2 Smart quotation marks (smart quotes) vs. straight quotation marks (straight quotes)

Note the difference between straight quotation marks ('...' or "...") and smart quotation marks ('...' or "..."). Smart quotes are in the shape of the numbers 6 and 9 respectively. Use only one type of quotation mark throughout your document.

To set your computer to use either straight or smart quotation marks automatically:

(i) Click on the **File** tab.
(ii) Click on **Options** at the bottom of the menu, choose **Proofing** (in the side pane to the left) and click on **AutoCorrect Options** (in the main section). Check that you are on the **AutoFormat As You Type** tab.
(iii) You have the option to activate either straight or smart quotation marks. Make your choice and click on **OK** twice.
(iv) Do the same on the **AutoFormat** tab.

In MS Word, one can insert symbols by clicking on the **Insert tab** and choosing **Symbol** on the far right. For an alternative way of producing letters with diacritical marks and other symbols, hold down the **Alt** key and type the correct code on the numerical keypad:

é = Alt + 130, à = Alt + 133

° (degree symbol) = Alt + 0176

€ (Euro sign) = Alt + 0128

To view a table of symbols or special characters and their codes in MS Word, click on the **Insert tab** on the Office ribbon (at the top of the MS Word window), and then on **Symbol > More symbols** on the far right.

12.6 Inserting a non-breaking or hard space

Use a non-breaking space between a number and a unit of measurement, such as an SI symbol, to ensure that the two are not separated when a sentence runs on to the next line.

> 50 mg

(i) Insert a non-breaking space by clicking on the **Insert** tab and then on **Symbol > More symbols > Special characters > Select and insert > Non-breaking Space**.
(ii) Alternatively, use the following shortcut:
  • Press **Ctrl** as well as **Shift**, and hold them down.
  • Press the space bar.

12.7 Inserting automatically spaced ellipsis

(i)   Click on the File tab on the Office ribbon in MS Word. Click on **Options** at the bottom of the menu, choose **Customize Ribbon > Customize Keyboard** shortcuts.
(ii) Scroll down the list of **Categories** (left-hand pane) to **Common Symbols**.
(iii) Scroll down the list of symbols (right-hand pane) and click **Ellipsis**.
(iv) In the **New shortcut key** text block (below the lists), type the combination that you wish to set up to always generate an ellipsis (e.g. **Alt + Ctrl** + x). In future, MS Office will insert an automatically spaced ellipsis every time you type this combination.

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12.8 Creating an en dash (–) and hyphen (-)

12.8.1 Shortcut for the en dash (–) on a desktop computer

(i)   Press the **Ctrl** key and hold it down.
(ii) Now press the minus sign (normally located in the top right-hand corner of the keyboard, in line with the **Num Lock** key).

> We are now all forced to pay attention to the e-learning mantra – how students learn is almost more important than what they learn.

12.8.2 Non-breaking hyphen

Sometimes, MS Word automatically changes the suspended hyphen to the longer en dash. On some computers you can prevent this by inserting a non-breaking hyphen:

(i)   Click on the **Insert** tab. Click on **Symbol > More Symbols > Special Characters > Nonbreaking Hyphen.**
(ii) Alternatively, use the keyboard shortcut **Ctrl + Shift** + – (the latter is the hyphen key, next to 'O)' on the keyboard; not the minus key).
Always check that MS Word does not automatically change the hyphen's length again once you have pressed the space bar or another key.

> He was a two- or three-year-old.

12.8.3 Optional hyphen

It is possible with MS Word to insert optional hyphens in words. Simply use the keyboard shortcut Ctrl + - (the latter is the hyphen key, next to 'O)' on the keyboard; not the minus key).

Unless MS Word is set to show formatting symbols, an optional hyphen will only be visible – i.e. displayed as an ordinary hyphen – if the relevant word appears at the end of a line. In this instance, the non-breaking hyphen serves as a word break.

If a word with an optional hyphen is not at the end of a line, the hyphen remains hidden in printed versions of the text, and in electronic versions if MS Word has been set to hide formatting symbols. If MS Word is set to show formatting symbols, optional hyphens will be displayed as '¬'.

NOTE: Some layout programs do not display optional hyphens inserted in MS Word correctly. Adobe InDesign, for instance, replaces optional hyphens with single empty spaces. Therefore, use optional hyphens in an MS Word document only if you know that the document will not be finalised in a layout program.

12.9 Using **Styles**

12.9.1 What is the styles function?

In MS Word, **Styles** allows you to apply groupings of formatting attributes (e.g. font size, font type, space before and after text, and bold and/or italics) to selected sections of text. In this context, a section of text starts at the very left of a line, either at the top of a page or after a paragraph mark (¶), and runs until the next paragraph mark. By default, MS Word documents start with some basic styles automatically activated. You can also create your own styles to meet the specific requirements of a document.

12.9.2 How to access Styles

Click on the **Home** tab on the **Office** ribbon (at the top of the

MS Word window), and then on the small arrow at the bottom right of the **Styles** group. A **Styles dialogue box** will open, showing a list of styles available in the document. Clicking on any paragraph or heading in the document text will show the style that has been applied to it. You can select a whole heading or paragraph, and choose a style from the list of available styles to apply to the selected text.

12.9.3 Benefits of using Styles

(i) If, for instance, you have consistently applied a 'paragraph' style to all the paragraphs in a document, and then want to change the font size for paragraphs only, you can do so by simply changing the font size attribute of the 'paragraph' style. All the text to which the style has been applied will automatically change according to the new specifications.

(ii) By applying styles consistently throughout a document, you can guarantee consistent formatting.

(iii) If you have used **Styles**, MS Word can generate an automated table of contents for your document. This eliminates the work – and the risk of errors – inherent in creating a table of contents manually and updating it to reflect the headings correctly. This is achieved by applying specific styles to specific elements of the text, and then, in the dialogue box for generating an automated table of contents, choosing the **Styles** option. In this way, every section to which one of the chosen styles has been applied will be incorporated into the table of contents. This would include sections to which a style has been applied unintentionally. Fortunately, this type of error will show up clearly in the automatically generated table of contents. To correct it, simply go to the undesired sections and change their style.

12.10 Inserting page numbers

12.10.1 No page number on the first page

(i)   To keep the first page of a document unnumbered:
- Click on the **Insert** tab and then on **Number** in the Header & Footer group. Choose the position of the page number.
- Click on the header or footer area of the first page to activate the **Header & Footer** tab. Then tick the checkbox for **Different First Page**. The page number on the first page will disappear.

(ii)   To choose what the page number on the second page should be:
- Click on the **Insert** tab, and then on **Page Number > Format Page Numbers**. Ensure that the correct option is selected at **Number Format**.
- Click on the **Start at** button (at the bottom of the box) and check that the correct number is displayed in the white block: '0' if you want the second page to start at 1, or '1' if you want the second page to start at 2.
- Click **OK.**

12.10.2 Mixed numerals in page numbers: Roman and Arabic

MS Word allows you to use Roman and Arabic numerals for separate sections in one document. The basic method can be used for various page number combinations, but the instructions below are specifically for numbering the pages of a thesis correctly (i.e. the title page without any page number; the preliminary pages with page numbers in Roman numerals, starting at ii; and the content from Chapter 1 onwards with page numbers in Arabic numerals, starting at 1).

(i)   To see the spacing and page breaks in the text clearly, go to the **Home** tab on the ribbon at the top, find the **Paragraph** group and click on the ¶ button **(Show/Hide)**.

(ii)   Scroll to the start of the thesis contents proper, where the first Arabic numeral (i.e. **1**) must appear, and click at the top of the page. Click on the **Layout** tab on the ribbon, go to the **Page Setup** group and click on **Break > Next Page.** The page before the intended page 1 will show a section break.

(iii)   Click again at the top of the page to make sure that you are in the section of the document where the numbering must start at 1 (i.e. at the beginning of the thesis contents proper).
- Click on the **Insert** tab on the ribbon and then, in the **Header & Footer** group, on Page Number > Format Page Numbers. At **Number Format**, choose the option '1, 2, 3'.

- Click the **Start at** button at the bottom of the box and ensure that the white block displays '**1**'. Click **OK**.
- You should still be on the **Insert** tab. Click on **Page Number** again to choose the positioning of the page numbers. The first main-text page should now be numbered 1, with subsequent pages being numbered 2, 3, etc.

(iv) Now go to the first page of the document that should show a Roman numeral (i.e. not the title page, but the next page, where the page number 'ii' should appear). Click at the top of this page, then click on the **Layout** tab on the ribbon, go to the **Page Setup** group and click on **Break > Next Page**. The title page will show a section break.

(v) Click on the **Insert** tab on the ribbon, and then, in the Header & Footer group, on **Page Number > Format Page Numbers**. At Number Format, choose the option 'i, ii, iii'.

- Click the **Start at** button at the bottom of the same box and click the up arrow until the white block displays '**ii**'. Click **OK**.

- You should still be on the **Insert** tab. Click on **Page Number** again to choose the positioning of the page numbers. The second page should now be numbered ii, with subsequent pages being numbered iii, iv, etc.

(vi) The very first page of the main content remains **1**. Click once in the relevant area – header or footer, depending on where you have chosen to position the page numbers – to activate the **Header & Footer** tab. On the Header & Footer tab, check the checkbox next to **Different First Page**. The page number on the title page will disappear. If the page number on the title page does not disappear after **Different First Page** has been selected, double-click on the page number and delete it.

If the page numbers do not start at the desired number, go to the **Insert** tab and click on **Footer** in the Header & Footer group. Select **Edit Footer** on the drop-down menu. The **Design** tab should open. (Alternatively, follow the steps set out in (vi) above.) In the **Navigation** group, deselect **Link to Previous.** The page numbers should now do your bidding.

12.11   Taking screenshots (or screengrabs)

You can take a screenshot of everything displayed on your screen at a specific moment.

12.11.1 On a desktop PC

(i)   Press **PrtSc** (or **prt sc** or a variation on this – the Print Screen key, usually at the top right of the keyboard). You have now copied your screen and need to paste it somewhere to save the image that has been automatically added to the Clipboard. For this, you can use any software that allows the pasting of images, e.g. MS Word, MS PowerPoint or an email message (if the email format allows for images). For example, open a new Word document, right-click, and select Paste. Your image will appear in the document.

(ii) Paste your image. Since the print screen functionality is essentially a copy-and-paste action, you will lose your copied screengrab as soon as you copy something else after having pressed **PrtScn**. Therefore, be sure to paste your screenshot directly after you have taken it. You can also take a screenshot that shows only the active window, not your entire screen. First click in a window to activate it. Then hold the **Alt** key and press **PrtScn**.

12.11.2 On a laptop (may vary)

1.   Hold Fn (the Function key, located to the left of the space bar) and press **PrtScn** (the Print Screen key, usually located at the top right of the keyboard) to take a screenshot.

(i)   Paste your image. Again, use software that allows the pasting of images, e.g. MS Word, MS PowerPoint or an email message (if the email format allows for images).

For a screenshot of only the active window on your laptop screen (instead of the full display), hold both **Alt** and **Fn** and press **PrtScn.**

For further reading

For further reading

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Addendum:
Institution-specific names and abbreviations

Addendum: Institution-specific names and abbreviations

Names and abbreviations may change at short notice, especially newly created ones. The information provided in this guide was correct at the time of going to press, but it would be wise to double-check before using any abbreviation and its full form.

Abbreviation	Designation
ADA	African Doctoral Academy
ARTLA	augmented remote teaching, learning and assessment
AARGO	Assessments, Academic Records and Graduation Office
APC	Academic Planning Committee
CRP	Campus Renewal Project
EE	employment equity
ELS	Extended Learning Spaces (project)
ERTLA	emergency remote teaching, learning and assessment
FIRLT	Fund for Innovation and Research into Learning and Teaching
GBV	gender-based violence
GMM	General Managers' Meeting
ICBC	Institutional Committee for Business Continuity
IF	Institutional Forum
ISFAP	Ikusasa Student Financial Aid Programme
L&T	learning and teaching

Abbreviation	Designation
nGAP	New Generation of Academics Programme
NSFAS	National Student Financial Aid Scheme
OMF	Office Managers' Forum
PASS staff	professional and administrative support services (PASS) staff (Afr: professionele en administratiewe steundienste- (PASD-)personeel) OR professional academic support services (PASS) staff (Afr: professionele akademiese steundienste- (PASD-)personeel)
PREDAC	Professional Educational Development of Academics (short course)
RC	responsibility centre (Afr: VS – verantwoordelikheidsentrum)
ResEd	residential education (cluster initiative)
SI	social impact
SoTL	Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (conference)
SRC	Students' Representative Council
SUPAN	Stellenbosch University Personal Assistants' Network

Generally, it is best to state the full name first, with the abbreviation following immediately in brackets. Sometimes, organisations may be better known by their abbreviation, such as the WHO. In such cases, authors may prefer to give the abbreviation first, with the full name following in brackets.