Style Guide and Editorial Guidelines

FOR BACHELOR OF MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION STUDENTS
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Quick reference

In this section you will find some of the most common questions about style. For more in-depth explanations and other style questions, please see the full ‘A-Z Guide’, beginning on page 11. For advice on punctuation, see the ‘Punctuation guide’ chapter on page 46. For more advice on quoting and attribution technique, see ‘Writing in upstart style’ chapter on page 55.

Dates

The upstart date format is date/month/year with no commas.

  e.g. 23 August 2017

Numbers

The following are the most common style rules for writing numbers. However, there are many particular rules for writing out units of measurement, time, conversions and money. Please see the entire entry under ‘Numbers’ in the full ‘A-Z Guide’ chapter.

In most cases numbers are written as words from one to nine, and numerals are used for numbers above nine.

  e.g. eight, nine, 10, 11.

However, there are some exceptions:

  Always spell out numbers that start a sentence.
  
  e.g. Fourteen people were injured during a bar brawl last night.

  Use numerals when expressing age in people.
  
  e.g. Three children, aged, 5, 8 and 11 were injured in the crash. The 11-year-old boy is in a critical condition.

  Always use numerals for units of measurement, time and currency.
  
  e.g. 3kg, 3pm, $3

Using capital letters

The following is quick reference to the most common uses of capitalisation. For more in-depth guidance, please see the entry on capitals in the full ‘A-Z Guide’ starting on page 11.
Use capitals for proper nouns only. This includes the formal names of people, places and things. Do not use them for generic references and common nouns.

Some examples of words that should be capitalised include formal professional titles, days of the week and months, languages, ethnicities, countries and geo-political areas and titled events.

  e.g. Professor Singh, January, Vietnamese, Eastern Europe, Spring Racing Carnival

Common mistakes in capitalisation are the names of jobs, sports and interest areas and arts. These are all common nouns.

  e.g. She likes playing football and guitar, and wants to be a journalist one day.

  e.g., etc.

Latin abbreviations for “for example: and “et cetera” and other forms are as follow:

  etc. et al. e.g. i.e.

**Titles**

When writing the title of books, magazines, films, TV shows and albums, you write the title in italics. However, songs, chapters, episodes and articles are written in Roman with single quotes.

  e.g. Childish Gambino’s album, *Because the Internet*, was nominated for a Grammy in 2013, and his song ‘Redbone’ won for Best Traditional R&B Performance in 2018.

**Its/It’s/who’s/whose**

*It’s* and *who’s* should only be used when shortening *it is*, *who is*, and *who has*.

  e.g. *It’s* a common question.
  e.g. Sam, *who’s* the president, is announcing it today.

*Its* and *whose* should be used when using the possessive form.

  e.g. The cat drank *its* milk.
  e.g. I want to know *whose* shoes these are.

For more in-depth explanation of apostrophe use, see the ‘Punctuation guide’ chapter on page 46.
Writing abbreviations, acronyms and initialisms

An acronym is a word formed from the initial letters of a name, and is often pronounced as a word (e.g. ANZAC). An initialism is an acronym where the letters are spelled out verbally (e.g. The ABC).

When writing acronyms and initialisms, most should be written in full at first reference, as readers may not be familiar with them, and then followed by the abbreviation in brackets. After the first reference, you can then refer to it just by the acronym.

e.g. The Environment Protection Authority (EPA) has...

However, commonly known acronyms and initialisms like TAFE and ABC, do not need to be written in full the first time.

Avoid full stops in or after acronyms and initialisms (except e.g. and etc.) and where it otherwise might cause confusion.

Some examples where full stops are not used:

When shortening *doctor, mistress and master*.

- e.g. Dr Singh not Dr. Singh. Ms Smith, Mrs Habib.

When shortening ‘versus’.

- e.g. Sri Lanka v Pakistan not Sri Lanka v. Pakistan

When abbreviating time.

- e.g. 10:30am not 10:30a.m.

When abbreviating measurements (they also do not need to be pluralised).

- e.g. 10,000km not 10,00k.m or 10,000kms

**Plurals/singular**

All organisations and sporting clubs are single entities and should be treated as singular, unless the team name, or nickname, is plural

- e.g. Collingwood *is* playing St Kilda this week
- e.g. The Swans *are* playing Essendon this week.
Quote punctuation

For in-depth information on quoting technique, see the ‘Punctuation guide’ chapter on page 46.

Double and single quote marks:

Double quotes are used to quote writing or speech in print text.

e.g. “The report is both damning and enlightening,” Turnbull said.

Single quotes: These are used only for quotes inside quotes, as well as chapter, song and article titles.

e.g. “When I spoke to the minister on Thursday, he said it was ‘foolish and irresponsible’ for the students to do that,” Nguyen said.

   e.g. His article for Forbes, ‘How to make a million in one year’ was lauded by many.

For full quotes the punctuation goes inside the quotation marks, and for partial quotes outside.

   e.g. “It was a long and arduous journey,” she said.
   e.g. He said: “We will announce the decision tomorrow.”
   e.g. She said the conditions in the race were “sweltering”.
   e.g. He said it the decision was “very controversial”, but would not comment further.

Overuse of partial quotes is not recommended. Try to paraphrase unless it is important for you to attribute the quote.

Social media

Facebook

Capitalise Facebook and Facebook features (News Feed, Facebook Memories, Timeline)
Do not use Facebook as a verb (Facebooking, Facebooked).

Likes: Use like in lowercase and without quote marks. It is common enough most people will know that you are talking about the act of hitting like.
Reactions: When using the other emoji reactions (love, wow, haha, sad, angry) as verbs, add an ‘ed to the end.

   e.g. I liked her post and wow’ed that picture.

Use unfriend, not de-friend.

Instagram
Capitalise Instagram, as well as filter names (e.g. Clarendon, Lark, Reyes), and features like Instagram Stories and DM. Do not capitalise feed.

Verbs: It is acceptable to use instagramming and instagrammed. Do not use the short form unless quoting speech. If so, write as ‘gram. Make a verb of DM using apostrophes (DM’ed, DM’ing)

Snapchat

Capitalise Snapchat and Snapchat features (Snapchat Stories, Snapchat Discover), but use lowercase for snap (like tweet) and snap story.

Verb forms are Snapchatting/Snapchatted or snap/snapped.

Tumblr

Capitalise Tumblr, but do not italicise. Do not capitalise reblog or like. Write newsfeed as lowercase and one word (News Feed like this is only for Facebook)

Blog titles: Individual Tumblr blog names should be italicised.

Post titles: Titles of posts (where possible-some aren’t named) go into single quote marks.

Twitter

Capitalise Twitter and verb forms that include the full name (e.g. Twitter user, Twitterstorm). Do not capitalise tweet and other verb forms (tweeted, tweeting, live-tweet, subtweeted).

Hashtags: hashtag is one word. Use capitals to separate words in a hashtag to make it easier for readers (e.g. #ThrowbackThursday #StayWoke #LetVenusPlay).

Twitter handles: Write exactly as on Twitter, even if it goes against normal punctuation/spelling rules (@InnerstrengthN)

Direct messages: use capitals and apostrophes (e.g. DM, DM’ed, DM’ing)

YouTube

Capitalise YouTube and YouTuber and write as one word.

Do not capitalise comments.
A to Z style guide

Abbreviations, acronyms and initialisms

In most cases, except the most common (ABC, MCG, AFL, TAFE), write out the organisation’s name in full the first time, with the acronym in brackets following it. Use the acronym in subsequent references.

e.g. The World Health Organisation (WHO) was formed in 1946. WHO is a special agency of the United Nations.

Australian states and territories: Spell out in the first instance (except ACT, which is always ACT) without the acronym in brackets, and then use the shortening in subsequent uses.

Correct abbreviations: SA, NT, Vic, Tas, WA, QLD, ACT

Abbreviations that are pronounced as words are usually capitalised.

NASA, UNICEF, UNESCO, AIDS, APEC

There are some exceptions, however, where abbreviation have become a part of the lexicon.

Anzac, eftpos, scuba

Title abbreviations: Doctor and Master and Mistress have no full stops.

e.g. Dr Singh, Mr Nguyen, Mrs Lauer.

Versus: This is shortened as follows:

e.g. Tonight’s match is Sri Lanka v Pakistan.

Time abbreviations: Write as follows:

e.g. 10:30am, 7pm
Latin abbreviations: Write as follows:

etc., et al., e.g., i.e.

Measurement abbreviations: These do not need to be pluralised.

e.g. 10,000km 10,000kms

BC/AD: When referring to the dates AD (Anno Domini) and BC (before Christ) in specific contexts, AD is written before the date and BC written after.

302BC and AD244

Aboriginal

Aboriginal is an adjective, usually used in the expression Aboriginal Australian. It should not be used as a noun. Also, note that there is a distinction between Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, who have different heritages and cultures. The term Indigenous Australians covers both. Capitalise both words.

Where possible use Indigenous proper nouns.

 e.g. Uluru not Ayers Rock

Note: There are several protocols in place to ensure students correctly and respectfully protect the cultural customs of Aboriginal Australians and Torres Strait Islanders. Please refer to the ‘Responsible reporting: upstart Editorial Guidelines’ chapter on page 62 for more information.

Accents

Accents are symbols carried over from foreign languages. Sometimes, when a foreign word has become common in English, like cafe (formerly written as café), the accents are no longer used. If unsure, consult an Australian dictionary.

 e.g. cafe, cliche, facade.

Proper nouns with accents should retain them.

 e.g. Paul Cézanne, Chișinău (city in Republic of Moldova).

Actor/Actress

Actor is a gender neutral term and is preferred.
**Affect/effect**

The word *affect* is a verb. It means to produce an effect or a change.

e.g. The epidemic largely affected the elderly.

The word *effect* is most often used in its noun form, describing the result of the influence or impact. It is usually preceded by *an* or *the*.

e.g. The effect on students was startling.

*Effect* can also be used as a verb, to mean to accomplish or carry out a deed

e.g. The new manager effected a change in policy at the company.

**Age**

Use numerals when expressing a person’s age.

e.g. Three children, aged 5, 8 and 11 were injured in the crash.

Always hyphenate age when it comes before the noun (or the noun is implied):

e.g. A 30-year-old runner died of a stroke yesterday.
e.g. The ruins of a 280-year-old palace were found.
e.g. The victim was a 3-year-old (the noun ‘child’ is implied).

Do not use hyphens when age is expressed after the noun and is in its plural form (tip: if you’ve written the plural *years* in the phrase, you probably don’t need to hyphenate it).

e.g. The runner was 30 years old.
e.g. The palace is 280 years old.

**Ampersand (&)**

This is the symbol for *and*. Use only in company names where the ampersand is part of their branding. In all other cases write out the word *and*.

e.g. Smith & Wesson is a firearm manufacturer based in the US.

**Apple products**

Use the following spelling.

e.g. iPhone 7s, iPhone 7 Plus, iPhone 6s, iPad Mini, MacBook Pro
Apostrophes

See the ‘Punctuation guide’ chapter on page 46 for information on how to use apostrophes correctly.

April Fool’s Day

Capitalised and with a possessive apostrophe on Fool’s as above.

Around

Use about instead of around for approximation.

    e.g. about 20km not around 20km

Asylum seeker, refugee

There is some confusion between the terms refugee and asylum seeker. An asylum seeker is someone who is seeking international protection but whose claim for refugee status has not yet been determined. A refugee is someone who has been recognised as such under the 1951 Convention relating to the status of refugees.

Australian Rules football

Do not use capital letters when referring generically to the game of football. Do use capitals when referring to the official league name. You do not need to spell out the acronym AFL in the first instance in upstart, as it is considered recognisable among Victorian readers.

    e.g. football, Australian rules football, Australian Football league, AFL

Awards ceremonies

Award names are capitalised (e.g. Oscars, Emmys, Grammys)

The full titles of awards categories are capitalised, unless you are shortening it to its non-official title.

    e.g. She won the Emmy for Outstanding Lead Actress in a Drama Series
    e.g. She won best actress two years in a row.

B

Billion/million

Always use figures before the words million and billion, and write the words million and billion. (To save readers from having to count the zeros!)
In cases where *black* is being used to denote skin colour or race, the word may be used as an adjective (where relevant), but not a noun.

For example, when writing about African American culture, it is often used as an adjective, but *African American* is the preferred noun.

The term *black* is not used to describe Indigenous Australians except in specific reference to skin colour or when using (where appropriate) terms like *Blackfella*. For reference to Australian Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders, see entry under ‘Aboriginal’

**Book titles**

See entry under ‘Titles’.

**Brackets and parentheses**

**Parentheses**: These are used for acronyms and for adding non-vital information to a sentence.

- *e.g.* The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) has announced...
- *e.g.* George Washington (the first president of the United States) gave his farewell address in 1796.

**Square brackets**: In journalism these are used to provide context, correction or clarification to a quote. The square brackets indicate that the information within has been added in by a journalist or editor.

- *e.g.* “The outcome of the vote will be announced tomorrow.””  →  “The outcome of the [marriage equality] vote will be announced tomorrow.”
- *e.g.* “When he leave the building.”  →  “When he leave[s] the building.”
Capitalisation

Capital letters are often overused in writing. Use capitals for proper nouns only. This includes the formal names of people, places and things. Do not use them for generic references.

Some examples of words that should be capitalised include formal titles, days of the week and months, languages, ethnicities, countries and geo-political areas and titled events.

- Queen Elizabeth, French, Syria, The Age, La Trobe University, January, Spring Racing Carnival.

Common mistakes in capitalisation are the names of jobs, animals, sports and interest areas and arts. These are all common nouns.

- badminton, fox terrier, journalist, art, film, internet, painting.

Here are some specific style rules for using capitals:

**Dates, seasons and days of the week:** Weekdays and months are capitalised. Seasons are not.

- It will be on the third Tuesday in July.
- The Melbourne Cup takes place in spring.

**Careers:** Titles that are granted to certain professions are capitalised. Generic descriptions of jobs are not.

- Doctor Ong didn’t always dream of being a doctor. When she was a child she also considered being a flight attendant, an engineer and prime minister.

**Academic, military, royal and religious titles:** When you are writing a person’s official title (along with their name) it is capitalised. When referring generically to a job or role, you do not.

- Captain Sanjeeva Ranasinghe became a captain two years ago
- Pope John Paul told his mother he’d be the pope one day.

**Political terms and titles:** See the entry under ‘Politics and government’.

**Geographical areas:** Use capitals for the proper names of countries, cities, regions and areas.

- He was born in Ecuador, but educated in the United States, where he attended college in New York. He studied languages and cultures, with a particular interest in the people of Eastern Europe.
Compass directions: Capitalise when they comprise part of the place name or geopolitical region, but not when they simply refer to a direction.

e.g. She left her north London flat to take a teaching job in North Korea.

Cultures and languages: Use capitals to refer to the country or culture, as well as its language or its people.

e.g. The majority of French people speak French as their first language. You will also find the French language spoken in Canada.
e.g. There is no such thing as speaking Indian in India. There are many languages spoken there, including Hindi, Punjabi and Bengali.

Capitals and Australian Indigenous cultures: When referring to Australian cultural groups, the terms Aboriginal and Indigenous are capitalised.

e.g. He wrote a book about his experience growing up as an Aboriginal Australian.
Other Indigenous writers praised his book.

When referring more generically to indigenous groups of other nations, we do not capitalise aboriginal or indigenous.

e.g. “The Inuit are indigenous people who inhabit areas of Canada, Alaska and Greenland.”

Titles of books, films, TV shows: These should have every word capitalised except for conjunctions and articles.

e.g. The film Wake in Fright is a classic Australian thriller.

Universities: When referring to a university, a department, a subject or an academic, the official title of each is capitalised. When it is a generic reference to a topic or interest area, it is not.

e.g. I have always been interested in media and communication. I gave a lot of thought to going to university. I made the decision when I learning that you could study both journalism and public relations subjects in the Bachelor of Media and Communication at La Trobe University. At Open Day, Professor Smith, the head of the Department of Communication and Media, told me the lecturers had all worked in the media industry.
Sport: These are not capitalised. However, the names of teams, official sports events, leagues and associations are.

  e.g. She is studying sports journalism because she wants to work for the Australian Football League one day. She also enjoys tennis and swimming, and recently completed an internship with Tennis Australia where she got to report on The Australian Open.

Christmas

See entry under ‘Holidays and religious occasions.’

Colons

See the ‘Punctuation guide’ chapter on page 46 for advice on how to use colons and semi-colons.

Contractions

Contractions such as can’t, it’s and won’t are commonly used in text. However, the contractions he’s, she’s, would’ve, she’ll are not normally used outside of quotes.

  e.g. The committee can’t decide if she is able to go. She would have gone on Tuesday, but they hadn’t decided yet.

Countries and territories

For accurate names of countries and territories, including their spelling, capitals and their status as a recognised country or territory, consult the United Nations cartographic department’s list here: http://www.un.org/Depts/Cartographic/english/geoinfo/geoname.pdf

Court titles

  Refer to courts using their full title:

    e.g. Victorian Court of Appeal, Victorian Supreme Court, Victorian County Court.

  Note: If the court is sitting outside Melbourne, you might say “the Victorian Supreme Court, sitting in Mildura”.

  When reporting on the Magistrates Court, you would refer to the locality of the court.

    e.g. Melbourne Magistrates Court, Dandenong Magistrates Court, Kerang Magistrates Court.
Dates

*Upstart* date format is date/month/year with no commas.

- e.g. 23 August 2017

Daylight Saving

Not *daylight savings* plural as is often used in speech.

Defence, defensive, defensible

*Defence/defense:* The correct Australian English spelling is *defence*. The American style is *defense*.

- e.g. She talked about the particular need for defence at our borders.

*Defense and defensible:* Both English and American English use *defensible* and *defensive*.

- e.g. The system is not morally defensible.

Disinterested/uninterested

These are commonly confused terms.

*Uninterested* means to not be interested.

- e.g. She is uninterested in studying the health sciences.

*Disinterested* means to show no bias.

- e.g. When writing news, a journalist should give a disinterested account of an issue.

Doctor/Dr

The correct shortening of *doctor* is *Dr* without a full stop separating the name and abbreviation.

- e.g. Dr Singh has worked in this office for 10 years.
Easter
See entry under ‘Holidays and religious occasions.’

Effect/affect
The word *affect* is a verb. It means to produce an effect or change.

*e.g.* The epidemic predominantly affected the elderly.

The word *effect* is most often used in its noun form, describing the result of the influence or impact. It is usually preceded by an or the.

*e.g.* The effect on students was startling.

*Effect* can also be used as a verb, to mean to accomplish or carry out a deed

*e.g.* The new manager effected a change in policy at the company.

Eid
See entry under ‘Holidays and religious occasions.’

F

Facebook
Capitalise *Facebook* and Facebook features (*News Feed, Facebook Memories, Timeline*)
Do not use Facebook as a verb (*Facebooking, Facebooked*).

Likes: Use *like* in lowercase and without quote marks. It is common enough most people will know you are talking about the act of hitting like.
Reactions: When using the other reactions (*love, wow, haha, sad, angry*) as verbs, add an ‘*ed* to the end.

*e.g.* I liked her post and *wow’ed* that picture.

Use *unfriend*, not de-(*friend*).

Fewer/Less
Use *fewer* when referring to numbers or things you can count, and *less* when referring to quantities or amounts of something.

*e.g.* Australian has fewer people than Canada and exports less gold.
Government and politics

Government

Capitalise for official titles, as well as when referring to the official incumbent body.

- e.g. The Government, State Government, State Opposition, Federal Government.

Lowercase for adjectives and plurals.

- e.g. At state government level, many opposition leaders.

Parliamentary institutions

Capitalise when referring to the specific institutions

- e.g. Parliament/ House of Representatives/ The Senate/Legislative Council

This includes the shortened version.

- e.g. the Senate, the House, the Council

Do not capitalise for adjectives.

- e.g. There will be a parliamentary inquiry next year.

Political titles

Ministers and other titles: Capitalise ministers when you are referring to their title/portfolio, and those whose title is their portfolio.

- e.g. Treasurer, Opposition Leader, Deputy Prime Minister, Education Minister

Use lowercase when generically describing their position.

- e.g. The minister said that the former minister had left it the portfolio in disarray.

Governor-General: note the hyphen. When making plural, the s is attached to governor (e.g. The governors-general)

Senators: Use uppercase when part of title, but lowercase the rest of the time.
e.g. Senator Smith met with another senator to discuss it.

Members: Use lowercase.

e.g. The member for Fremantle

GP

The term GP as an acronym for general practitioner is so widely accepted that it does not need to be written out.

e.g. The witness said she visited her GP on the Monday after work.

H

Headlines

Headlines should be short, descriptive of the article, with no full stop at end. They should be written in minimal caps, with only the first word and proper nouns capitalised.

e.g. “Prisoner stabbed to death inside Port Phillip Prison”

Holidays and religious occasions.

Holiday names and religious festivals are capitalised.

e.g. Christmas, Eid al Adha (commonly referred to as Eid), Easter, Hannukah.

Holiday greetings are not capitalised:

e.g. I wanted to wish them happy Hannukah, seasons greetings, or merry Christmas.

Capitalise New Year when speaking of the holiday occasion.

e.g. New Year’s Day, New Year’s Eve, New Year’s resolution.

Do not capitalise when talking generically of a new year.

e.g. It is January and a new year is upon us.
April Fools’ Day, Mother’s Day and Father’s Day all take possessive apostrophes as above.

Hyphens

Please see the ‘Punctuation guide’ chapter on page 46 for instructions on hyphen use.

Indigenous/aboriginal

Indigenous describes people who are the original inhabitants of an area. In Australia, when referring to Indigenous Australians, the word is capitalised, and is used to refer to both Aboriginal Australians and Torres Strait Islanders.

Aboriginal is an adjective and Aboriginal people is the preferred noun. Black should be avoided as a noun for Aboriginal Australians. It can be offensive and is not a meaningful description.

Where possible use Indigenous proper nouns for places.

  e.g. Uluru NOT Ayers Rock

Note: there are several protocols in place to ensure students correctly and respectfully protect the cultural customs of Aboriginal Australians and Torres Strait Islanders. Please refer to the ‘Responsible reporting: upstart Editorial Guidelines’ chapter on page 60 for further information.

Instagram

Capitalise Instagram, as well as filter names (e.g. Clarendon, Lark, Reyes), and features like Instagram Stories and DM. Do not capitalise feed.

Verbs: It is acceptable to use instagarmming and instagammed. Do not use the short form unless quoting speech. If so, write as ‘gram. Make a verb of DM using apostrophes ( Dm’ed, DM’ing).

Internet terms and acronyms

Internet is not a proper noun and thus does not need to be capitalised (although some older versions of Word will spellcheck it that way). Same goes for web.

Web

Capitalise the full name World Wide Web. However, it is sufficient to say web in most instances these days.

Compound words made from web are generally lowercase and one word.

  e.g. webpage, website, web
Screen words

Computers and the internet have created a lot of compound words using screen. As a general rule, make them one word.

- e.g. screengrab, screenshot, screensaver

Internet acronyms: Use uppercase letters.

- e.g. LOL, BFF, AF (only use AF when quoting!), JK, IRL, FOMO, IDK

- e.g. JPEG, GIF (GIF’ed, GIFable)

Into/in to

*Into* is a preposition that relates to direction and movement.

- e.g. He walked into the room, she stepped into the shower, he walked into the lamppost.

Sometimes *in* and *to* can end up next to each other in a sentence in a case where *in* is connected to the verb. Do not join in these cases.

- e.g. We broke in to the room.
- e.g. She walked in to hear her mother talking about her.

 iPhones and Apple products

See entry under Apple products.

Its/whose/it’s/who’s

These are commonly confused. Here is when to use them with and without an apostrophe:

*It’s* and *who’s* should only be used when creating a contraction. This is the process of shortening two words into one. In this case the apostrophe is telling us that something has been removed, and has nothing to do with ownership.

*It is* become *it’s*:

- e.g. It’s a common question.

*Who is* becomes *who’s*:
e.g. Sam, who’s the president, is announcing it today.

Who has becomes who’s:

- e.g. Sam, who’s been running for an hour, told me he is getting tired.

Its is used when you are using the possessive form to expressing belonging.

- e.g. The cat drank its milk.
- e.g. The company and its partners launched the new product.

Whose is the possessive form of who or which.

- e.g. I want to know whose shoes these are.
- e.g. Sam, whose resume is very impressive, is a contender for the job.

J

Judge/Justice

There are particular protocols for referring to judges in Australia. These depend on the court.

- Supreme Court: Justice Jane Smith on first reference and then Justice Smith.
- County Court: Judge Wendy Smith on first reference and then Judge Smith.
- Magistrates Court: Magistrate John Smith at first reference, and then Mr (or appropriate title) Smith.

K

Koran/Quran/Qur’an

The Koran is the book of the Islamic faith. There are multiple spellings that are all correct but for simplicity Koran is preferred in English text.

L

Labour/Labor

Australian English spelling takes the ending -our for words like labour, colour, flavour etc. The -or ending is the US English form of spelling. (See the ‘Writing in upstart style’ chapter on page 55 for more on Australian English Spelling v US spelling.)
One important spelling exception is the Australian Labor Party. When using the title of the party, it takes the US English form of the word.

\[ \text{e.g. The Labor Party discussed labour conditions for factory workers today.} \]

**Lady**

*Lady* is only to be used as part of a title or name. Otherwise all references should use *woman* or *women*.

\[ \begin{align*}
&\text{e.g. Methodist Ladies College is an all-female college, but both men and women teach there.} \\
&\text{e.g. Lady Stanton was a highly educated woman.}
\end{align*} \]

**Last/latest**

*Avoid last* as a reference to a past event unless it really was the final event. If there is any chance the event may occur again, use *latest*.

\[ \begin{align*}
&\text{e.g. His last words before he died were...} \\
&\text{e.g. His latest attempt at breaking the world record was in March, 2016.}
\end{align*} \]

**Lent and leant**

*Lent* is a period in the Christian calendar. *Leant* is the past tense of *lean*.

**Licence/License**

In Australia, *licence* is the noun and *license* is the verb.

\[ \text{e.g. One who is licensed to drive must carry a driver’s licence} \]

American spelling uses *license* as both a noun and a verb. Also, see *practice/practise*

**Like/as**

Writers tend to use these terms interchangeably when they actually mean different things. Most commonly it is a problem of using *like* when you ought to be using *as/as if/as though*. The simplest way to get it right is to ask yourself the question each time you use *like*: Can it be replaced with the phrases *as/as if/as though*? If it can, then it should be.

\[ \begin{align*}
&\text{e.g. Correct} \\
&\text{He treated the student like a baby.} \\
&\text{She acted like a hero.}
\end{align*} \]
e.g. Incorrect (could be replaced with as/as though/as if)

He went on talking like nothing had happened.

Like the professor said...

M

Man

Use man to describe humans of the male gender. In all other case, always use gender neutral terms where possible. Avoid phrases like ‘man the pumps’ and ‘man hole’. The gender neutral terms here would be ‘to staff’ or ‘attend’ the pumps, and an ‘access hole’.

Many

Many is considered too vague in journalism. Be specific with amounts and numbers where possible.

Meter/Metre

In Australian English, a meter is a device for measuring something, and a metre is a unit of length. In the US, meter is used for both cases.

e.g. The electricity meter is five metres from the back door.

Metric system

Always use the metric system (the measurement system used in Australia) and convert anything not in the metric system for readers. When non-metric figures are in direct quotes, put the conversion in brackets.

e.g. “I walked thirty-two miles [51.5km] to get help,” he said.

Money

Write amounts of money in numerals, even if the amount is under nine. There is no space between currency unit abbreviation and the symbol.

e.g. I only paid $8 for it, but she paid $25.

When other currencies are referenced put the Australian conversion in square brackets.

e.g. He said: “The bill came to $80 [AUD$94.50].”

More than
Use *more than* with numbers, and *over* when referring to less specific quantities.

  e.g. More than 50, over a cup.

**Movie titles**

See entry under Titles

**Names**

The correct spelling of names of people, places, and things is extremely important. All names, however simple, must be checked before publication. Be careful with foreign name conventions, such as Chinese names, where the surname comes first.

In journalism it is common to refer to a person by their full name, or full name and title at first reference. In following references you can refer to just their last name, or their title and last name.

  e.g. Anh Nguyen is a prolific author. Before she had even published her first book, Nguyen had started another.
  e.g. Dr Adam Almasi treated the patient five times. The third time Dr Almasi saw her, he prescribed a different medication.

In broadcast media the convention is to put the position before the name.

  e.g. ABC managing director, Michelle Guthrie said...

In print, the convention is reversed

  e.g. Michelle Guthrie, managing director of the ABC, said....

**Numbers/numerals**

Here are some general rules for writing numbers:

  **Words vs. numerals:** Numbers are written as words from one to nine, and figures are used for numbers above nine.

  e.g. eight, nine, 10, 11

  However, always spell out numbers at the start of a sentence, even if it is below nine.

  e.g. Seven people were injured during a bar brawl last night.
**Measurement:** Always use numerals for units of measurement.

  e.g. 3kg, time (3pm) or currency ($2), weight (3kg)

**Time:** Write in numerals and as follows.

  e.g. 10:30am, 7pm

**Metric:** Always use the metric system (the measurement system in Australia) and convert anything not in the metric system. When non-metric figures are in direct quotes, put conversion in brackets.

  e.g. “I walked thirty-two miles [51.5 km] to get help,” he said.

**Large numbers:** Use a comma for numbers over a thousand.

  e.g. More than 2,000 people protested.

Millions and billions are written with figures and words. This makes it clear for the reader and saves them from having to count all the zeros.

  e.g. 100 million, 2 billion.

**Money**

There is no space between currency unit and the symbol.

  e.g. AUD$100 or US$20

When other currencies are referenced put the Australian conversion in brackets.

  O

**Offence, offensive**

The correct use in Australian English is *offence* and *offensive*. The American spelling is *offense*.

**Okay/ok**

Use the full word *okay* in both writing and quotes.

**Olympics**

*Olympics* is capitalised.
There are two kinds of Olympic Games, the Summer Olympics and the Winter Olympics. They treated as a plural (because they are a series of games, hence the full name).

The Olympics are being held in Tokyo next.

When saying the games on your second reference (say Olympic Games the first time) it is in lowercase.

These games have been fraught with controversy.

Medals should be in lowercase.

She took gold in the relay, but only silver in the 400m.

Onto/on to

Use onto to mean on top of, to a position on, or upon.

She climbed onto the roof.

Onto can also be used to mean to be aware of or to be informed about something.

I’m onto your scheme.

Use on to when the on is connected the verb instead of the preposition.

I’m going to log on to the computer.

Over

Use more than for numbers, keep over for references to places.

More than $100.

The plane flies over the water. I’m over the moon.

Parentheses

See the entry under ‘Brackets and Parentheses’ in the Punctuation guide’ chapter on page 46.
Past/last

Past refers to the time up until the present moment. The term past year means the previous 12 months. Last year means the previous calendar year. Also avoid redundant uses such as past history or past record.

Per cent

Percent is written in the upstart style as one word. Do not use the symbol % except in charts. Percentage is always written as a numerals unless at the start of a sentence.

Person

Person is the singular. People is the plural. Persons is common in American English but not used in Australian English.

Plurals

Plurals can be tricky and several different systems apply in English, depending on the derivation of the word.

Most commonly -s or -es is added to a word.

- e.g. atlases, donkeys.

Many words ending in -y use an –ies in the plural.

- e.g. cities, babies.

Some words ending in -f or -fe simply take an -s but others take -ves.

- e.g. roofs, selves, lives.

Words ending in -o vary. Check a dictionary if you are not sure.

- e.g. broncos, potatoes.

Words with -i endings are always pluralised with an -s.

- e.g. taxis, bikinis.

The Greek-derived -on ending uses an -a or an -s.

- e.g. phenomena, protons.
Note: Words such as media and criteria are plurals. They must be expressed that way.

   e.g. The criteria are. The media are...

Latin derived words ending in -us, usually take an -es, or sometimes an -era.

   e.g. cactuses, genera.

The plural -s is not necessary for metric contractions.

   e.g. 20km NOT 20kms.

Compound words can be tricky and should always be checked for the correct plural form.

   e.g. ‘attorneys general’ or ‘five chiefs of staff will be chosen.’

Politics and government

See entry under ‘government and politics’.

Practice/practise

Practice is the noun and practise is the verb in Australian English spelling.

   e.g. A GP practises medicine in a medical practice.

Note: In American English practise is used for both forms.

Preventive

Preventive is the correct spelling, not preventative.

Principle/Principal

Can be confused. Principles are rules or standards. The principal is the person of highest standing (principal of school) or an amount of money before interest.

Profanity

Avoid profanity in prose for upstart. When quoting, use dashes to signify some missing letters.

   e.g. f---ing idiot, f---wit, sh—head

Political parties

Capitalise the names of political parties.
e.g. Australian Labor Party, Liberal Party of Australia, Australian Greens.

This includes the shortened, common names for political parties.

e.g. Richard Di Natale said the Greens are considering the proposal, even though Labor swiftly rejected it.

Political philosophies are lower case unless a proper noun is part of the term.

e.g. communism, fascism, Marxism, Nazism

Possessives

See entry under Apostrophes

Proper Names

Use the official spelling and style of proper names of organisations even if it contradicts the upstart publication style.

e.g. Centers for Disease Control, U.S. Department of Defense

Prosecutors

In the Magistrates Court, prosecutors are usually police. You would check their name and rank.

e.g. ‘Police prosecutor David Bentley’ for first reference followed by ‘Sergeant Bentley’.

In the County and Supreme courts, prosecutors might have a formal role with the state Office of Public Prosecutions. They might be described initially as, for instance, Senior Crown Prosecutor Kerri Judd, QC. After that, you would refer to her in the story as Ms Judd. Here is a list of crown prosecutors. http://www.opp.vic.gov.au/About-Us/Crown-Prosecutors/Listing-of-CPs

Otherwise, other barristers might be prosecutors in the higher courts. At first reference, it might be ‘Prosecutor Trevor Wing, SC’, then Mr Wing later in your court story. If Mr Wing was acting as the defence lawyer, you might describe him as ‘Defence lawyer Trevor Wing, SC’, then Mr Wing after that.

Quarter-final

This is always hyphenated. So is semi-final.
QC and SC (Queen’s Counsel and Senior Counsel)

These titles reflect a barrister’s seniority and status. In Victoria, the Chief Justice appoints barristers to this status each November. The barristers can choose to be a QC or SC if appointed. Symbolically, they wear silk, not the normal cotton, black robes in court. Journalists need to know if a barrister is a QC or SC. Here is a link to the barristers’ website, the Victorian bar, to help with the check: https://www.vicbar.com.au/

Quoting and quote punctuation

Double quotes are used to quote speech in print text.

  e.g. “The report is both damning and enlightening,” Turnbull said.

Single quotes are used only for quotes inside quotes.

  e.g. “When I spoke to the principal on Thursday, he said it was ‘foolish and irresponsible’ of the students,” Nguyen said.

It is very important that students punctuate quotes correctly.

For full quotes the punctuation goes inside the quotation marks, and for partial quotes outside.

  e.g. “It was a long and arduous journey,” she says.
  e.g. She said the conditions in the race were “sweltering”.
  e.g. He said it the decision was “very controversial”, but would not comment further.

Use partial quotes sparingly. Unless the partial quote is necessary, try to paraphrase the information.

For more information about how to punctuate quotations see A to Z guide entry ‘Quotations’ on page 29. For more information on quoting technique see the ‘Writing in upstart style’ section on quoting and attribution technique on page 25.

Recent

In journalism, recent is too general and should be avoided. Try to provide a more specific time frame.

  e.g. In the last six months, his game has improved.
Refugee, asylum seeker

There is some confusion between the terms refuge and asylum seeker. An asylum seeker is someone who is seeking international protection but whose claim for refugee status has not yet been determined. A refugee is someone who has been recognised under the 1951 Convention relating to the status of refugees.

Refute/reject/repudiate

Reject and refute are sometimes confused. To reject means to not accept something. To refute means to disprove something.

  e.g. The committee rejected the proposal to change the date. The dog rejected her puppies.
  e.g. They produced evidence that refuted his claims.

Religious titles

Capitalise the names of religious denominations and titles.

  e.g. Buddhist, the Reverend Jesse Jackson

Restaurateur

Someone who runs a restaurant is a restaurateur, not a restauranter as is commonly misspelt.

Revert to

To avoid redundancy, write revert to, not revert back to.

Roofs

The plural form of roof is roofs, not rooves.

S

Said/says

The upstart style is to use said in our speech tags instead of says (and always after the quoted person’s name).

  “The decision will be made on Tuesday,” Haj Raseem said on Tuesday.

Sceptic/skeptic

Sceptic is correct. Skeptic is the American spelling.
**Screen words**

Computers and the internet have created a lot of compound words using screen. As a general rule, make them one word.

- e.g. screengrab, screenshot, screensaver.

**Seasons**

The four seasons are not capitalised. Also avoid using seasons as a time reference. Try to be more specific by naming a month or the date.

**Semi-colon**

See the ‘Punctuation guide’ section on page 46 for advice on how to use a semi-colon.

**Slang**

Avoid slang, unless you are quoting it in direct speech.

**Smartphone**

Write as one word in lower case.

- e.g. He bought a smartphone but hates it.

**Snapchat**

Capitalise Snapchat and Snapchat features *(Snapchat Stories, Snapchat Discover)*, but use lowercase for snap (like tweet) and snap story.

Verb forms are *Snapchatting/Snapchatted or snap/snapped*.

**Social media terminology**

**Facebook**

Capitalise Facebook and Facebook features *(News Feed, Facebook Memories, Timeline)*

Do not use Facebook as a verb *(Facebooking, Facebooked)*.

Likes: Use *like* in lowercase and without quote marks. It is common enough most people will know you are talking about the act of hitting like.

Reactions: When using the other reactions (love, wow, haha, sad, angry) as verbs, add an ‘ed to the end.

- e.g. I liked her post and wow’ed that picture.

Use *unfriend*, not *de-friend*.

**Instagram**
Capitalise Instagram, as well as filter names (e.g. Clarendon, Lark, Reyes), and features like Instagram Stories and DM. Do not capitalise feed.

Verbs: It is acceptable to use instagranming and instagranmed. Do not use the short form unless quoting speech. If so, write as ‘gram. Make a verb of DM using apostrophes (Dm’ed, DM’ing)

Snapchat

Capitalise Snapchat and Snapchat features (Snapchat Stories, Snapchat Discover), but use lowercase for snap (like tweet) and snap story.

Verb forms are Snapchatting/Snapchatted or snap/snapped.

Tumblr

Capitalise Tumblr, but do not italicise. Do not capitalise reblog or like. Write newsfeed as lowercase and one word (News Feed like this is only for Facebook)

Blog titles: Individual Tumblr blog names should be italicised.

Post titles: Titles of posts (where possible-some aren’t named) go into single quote marks.

Twitter

Capitalise Twitter and verb forms that include the full name (e.g. Twitter user, Twitterstorm). Do not capitalise tweet and other verb forms (tweeted, tweeting, live-tweet, subtweeted).

Hashtags: hashtag is one word. Use capitals to separate words in a hashtag name to make it easier for readers (e.g. #ThrowbackThursday #StayWoke #LetVenusPlay).

Twitter handles: Write exactly as on Twitter, even if it goes against normal punctuation/spelling rules (@InnerstrengthN)

Direct messages: use capitals and apostrophes (e.g. DM, DM’ed, DM’ing)

YouTube

Capitalise YouTube and YouTuber and write as one word.

Do not capitalise comments.

Song titles

See entry under Titles.

Stadiums/stadia

Both are accepted plurals in most dictionaries but stadiums is more common and is preferred.

Swearing

See entry under ‘profanity’.
T

Tense

Most news and feature writing maintains the present tense.

e.g. Police are investigating two robberies.

However, when referring to past events or speeches, past tense is always used.

e.g. Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull says he is in no rush to discuss the bill, but last year in a speech to the National Press Club he said that he would debate the bill at the “earliest possible opportunity”.

Television

The shortening is TV.

That

The word is usually redundant. The best way to find out is to ask yourself if the sentence still makes sense without that. If it does, take it out.

e.g. ‘He thought it was a good idea’ not ‘He thought that it was a good idea’.

The

Remember that the is not always needed before a title or role.

e.g. Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull

However, be aware of when the is part of an official term or title.

e.g. The Age newspaper, is owned by Fairfax Media.

Time

Use numerals for time, and write as follows:

e.g. 10:30am, 7pm

Titles and names
Use *Mr*, *Ms* (not *Mrs*) and *Dr* where necessary. They do not require a full stop after the abbreviated part (*Dr Jones* not *Dr. Jones*). Give the person’s full name at first reference then refer to them by surname thereafter.

**Toward/towards**

*Towards* is preferred. *Toward* is American spelling.

**Transgender**

This is an umbrella term to describe people whose gender identity differs from that assigned to them at birth. Always use a person’s chosen name and refer to them as the correct or preferred gender pronouns. Only mention a person is transgender if relevant to the story. Transsexual is an outdated term. Use transgender instead.

**Try and/Try to**

In speech, many people say they will *try and* do something. However, in correct writing, *try to* is correct not *try and*.

*e.g.* ‘I will try to call him’ not *I will try and call him*.

**Tumblr**

Capitalise *Tumblr*, but do not italicise. Do not capitalise *reblog* or *like*. Write *newsfeed* as lowercase and one word (*News Feed* like this is only for Facebook).

Blog titles: Individual Tumblr blog names should be italicised.
Post titles: Titles of posts (where possible - some aren’t named) go into single quote marks.

**Twitter**

Capitalise *Twitter* and verb forms that include the full name (*e.g.* Twitter user, Twitterstorm). Do not capitalise *tweet* and other verb forms (*tweeted*, *tweeting*, *live-tweet*, *subtweeted*).

Hashtags: *hashtag* is one word. Use capitals to separate words in a hashtag name to make it easier for readers (*e.g.* #ThrowbackThursday #StayWoke #LetVenusPlay).

Twitter handles: Write exactly as on Twitter, even if it goes against normal punctuation/spelling rules (@InnerstrengthN)

Direct messages: use capitals and apostrophes (*e.g.* *DM*, *DM’ed*, *DM’ing*)

**Under/Over**
**Under and over** should not be used with numbers. *Fewer* and *more than* is the correct usage.

- e.g. more than 100 people walked over the bridge

**Under way**

*Under way* is two words. Others such as *underage* are one word so always check an Australian dictionary when unsure.

**Uninterested/disinterested**

These are commonly confused terms.

*Uninterested* means to not be interested

- e.g. She is uninterested in the health sciences.

*Disinterested* means to show no bias.

- e.g. When writing news, a journalist should give a disinterested account of an issue.

**Unique**

The word is absolute and has no fractions or degrees. In this sense something or someone cannot be described as *very unique* or *slightly unique*. They are simple unique or they are not.

**Up/down**

Avoid using these words in economic and financial reporting. Instead use *higher* and *lower* or *increased* and *decreased*.

**US (United States)**

When referencing the country, spell out at first reference (the United States), then use *US* for subsequent references or headlines. When referring to a person, American is correct.

**Versus**

The preferred upstart style is to use the abbreviation ‘v’.

- e.g. Australia v Pakistan.

**Vice**

The prefix *vice* takes a hyphen.
e.g. vice-captain, vice-president.

W

Wake

Avoid in the wake of. Use after or following.

Web

Capitalise the full name World Wide Web. However, it is sufficient to say web in most instances these days.

Compound words made from web are generally lowercase and one word.

  e.g. webpage, website, web

Well

Well is hyphenated when used as a prefix to a noun.

  e.g. She is a well-read woman.

Western Australia

Not West Australia.

Where

This is often used incorrectly when in which or at which are correct.

  e.g. ‘The meeting in which it was discussed’ not ‘The meeting where it was discussed’.

Which

Which and that can be confused. That is a clause that defines what is being talked about. In the following example that defines what kind of dogs are being talked about and can’t be removed.

  e.g. Dogs that bark scare me.

Which adds additional information but is non-restrictive. This means it can be removed with changing the meaning of the sentence.
e.g. Dogs, which can be expensive, make great pets.

Who/whom

Who refers to the subject of a sentence, while whom refers to the object.

e.g. Who made these awesome tacos?
e.g. To whom was the letter addressed?

Wide

Worldwide and nationwide are one word. Wide-eyed and wide-open are hyphenated when used before a noun.

World Wide Web/Internet

Use internet (lowercase) instead of web or world wide web.

X

X-ray

The word x-ray is hyphenated.

Y

Years

Use figures to express the year.

e.g. 1975, the 1980s

YouTube

Capitalise YouTube and YouTuber and write as one word.
Do not capitalise comments.
Sports style guide

In the following pages you will find style rules specifically for writing about sports, including team names, races and positions. You will also find particular rules related to capitalisation, referring to sponsors. Sports journalism students are expected to follow this guide in their sports writing, but it can be used as a guide for any students writing about sport for *upstart* or their media and communication subjects.

AFL Teams.

First reference either the full name – Essendon Bombers, or place-name Essendon. Then throughout the story other nicknames are acceptable, Bombers, Dons etc.

Plural vs non-plural teams.

Singular team names take a singular verb.

  e.g. Melbourne is playing Hawthorn, the team is on the road.

Teams with plural names take plural verbs.

  e.g. The Melbourne Demons are in town.

Umpires/Referees/Officials.

Officials – AFL and cricket have umpires, rugby league, football (soccer) and rugby union have referees.

Australian League Names.

  AFL – Australian Rules Football
  NRL – National Rugby League
  Big Bash – cricket.
  Super Rugby – rugby union.
  A-League – football.

National Team Names.

As a general rule, use the name used by sport governing body. Note that the Australian cricket teams are now known as the men’s national cricket team and the women’s national cricket team.

Anzac

As in Anzac Day matches. Initial cap but not the entire word.

Olympics

The Olympics are capitalised
e.g. There are two kinds of Olympic Games, the Summer Olympics and the Winter Olympics.

They treated as a plural (because they are a series of games, hence the full name).

e.g. The Olympics are being held in Tokyo next.

When saying the games on your second reference (say Olympic Games the first time) it is in lowercase.

e.g. These games have been fraught with controversy.

Medals should be in lowercase.

e.g. She took gold in the relay, but only silver in the 400m.

**Distances**

In sports with distance events, such as athletics and swimming, we express distances in the abbreviated, non-plural form.

e.g. 400m hurdles/400m freestyle.

**Capitals in sports titles**

Capitals are used where the title is attributed directly to a named individual

e.g. “FIFA President Sepp Blatter said ...”

But not when the title only is used.

e.g. “The president said...”

Or when using the title in general.

e.g. “FIFA presidents have always been drawn from South America or Europe ...”.

Capitals should not be used for player position, or coach.

e.g. Richmond forward Jack Riewoldt, not Richmond Forward Jack Riewoldt.
e.g. Australian cricket coach Darren Lehmann, not Australian Cricket Coach Darren Lehmann.

Team names should be capitalised.
Specific event names do take capitals.

e.g. The 2018 Australian Open, the 2018 AFL Grand Final, the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games.

Note we use test cricket, not Test Cricket or Test cricket.

Titles of sports events

Use lower case for: sport names, junior, men’s, women’s, championship, tournament, meeting, match, test, race, and game.

Use upper case for title of the events.

e.g. French Open tennis championships, Dutch Open golf tournament.

Use singular championship when one title is at stake and plural championships for more than one.

e.g. U.S. Open tennis championships (men’s, women’s, doubles). U.S. Open golf championship (one winner).

The name of the sport should precede the word championship, tournament etc.

Disaster/tragedy

Do not use disaster or tragedy for sporting contests because this devalues the word. Losing a football match is not a disaster. A stand falling down and crushing fans is.

Specific sports positions and terms.

In most sports, separate phrases. Rugby is the notable exception.

**Rugby positions:** Run two words together

- e.g. flyhalf, scrumhalf, fullback (as opposed to soccer positions which are expressed as separate words).
- e.g. tighthead prop, inside centre, loosehead prop, hooker.

**Soccer positions:** Written as two words

- e.g. wing back, centre half, full back, centre forward except for goalkeeper.

**Cricket positions:**
left-arm spinner – Slow bowler in cricket, note hyphen.
leg slip – Fielding position in cricket. Two words.
leg-spinner – Bowler in cricket.
wicketkeeper – One word.
wicketkeeper-batsman – Hyphenated. A cricketer who is a recognised batsman but also fulfils a wicketkeeping role when his side is fielding.
third man – Fielding position in cricket is two words.
square leg – Fielding position in cricket, two words, but hyphenated as an adjective as in the square-leg umpire.

Tennis: This is mixed.
backhand – One word in tennis and badminton.
match point – Two words in tennis, racket sports.
tiebreak – one word in tennis.
topspin – One word in tennis.

Sponsors

Writers should not become billboards for a profusion of sponsors, though journalists must note that it is legitimate to use sponsor names within strict criteria. Usage should be related to the way media in general use sponsors’ names. Sponsors are becoming increasingly aggressive and are more likely to refuse to accredit journalists to events where the sponsor’s name is not used. On some occasions it may be counter-productive to refuse to comply with this, but on principle it should be resisted as far as possible.

Team names

Sponsors names should not be used in team names when the sponsorship may change on a periodic basis

e.g. Austrian club Red Bull Salzburg (correct usage SV Salzburg).

Exceptions should be made for teams which began as works sides or for teams where sponsorship provides the only means of identity (some cycling teams).

e.g. Bayer Leverkusen

Events

Most sporting events have a sponsorship name attached. Where it is clear what the event is without the name of the sponsor, we should drop it.
e.g. world championships, the FA Cup etc.

**Rankings and statistics**

Sponsors’ names should be used only where it is necessary to distinguish them as a legitimate source.

* e.g. Reuters golf rankings.

FIFA world soccer rankings is a source in itself and would not need to have a sponsor’s name. In soccer, avoid sponsors’ names on domestic leagues that can all be described by their category

* e.g. English Premier League.
Punctuation guide

Apostrophes

Despite having fairly consistent rules for use, apostrophes are a common source of errors in student writing. Apostrophes serve two main functions: to indicate ownership or tell us something has been abbreviated.

Ownership

Use an apostrophe to indicate ownership by adding an apostrophe followed by an s to singular nouns.

- e.g. a hen’s beak, the book’s contents, Susan’s point is clear.

For plural nouns, the apostrophe follows the s.

- e.g. five hens’ beaks, the girls’ books.

In the case of words that are already plural, like children and sheep, the apostrophe goes before the s, same as it does in the singular form.

- e.g. the children’s book, the sheep’s paddocks

Abbreviations

Use an apostrophe to indicate where a word has been shortened or abbreviated.

Con retractions are a form of abbreviation where two words are fused together—with letters removed—to create a shortened form

- e.g. they’re (they are), didn’t (did not), let’s (let us), it’s (it is), who’s (who is).

We also use apostrophes to indicate a word is shortened. The word until is often shortened in speech.

- e.g. Myers wrote the book Won’t Know ‘til I Get There.

Sometimes words are shortened so often it becomes the common form. For example, the word plane, which is an abbreviation of airplane, used to be written as ’plane. But now the word has become so common it has entered the lexicon as its own word.
Apostrophes are also used when dates are abbreviated.

  e.g. Summer of ’69

Plural words do not need an apostrophe even if they are numbers with acronyms.

  e.g. fish and chips, 1960s, BMWs

**Common confusions with apostrophes**

The words it’s/its and who’s/whose create the most confusion for students.

The words *it’s* and *who’s* should only be used when shortening *it is, who is* and *who has* into contractions.

  e.g. It’s a common question.
  e.g. Sam, who’s the president, is announcing it today.

*Its* and *whose* (without apostrophes) should be used when using the possessive form.

  e.g. The cat drank its milk.
  e.g. I want to know whose shoes these are.

**Colons**

Note: a colon looks like this : and is not to be confused with the semi-colon, which looks like this ;

Use a colon to introduce short quotes, to start off a list, or introduce an idea or explanation.

When introducing the start of a quote, you use capitals after it.

  She said: “We will decide next week.”

If starting off a list, or introducing an explanation or an idea, you do not.

  She packed: two jumpers, jeans, and a battery.
  We need to: form a committee, start planning, consult with experts.
Commas

Students tend to use commas more than necessary rather than not enough. Here are some general rules for when a comma is necessary.

**Listing things:** When writing a list, a comma substitutes the *and*.

- e.g. She broke records in 2007, 2008, 2010 and 2011.
- e.g. I cleaned the house, went to the gym, built a chair and then cooked dinner.

In *upstart* we do not use a comma before the *and* in lists. This is known as the Oxford comma and is used by some publications.

**Separating clauses:** A clause is a building block of the sentence structure. They are often joined by a comma.

Some clauses are described as independent, meaning they could stand on their own as a sentence and make complete sense. However, sometimes two independent clauses are linked by a comma to establish a relationship (often linked by *and* or *but*).

- e.g. “She appealed to the court, but did not get a response.” v “She appealed to the court. She did not get a response.”

Then there are dependant clauses. These do not make sense on their own.

- e.g. Although he started out as a dancer.
- e.g. Which was very difficult for me.

A dependant clause needs to be attached to another clause to help it make sense. When this is done, the clauses are joined by a comma to indicate their relationship.

- e.g. Although he started out as a dancer, he quickly became more interested in cheerleading.
- e.g. I had to decide whether or not I wanted to stay in Australia, which was very difficult for me.

**In place of a parentheses:** This is where commas are used to separate out a supplementary clause inside a sentence.

- e.g. Merna, who has worked there for many years, showed me the ropes.
In the case above, the comma can be thought of as performing a similar task to parentheses. Instead, a comma is placed before and after a clause that is related to the sentence, but somehow less important or supplementary. In the above example, the main idea of the sentence is that someone called Merna showed the speaker or writer the ropes. The information that she has worked there for many years is supplementary information so it is surrounded by commas to separate it from the main idea. You can identify these supplementary clauses by asking yourself if the sentence would still make sense if it was removed.

With these clauses, both parentheses and commas could be used. Both the examples below are correct. However, it is best not to overload your writing with distracting parentheses, where a comma could perform the same function.

e.g. The meeting (which will take place on Friday) will decide the outcome

e.g. The meeting, which will take place on Friday, will decide the outcome.

Around identifying nouns: You will often see commas placed around names or identifying nouns.

e.g. The actor’s husband, Andrew Upton, will accompany her to the set in Lagos.

Be careful to use these properly. In the preceding example, setting commas around the name implies that Upton is the actor’s only husband. In the following example, however, without any commas, the implication is that he is one of more husbands.

e.g. The actor’s husband Andrew Upton will accompany her to the set in Lagos.

In quoting: The comma is used at the end of a complete quote when a speech tag is going to be added.

e.g. “I don’t know why,” he said. “We will know more when the report comes out.”

Introductory words: Some introductory words such as yes, however, well and so at the start of sentences are set off by a comma. It indicates a kind of pause to the reader.

e.g. However, the results were contradictory.

e.g. So, what will you do now?

e.g. Well, that was a mess.

Ellipses

An ellipses is a series of dots in a row. They can be used in more than one way.
To indicate that someone trailed off in speech. In this case it is indicated by three dots with no spaces between the words preceding or following it.

  e.g. “I found it really difficult, but I…”
  e.g. “I felt so...I don’t know...guilty?”

In journalism an ellipsis is also used in quotes to show where words have been omitted. The ellipses signals to the reader something has been removed. In this case, a space is left one either side of the ellipses.

  e.g. “Today, after careful deliberations, we vetoed the bill.” becomes “Today ... we vetoed the bill”.

Capitalise the word after the dots if it is part of a new sentence.

  e.g. “I wanted us to do our best on this night, the night of the competition. Some members of the team performed well, but others didn’t.” becomes
  “I wanted us to do our best... Some members of the team performed well, but others didn’t.”

**Full stops**

A full stop marks the end of a discrete statement. It is generally advised to use shorter sentences with full stops in journalism rather than semi-colons or long sentences jammed with clauses and commas. It keeps the writing clear, punchy and concise.

**Hyphens**

Hyphens are sometimes necessary to join two words together to create either a new meaning, or to avoid confusion of meaning. Some compound words (nouns that are actually made up of two words) are also joined by hyphens.

The use of hyphens can sometimes be part of a concrete grammar rule and sometimes a matter of style choice, which can make it confusing. It is best to consult with an Australian Dictionary if you are unsure of particular instances.

The following examples are some useful, concrete rules for when to use hyphens.

  **Numbers**: compound numbers are hyphenated.

  e.g. Twenty-two, fifty-six.
**Expressing age:** when age is functioning as an adjective it should be hyphenated.

- e.g. The 12-year-old boy was found yesterday. He is a 12-year-old.

But NOT when age is taking a plural form.

- e.g. She is 12 years old. The building is 50 years old.

**Adjective + adjective:** In the case where two adjectives depend on each other to describe a noun, they are often hyphenated to avoid confusion.

For example, consider the difference between the following examples with or without a hyphen.

- e.g. A blue finned fish is a blue fish that has fins.
- e.g. A blue-finned fish is a fish with blue fins.

In the above case, the hyphen tells us that blue and fin are modifying each other. Here is a similar case where the hyphen is needed to avoid confusion.

- e.g. extra marital sex. This means extra sex during marriage.
- e.g. extra-marital sex. This means sex that takes place outside of the marriage.

**Adverbs + adjective:** When an adverb is modifying an adjective, they sometimes take hyphens.

When using the adverbs very and adverbs ending in ly, they do not usually take a hyphen.

- e.g. the very fit athlete, the highly capable student, the finely tuned piano.

However, when using well to modify an adjective, it often does. If unsure, consult with an Australian Dictionary.

- e.g. the well-adjusted child, the well-versed student.

**Nouns + prepositions:** Words that are formed from joining nouns and prepositions require a hyphen.

- e.g. The break-up finally happened after a long build-up.

However, you do not use it when you are expressing a verb action.

- e.g. The tensions started to build up over a year ago, and we wondered if they'd break up or not.
Prefixes: These will either be hyphenated, or set solid (made into one word). The preference is set solid where possible, but usage can vary. Consult an Australian dictionary if unsure.

- e.g. over-estimate, semi-trailer, anti-intellectual
- e.g. extraordinary, deactivate

Hyphens are often used when the last word of the prefix is the same as the first letter of the word to avoid difficulty in reading or pronouncing.

- e.g. Anti-intellectual (instead of antiintellectual).

Use a hyphen where adding a pre-fix might create a word that is identical with an existing word and might create confusion.

- e.g. ‘re-cover’ to mean to cover something again, so it cannot be confused with ‘recover’ as in to get better.

Part and semi: these are usually hyphenated.

- e.g. They will play in the semi-finals on Friday if they win.
- e.g. He has a part-time job.

Fractions: These are hyphenated.

- e.g. Three-quarters of the bowl should be filled. Then add two-thirds of a cup of flour.
- e.g. The players stay on the field to rest at quarter-time, but go to the change rooms for half-time.

Hyphens and compound nouns

Compound nouns are formed when two nouns work together (and depend on each other) to create a new noun. For example, water and bottle are joined to create water bottle. How compound nouns are written comes in three forms, with (unfortunately) no real rules governing the use. If you are unsure, consult an Australian Dictionary. Be consistent with use.

As two words in a row:

- e.g. She got as far as the bus stop when she realised she’d forgotten her water bottle.

As two words fused together:

- e.g. His lunchbox was filled with food.
As two hyphenated words:

e.g. Her mother-in-law had a great-granddaughter who was a plumber.

Note: In some cases, there is more than one acceptable variation. If you are not sure how to write them, you are best to look up compound nouns in an Australian dictionary.

Quotation marks

Quotation marks indicate that you are writing something that has been said or written by another entity. For ethical and legal reasons you must ensure everything that is placed between quote marks is exactly what was originally said or written. If the quote is unclear or long, it is best to paraphrase it into an indirect quote where you can ensure the language is clear.

The following are some rules for writing quotes in upstart style.

Double and single quote marks:

Double quotes are used to quote writing or speech.

e.g. “The report is both damning and enlightening,” Turnbull said.

Single quotes are used only for quotes inside quotes.

e.g. “When I spoke to the minister on Thursday, he said it was ‘foolish and irresponsible’ for the students to do that,” Nguyen said.

For full quotes the punctuation goes inside the quotation marks, and for partial quotes it is placed outside.

e.g. “It was a long and arduous journey,” she said.

e.g. She said the conditions in the race were “sweltering”.

e.g. He said it the decision was “very controversial”, but would not comment further.

For more on quoting and attribution style, see the chapter on ‘Writing in upstart style’ on page 55.
Semi-colons

Note: a semi-colon looks like this ; and should not be confused with the colon, which looks like this :

Semi-colons are described as stronger than comma but weaker than a full stop. They are most commonly used to link independent clauses that are related in thought.

\[ \text{e.g. Some people write with a word processor; others write with a pen or pencil.} \]

Both sides of the semi-colon must be able to stand alone as complete sentences. Don’t use with a dependent clause. Journalism students are advised to avoid using semi-colons where two short sentences would be more appropriate.


Writing in *upstart* style

**Attribution and quoting**

**Attribution**

In journalism we seek authoritative sources to provide information on a topic, such as an expert, a witness, a key decision-maker, or words from a document. Attribution is the act of citing the source material in your piece. Unlike essays where referencing tools such as a bibliography or footnote is used to cite sources, journalists must attribute within the text by incorporating it into the text or broadcast.

You must attribute all information (that is not common knowledge) to the source, whether you are quoting or paraphrasing it.

- e.g. "A decision will be made next week," said Principal Lou Smith.
- e.g. The school’s principal, Lou Smith, said a decision will be made next week.

The attribution should include enough information that the reader/listener understands why knowledge from that source should be trusted.

Consider the following example:

> “There has been a marked increase in STIs among those aged 18 to 25 in the last few years,” Joanne Smith said.

While this attributes the speaker by telling us her name, it does not indicate why she has the authority to speak on the subject. In this case it does:

> “There has been a marked increase in STI among those aged 18 to 25 in the last few years,” Dr Joanne Smith, lead researcher in the study, said.

The same protocols are followed when information is being paraphrased.

- e.g. Global temperatures will rise this summer, representatives from the United Nations World Meteorological Organisation said yesterday.

**Attributing other media sources:** If you are including information that was obtained by another media organisation, or using a quote they published, you must attribute both the speaker and the source to avoid plagiarism. The following is an example of how an *upstart* contributor might attribute a quote taken from another publication:
“We are revising the policy next month,” Turnbull told *The Age* yesterday.

Where possible, however, avoid using quotes taken from other news stories.

**Attributing quotes:**

In nearly all cases the speaker should be attributed before the quote. The best way to introduce them is to paraphrase part of what they have said as a sort of ‘mini introduction’. This will help you to make a smooth transition into their quote and to ensure the reader or listener knows who is speaking and what they are speaking about before the quote begins.

Hannah Jones, Trees Victoria’s chief arborist, says rising temperatures are already beginning to affect trees in the state.

“Park keepers are having to set watering systems on some of the older European trees all over Victoria,” she said.

Always add a speech tag (‘she/he/they said’) at the end of a long quote to ensure the reader knows where it ends.

In rare cases of a very short quote, the attribution may come after the quote, because the reader does not have to wait too long to see who is speaking.

“We will fight the rule,” Lea Bathari, head of the parent committee, said.

However, we’d usually see some sort of introduction to the quote. Note how the quote starts on the next line.

Parents have expressed their dismay at the principal’s new rule, and the lack of consultation.

“We will fight the rule,” Lea Bathari, head of the parent committee, said.

Avoid repeating the same words or phrasing in the introduction as in the quote. Repetition sounds clumsy. Consider the following example:

The city mayor, Casey Smith, is proud of the city’s ranking.

“We are proud of our city’s ranking in the liveability survey. We have put a lot of effort in, over a long period of time to get this result. It reflects hard work, constant improvements to infrastructure, and citizens who really care about this city,” she said.

Instead, paraphrase the first part as indirect speech, and quote the rest:
The city mayor, Casey Smith, is proud of the city’s ranking as one of the country’s most liveable.

“We are proud of our city’s ranking in the liveability survey. We have put a lot of effort in, over a long period of time to get this result. It reflects hard work, constant improvements to infrastructure, and citizens who really care about this city,” she said.

Note: When referring to a source, or attributing a quote, the preferred use in newswriting is said. Avoid other words such as adds, continues, concludes, believes, feels.

Quoting

Quotes are vital to storytelling in journalism. They give both credence and colour to your work.

Quoting is the act of incorporating someone else's words into your work. Quotes should always be an exact representation of what the source said, and cannot be altered except for minor changes to provide clarity.

For example, in the following case, the only words you might omit might be the “um” for clarity as it is not a word. In the case of profanity, some publications might omit all but the first letter. Consult with your editor.

He said: “I, um, never, um, said he did it. That’s a fucking lie!”
He said: “I never said he did it. That’s a f------ lie!”

Amending quotes

Sometimes a quote needs to be amended or added to for clarity. To do so, we put that information inside square brackets. They signify that anything inside them has been added by the writer or editor. In the following example, the writer wants to clarify what the it refers to:

e.g. “Our discussion about whether it [Australia Day] should be moved became quite heated.”

Partial and complete quotes:

Both partial and complete quotes can be used by journalists. However, complete quotes are always preferable.

Complete quotes are quotes that can stand alone as complete expressions.

e.g. “Camera footage tells us the driver hit the cyclist, paused for a moment, and then drove away,” Constable Glenn said.
Partial quotes are quotes made from a short segment of a quote. A partial quote often needs to be incorporated into a sentence to make sense.

  e.g. The school principal, Alma Nagpal, said the students were being “foolish and irresponsible” on Thursday.

**Word order**

When adding a speech tag (*he said, they said, Smith said*) the subject is the most important part of attribution so put them before the verb.

  e.g. Smith said NOT said Smith

Also, avoid *according to* when referring to people. Only use when the source is an organisation or a report.

  e.g. According to the police report

**Writing in the active voice**

Always write in active voice where it makes sense. It is a more concise and direct form of expression. In a sentence the subject of a sentence performs an action (through a verb). In the active voice, the subject (underlined) is placed at the top of the sentence:

  The police officer arrested the woman.
  The witness told the court yesterday.

In passive voice the object (underlined), the thing that is the object of the action, is placed at the top of the sentence:

  The woman was arrested by the police officer.
  The court was told by the witness.

A tell-tale sign that you are using the passive voice is having to use the word *by* in your sentence. There are some common constructions where the passive voice is used, however. For example, it is common to say someone was hit *by* a car, and not that a car hit somebody. In a case like that, it is better to go with the more familiar form.

**Using gender neutral language**

Always use gender neutral language when describing professions.

  e.g. police officer NOT policeman.
e.g. chairperson NOT chairman.
e.g. salesperson NOT salesman.
e.g. waiter NOT waitress.
e.g. flight attendant NOT stewardess.

US v English spelling

There are many differences between Australian English and US English spelling. Due to our increased exposure to the US style of spelling in the media, students aren’t always sure which is correct.

Australian English follows the British tendency to retain the spelling styles of words taken from other languages. (For example, the -our at the end of words like flavour is retained from the original French spelling.) This is not the case in the USA where Noah Webster, an American language reformist made changes to many words in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to make the words look more like they sounded and thus, easier to spell. (For example, he changed dialogue to dialog)

Here is a table that lists some of the most common spelling differences. However, it is not exhaustive. When unsure, consult with an Australian English dictionary. You should also set your word processing program to Australian English.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variations</th>
<th>Australian English</th>
<th>U.S. English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-our/or</td>
<td>colour, behaviour</td>
<td>color, behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-re/-er</td>
<td>centre, theatre, metre</td>
<td>center, theatre, meter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ogue/-og</td>
<td>dialogue, analogue</td>
<td>dialog, analog</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ise/ice</td>
<td>recognise, capitalise, analyse</td>
<td>recognize, capitalize, analyse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ce/-se</td>
<td>defence, pretence, Offence</td>
<td>defense, pretense, offense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>practise (verb) practice (noun)</td>
<td>practise (both verb and noun)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>licence (general) licence (formal licence)</td>
<td>license (all uses)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ll/-l-</td>
<td>travelling, fuelling, travelled, fuelled</td>
<td>traveling, fueling, travelled, fueled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ae/oe</td>
<td>oestogen, paediatric, manœuvre</td>
<td>Estrogen, maneuver, pediatric</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Use the official spelling and style of proper names even if it contradicts the publication style.

e.g. Centers for Disease Control, U.S. Department of Defense

Writing names

Always refer to people by their full name in the first instance. In following instances you can use only the second name.
Include their professional title or honorific where relevant to the story. For example, if you are referring to a medical doctor in their professional capacity, they would be referred to by full name and title.

```plaintext
e.g. Dr Jennifer Rowe consulted with the patient’s family.
```

Following the first instance, use the honorific or title, followed by the last name.

```plaintext
“The patient was initially stable,” Dr Rowe said.
```

**Writing standfirsts and excerpts**

Short and punchy standfirsts work best. *Upstart* style always uses ‘writes’ followed by the author’s name at the end of the stand first.

```plaintext
e.g. To declare or not to declare? It’s the dilemma our politicians face on a regular basis, writes Marie Trevithick.
```

**Writing headlines**

Style: Keep headlines short. Don’t try to summarise the article. Just try to grab the reader’s attention. However, it should give a clear indication of the subject of the article, rather than being a clever play on words.

Headlines for *upstart* must be in minimal capitals, capitalising only the first word and any proper nouns.

```plaintext
e.g. ‘Sydney and Canberra threatened by bushfires’
```

**Concise writing**

Journalistic writing should be simple, concise, and contemporary. An important part of clear writing is avoiding wasteful words. Many students become less concise when attempting to create a formal, professional tone.

Here are some common examples of this, with the preferred versions in parentheses:

```plaintext
e.g. A large proportion (most)
e.g. As a result (because)
e.g. At this point in time (now)
e.g. Filled to capacity (full)
e.g. In the vicinity of (near)
e.g. Prior to (before)
```
Always use short, simple words rather than longer words. The preferred versions are in parentheses:

- e.g. Approximately (about)
- e.g. Attempt, endeavour (try)
- e.g. Commence (start, begin)
- e.g. Facilitate (help)
- e.g. Remunerate (pay)
- e.g. Utilise (use)

### Commonly confused words

The English language has many similarly-spelled words that often have quite different meanings. Using them incorrectly can lead to inaccuracies.

Here is a (non-exhaustive) list of commonly confused words. Remember, spellcheck won’t pick up the differences! If you are using these and are unsure of which to use, please consult an Australian English dictionary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accept/except</th>
<th>Complement/compliment</th>
<th>Dying/dyeing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Affect/effect</td>
<td>Dependant/dependent</td>
<td>Inquire/enquire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aisle/isle</td>
<td>Diffuse/defuse</td>
<td>Lose/loose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assent/ascent</td>
<td>Discreet/discrete</td>
<td>Practice/practise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borne/born</td>
<td>Disinterested/uninterested</td>
<td>Principal/principle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breech/breach</td>
<td>Dual/duel</td>
<td>Stationary/stationery</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Responsible reporting: *Upstart* editorial guidelines

Ethics and responsible reporting

All student journalists have responsibilities to provide accurate, fair and culturally sensitive journalism. This can often involve seeking a balance between ethical reporting and protecting public interest. The following sections will provide you with vital information to ensure you are acting responsibly and ethically in your role as a student journalist.

La Trobe University Media and Communication students working for *Upstart* must behave in a professional manner, as outlined in the *Upstart* Code of Conduct.

**The *Upstart* Code of Conduct**

- When approaching anyone for interviews or information, always identify yourself as a journalist and name the organisation you are working for. Covert journalism is only acceptable in specific circumstances and with the written permission of the editors.

- Take all reasonable steps to ensure your work is accurate and not misleading in any way.

- In the case of a mistake being published in your work, take immediate steps to notify your editors and to rectify the issue on their advice.

- Endeavour to cover both sides of a story where there is dispute, controversy or contention.

- Give individuals, companies and organisations the right of reply where any potentially defamatory allegations are being made against them, including a reasonable timeframe for them to respond. If they do not respond, signify to readers it was sought.

- Attribute all sources of information and avoid all forms of plagiarism.

- Do not alter any direct quote unless it is a minor change for clarity or to protect privacy.

- Do not refer to a person’s colour, race, religion, physical disability, mental illness, sexuality, marital status or nationality unless it is directly relevant to the story. Do not reference these elements of identity in any way that is pejorative.

- Respect the right to the privacy of individuals and their personal information.

- Behave sensitively and with courtesy for those grieving or in emotional distress.

- Let your editors know of any conflicts of interest that might conflict with your ability to provide balanced coverage of a topic. (e.g. financial interest in a company, religious or cultural beliefs, ethical or moral stances).

- Do not interview, photograph or record children without written consent from a parent or guardian or school. Do not identify children in any stories relating to crime or any court reports.
• Do not accept gifts or money from individuals, companies or organisations, or accept any offer that would count as a personal gain in exchange for coverage or review.

• Follow the sources provided in the ‘Guidelines and standards for responsible reporting’ section when writing about suicide, mental health or family violence.

Other important resources

La Trobe University Media and Communication students working for upstart must use the following guidelines on ethics and responsible reporting, particularly in relation to stories reporting on issues such as mental health, suicide and children etc.

The MEAA journalist code of ethics

Upstart adheres to the Journalist Code of Conduct, as written by the Media, Entertainment and Arts Alliance (MEAA). The Code of Ethics is based on the following fundamental principles:

• Honesty
• Fairness
• Independence
• Respect for the rights of others

Read the full MEAA code

The PRIA code of ethics for public relations professionals

All members of the Public Relations Institute of Australia are expected to adhere to the PRIA code of ethics. The code outlines standard for public relations professionals in the following areas:

• Ethical practice
• Professional competence

Read the PRIA code of ethics
Responsible reporting: Guidelines and standards

Reporting on mental health.

Students working for *upstart* media must report on mental health and suicide responsibly. At *upstart*, we follow Mindframe’s guide for responsible reporting of mental health and suicide for media professionals. The guide makes recommendations based on the following factors:

- The relevance of mental illness to the story
- Producing balanced and responsible representation
- Handling police and court reports
- Interviewing those with mental illness
- Framing celebrity stories

Read the guidelines on how to responsibly report and depict suicide in the media, see Mindframe’s ‘*Reporting suicide and mental illness: A Mindframe resource for professionals*’.

Reporting on suicide

Students working for *upstart* are expected to adhere to the Australian Press Council’s standard for reporting on suicide in Australia.

These include specific guidelines on the following areas:

- Judging whether reporting an individual event is in the public’s interest
- Reporting on the specific details of a suicide and the identity of the dead
- Avoiding both stigmatisation and glamorisation of suicide
- Providing sources of assistance in published material

Read the Australian Press Council’s [suicide reporting standard](#) before reporting on any topic related to suicide.

Reporting on family and domestic violence

Due to an increase in reports about family and domestic violence, several guidelines and advisories have been created to ensure journalists report professionally and sensitively on these subjects. This might include consideration of the following:

- The legal restrictions on reporting on the subjects.
- Maintaining awareness of the safety of those affected by violence.
- The cultural sensitivity that might be required to report on some instances.
- The need for careful thought around the context in which the violence occurs and the complexity of the subject.
Before writing any article about these subjects, please consult with The Australian Press Council’s Advisory Guidelines of Family and Domestic Violence Reporting. Additionally, consult with EVA’s ‘Responsible Reporting of violence against women’ guidelines.

Reporting on Australian Indigenous culture

Many Australian government agencies and media bodies have developed protocols for reporting on and depicting Aboriginal Australians and Torres Strait Islanders. These protocols have been created in consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups to acknowledge and honour their unique culture and traditions, and to ensure journalists report on them respectfully.

Depicting and reporting on the death of Indigenous Australians

There are important protocols relating to depicting images, broadcasting recorded voices, or using the names of deceased Aboriginal Australians or Torres Strait Islanders in print or broadcast journalism.

In many Indigenous Australian cultures reproducing the names of, or distribution of images of the deceased is restricted during mourning periods. Instead, there may be certain (and it varies among cultures) protocols for representing the deceased.

To understand more about these protocols, please use the SBS Guide for reference.

Using inclusive language when writing about Australian Indigenous cultures.

The following are the appropriate terms for referring to Australian Indigenous people:

**Specific terms:** Where possible, use a specific community or tribal group, instead of a general term. (However, it is important to be aware that some members of the indigenous community may not know their language or cultural group.)

  e.g. She is a thirty-five-year-old Wurrundjeri woman.

**General terms:** When you do not know the specific cultural group, or are speaking about the entire Indigenous community the following terms are applicable.

- Aboriginal/Aborigine: ‘Aboriginal’ is the adjective and ‘Aboriginal person’ or ‘Aboriginal people’ are the preferred nouns. Avoid the terms ‘Black’ and “aborigine”. Both can be considered offensive.

- Torres Strait Islanders: Torres Strait Islanders have a culture that is distinct from other Aboriginal cultures, thus the word Aboriginal does not encompass their culture as well.

  Use the following when referring to both peoples or cultures:

  e.g. “Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture is unique to Australia.”
• **Indigenous**: This is a term that covers both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

  e.g. “Indigenous communities from across Australia participated in the event.”

• **Koori**: This is a term that Aboriginal people from Victoria and New South Wales often refer to themselves by. It cannot be used to refer to Indigenous Australians in general.

  e.g. “Uncle Stewart was a respected Elder of the Wemba Wemba people, and held many positions in the Koori community, according to the Koori Heritage Trust, where the library is named after him.”

**Note:** When referring to Australian cultural groups, the terms *Aboriginal* and *Indigenous* are capitalised. When referring more generically to indigenous groups of other nations, we do not. For example: “The Inuit are an indigenous group who inhabit areas of Canada, Alaska and Greenland.”
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