

# Submissions writing style guide

June 2024



# Contents

|          |   |           |
|----------|---|-----------|
| <b>1</b> | <b>PURPOSE .....</b>                        | <b>3</b>  |
| <b>2</b> | <b>DOCUMENT SETUP.....</b>                  | <b>3</b>  |
|          | Paragraph styles .....                      | 3         |
|          | Spelling .....                              | 4         |
|          | Bold, italics and underlining.....          | 4         |
| <b>3</b> | <b>WRITING STYLE .....</b>                  | <b>4</b>  |
|          | Referring to the company and partners ..... | 4         |
|          | Tautologies.....                            | 4         |
|          | Conciseness.....                            | 5         |
|          | Simple grammar tips .....                   | 5         |
|          | Noun then verb.....                         | 5         |
|          | Active voice .....                          | 6         |
| <b>4</b> | <b>PUNCTUATION .....</b>                    | <b>6</b>  |
|          | Punctuation to avoid.....                   | 13        |
|          | Word special character shortcuts .....      | 13        |
| <b>5</b> | <b>OTHER PARTS OF THE DOCUMENT .....</b>    | <b>13</b> |
|          | Table and graphs .....                      | 13        |
|          | Images .....                                | 14        |
|          | Callout boxes .....                         | 14        |
|          | Footnotes .....                             | 14        |
|          | References.....                             | 15        |
|          | Locations in the same document .....        | 15        |
|          | Other documents in the submission.....      | 15        |
|          | External publications and copyright .....   | 15        |
|          | Appendices and attachments .....            | 16        |



# 1 Purpose

The purpose of this style guide is to help provide consistency across documents in terms of expression, presentation and referencing, despite having different authors and editors for our submissions.

It is acceptable to diverge from conventions in this guide as a one-off for a specific submission, as long as the alternative is applied consistently to all documents in the submission.

## 2 Document setup

### Paragraph styles

Submission templates are set up using Word paragraph styles. It is crucial for all authors working on the submission to use only these styles across all documents.

Press Ctrl+Alt+Shift+S to pop out the **Styles** pane on the right-hand side of the screen and easily access the pre-formatted styles. Tick the *Show Preview* box at the bottom of the **Styles** pane for a quick visual reference of the differences between styles. Alternatively, you can use the **Style Gallery** in the **Home** ribbon.

To confirm you are viewing the preferred styles for the document, in the **Styles** pane select *Options > Select Style to Show > In current document*.

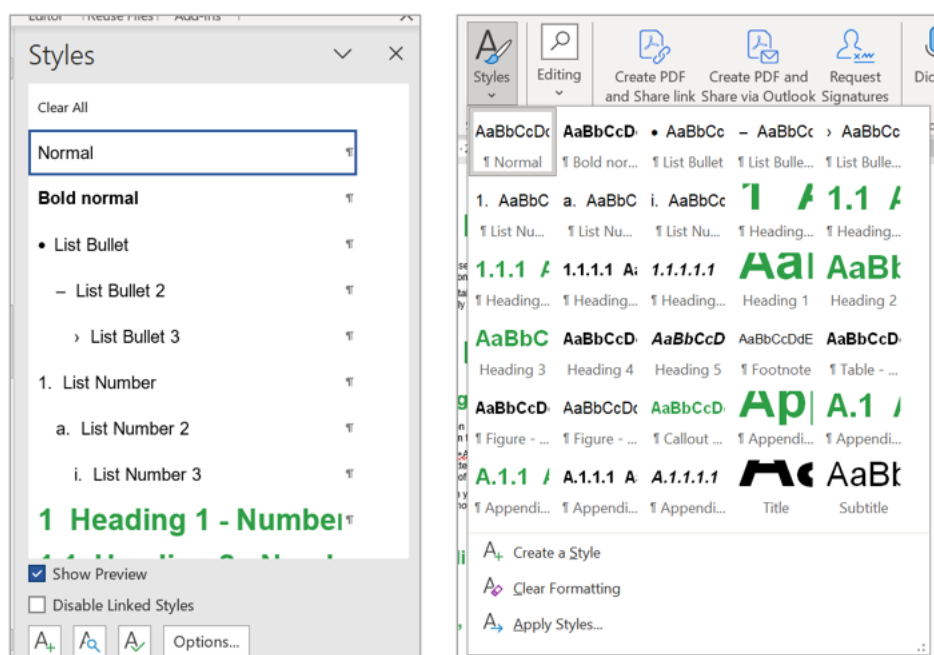


Figure 1: The **Styles** pane (left) and **Style Gallery** (right) show all the pre-formatted styles in your document.

To paste content from external documents, you need to paste using the *Keep Text Only* function. Failure to do this will import random, unapproved styles into the **Styles** pane. This can lead to confusion and inconsistency throughout the entire document.

The **Styles** pane includes pre-formatted styles for bullet points and numbered lists (see *Figure 1*). These are not the same as the bullet and number options in the **Home** ribbon, so make sure all authors are only using the pre-formatted styles.

## Spelling

Our submissions use Australian English. The language for all Word documents in a submission should be set to 'English (Australia)'. However, some American and British English spellings may not be picked up by Word as errors.

Below is a list of common Australian English spellings we need to apply consistently in submission documents:

- 'ise' instead of 'ize' in words such as 'specialise' and 'organise'
- 'our' instead of 'or' in words such as 'colour', 'labour' and 'behaviour'
- 're' instead of 'er' in words such as 'metre' and 'centre'
- 'coordinate' instead of 'co-ordinate'
- 'defence' instead of 'defense'
- 'program' instead of 'programme'.

## Bold, italics and underlining

You may use either **bold** or underlining to emphasise specific words or phrases in a sentence as long as you choose one and use it consistently for all documents in the submission. Do not use both.

Use *italics* for:

- The titles of references (see *References*), including other documents in the submission
- Cross-references to other sections of the document.

# 3 Writing style

## Referring to the company and partners

When writing about the solution and McConnell Dowell's experience, you may use the pronouns 'we' and 'our', and verb forms such as 'are', 'have', 'offer' and 'propose'.

However, if the subject of your sentence is 'McConnell Dowell' or another company name, you must instead use the singular pronoun 'it' and verb forms such as 'is', 'has', 'designs' and 'works'. This also applies to the terms 'company', 'team' and 'joint venture'.

If it reads awkwardly to use singular verbs in a sentence, you can use the term 'team members' as a workaround, e.g., 'The Urban Design Leadership team members bring relevant experience in...'

Always spell out 'McConnell Dowell' and the name of any joint venture or alliance partners in full. When referring to all the bidding organisations together, it may be helpful to use the term 'the consortium' to save space.

## Tautologies

A tautology is a repetitive and unnecessary word or phrase. Look out for them as they are surprisingly common, e.g., '7am in the morning' can be rewritten as either '7am' or '7.00 in the morning'.



# Conciseness

Some authors introduce florid strings of words that take up space and distract from the win themes. We can reduce pages, save editing time, and communicate more clearly by using concise terms instead. Below are some classic examples of concise phrasing:

| Complex                                    | Concise                               |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| The utilisation of                         | Use/usage/using                       |
| Undertake a review of                      | Review (verb)                         |
| The development of                         | Developing                            |
| Throughout the development of              | While developing                      |
| Is inclusive of                            | Includes                              |
| Provide guidance to                        | Guide (verb)                          |
| Provide an understanding of                | Explain/show/demonstrate              |
| Serve as/play the role of                  | Be                                    |
| Includes the identification of             | Identifies                            |
| In concert with/in combination with        | And/with                              |
| Work collaboratively                       | Collaborate                           |
| Through consideration of                   | By considering                        |
| The compliance of McConnell Dowell with... | McConnell Dowell's compliance with... |
| As a result of                             | Of/Because of                         |
| In addition to                             | Also/and/with                         |
| Within                                     | In                                    |
| With respect to/In regard to               | About/by/with                         |
| In relation to                             | About/with                            |
| Make revisions to                          | Revise                                |
| Results in improved                        | Improves                              |
| Proposed to be included in                 | Proposed for                          |
| We aim to ensure that                      | We will                               |

## Simple grammar tips

Below are some simple grammar tips to keep our submissions easy to read.

### Noun then verb

Try to start most sentences with a noun then a verb. This is a very common writing style that will read naturally to English speakers. A noun can be a single word, a noun phrase or a pronoun, e.g.:

- 'McConnell Dowell will...'
- 'The design team reviewed...'

- 'All noise walls are...'
- 'They endeavour to...'

Below are two examples of wordy sentences that can be simplified using the 'noun then verb' structure.

| Wordy sentence   | Noun then verb   |
|--|--|
| Responsibility for compliance of the UDLP with these documents will sit with the Moondani UDLP team.<br><br>(Okay, this technically starts with a noun phrase, but it is a long cumbersome one that loses the reader in the sentence structure.) | The McConnell Dowell UDLP team will be responsible for ensuring the UDLP complies with these documents.                                    |
| When inclusive of time required to develop the UDLP and make revisions in response to feedback received during consultation, the entire duration of the UDLP preparation is estimated to be 49 weeks.  | We estimate the UDLP preparation will take 49 weeks including time to develop the UDLP and revise it in response to consultation feedback. |


## Active voice



Use the active voice wherever possible. This holds the readers' attention better and carries more information because it states who does something. It makes you sound transparent, whereas passive structures can sound like you are avoiding responsibility or commitment. Below are two examples of sentences that can be made more engaging using active voice.


| Passive voice  | Active voice  |
|--|---|
| A site-specific urban design solution will be created...   | Our team will create a site-specific urban design solution...   |
| Placing urban design at the core of this process and minimising impact to the community will greatly assist with the extensive community and stakeholder process required for the UDLP to be approved. | McConnell Dowell will place urban design at the core of this process and minimise impact to the community. These measures will assist with the extensive community and stakeholder process necessary for the UDLP to gain approval. |


# 4 Punctuation

| Topic                    | Preference  |
|--------------------------|---|
| Acronyms and initialisms | <p>An acronym is a word formed out of the initial letters of a phrase, e.g., ANZAC.</p> <p>Initialisms are, usually, a shortened form of a title using the first letter of each word, e.g., Expression of Interest (EOI).</p> <p>The general rule is to spell out the phrase in full in the first instance, and then follow with the acronym or initialism in brackets. In subsequent references, you can use the acronym or initialism only, e.g., 'The next Expression of Interest (EOI) is due on 1 August. The EOI is for...'</p> <p>If the phrase only appears once or twice in your document, consider simply writing it out in full each time instead of using an acronym or initialism. This is so readers do not accidentally skip what the acronym or initialism is short for.</p> <p>Do not use full stops in initialisms or acronyms, e.g., write NSW <u>not</u> N.S.W.</p> |

| Topic              | Preference  |              |         |      |             |      |              |        |            |         |                        |       |                   |    |                                      |      |         |        |                   |
|--------------------|---|--------------|---------|------|-------------|------|--------------|--------|------------|---------|------------------------|-------|-------------------|----|--------------------------------------|------|---------|--------|-------------------|
|                    | <div>  <p>Use of informal abbreviations (e.g., 'comms' from 'communications') should generally be avoided in submissions.</p> </div> <p>It is acceptable to use the following Latin abbreviations in submission documents.</p> <table> <tr> <th>Abbreviation</th><th>Meaning</th></tr> <tr> <td>e.g.</td><td>for example</td></tr> <tr> <td>etc.</td><td>and so forth</td></tr> <tr> <td>et al.</td><td>and others</td></tr> <tr> <td>et seq.</td><td>and the following ones</td></tr> <tr> <td>ibid.</td><td>in the same place</td></tr> <tr> <td>id</td><td>same; something previously mentioned</td></tr> <tr> <td>i.e.</td><td>that is</td></tr> <tr> <td>op cit</td><td>in the work cited</td></tr> </table> <p>Insert a comma before and after using a Latin abbreviation, for example, ' , e.g., '</p>  | Abbreviation | Meaning | e.g. | for example | etc. | and so forth | et al. | and others | et seq. | and the following ones | ibid. | in the same place | id | same; something previously mentioned | i.e. | that is | op cit | in the work cited |
| Abbreviation       | Meaning   |              |         |      |             |      |              |        |            |         |                        |       |                   |    |                                      |      |         |        |                   |
| e.g.               | for example   |              |         |      |             |      |              |        |            |         |                        |       |                   |    |                                      |      |         |        |                   |
| etc.               | and so forth  |              |         |      |             |      |              |        |            |         |                        |       |                   |    |                                      |      |         |        |                   |
| et al.             | and others  |              |         |      |             |      |              |        |            |         |                        |       |                   |    |                                      |      |         |        |                   |
| et seq.            | and the following ones  |              |         |      |             |      |              |        |            |         |                        |       |                   |    |                                      |      |         |        |                   |
| ibid.              | in the same place   |              |         |      |             |      |              |        |            |         |                        |       |                   |    |                                      |      |         |        |                   |
| id                 | same; something previously mentioned  |              |         |      |             |      |              |        |            |         |                        |       |                   |    |                                      |      |         |        |                   |
| i.e.               | that is   |              |         |      |             |      |              |        |            |         |                        |       |                   |    |                                      |      |         |        |                   |
| op cit             | in the work cited   |              |         |      |             |      |              |        |            |         |                        |       |                   |    |                                      |      |         |        |                   |
| Adjectival phrases | <p>An adjectival phrase is a group of words in a sentence that are functioning in the same way a single adjective would. It usually needs to be hyphenated, unlike a simple sequence of two adjectives which does not, e.g., write 'a clever economical solution' but 'a value-for-money solution'.</p> <p>Below are common types of adjectival phrases (underlined) that always need to be hyphenated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An adjective preceding a noun to which -d or -ed has been added as a past-participle construction, e.g., <u>loud-mouthed</u> student, <u>rose-tinted</u> glasses</li> <li>• A noun, adjective, or adverb preceding a present participle, e.g., a <u>long-lasting</u> partnership, a <u>far-reaching</u> decision</li> <li>• Numbers preceding a noun, e.g., <u>five-year</u> plan, <u>21-page</u> response</li> <li>• Comparatives and superlatives, e.g., the <u>highest-priced</u> offer, a <u>shorter-term</u> solution.</li> </ul> |              |         |      |             |      |              |        |            |         |                        |       |                   |    |                                      |      |         |        |                   |
| Ampersands         | <p>Ampersands should <u>only</u> be used in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business names, if you can confirm the business itself uses an ampersand (e.g., Johnson &amp; Johnson)</li> <li>• Industry terms where it is an established convention (e.g., D&amp;C, OH&amp;S).</li> </ul> <p>In all other cases, write the word 'and' instead.</p>   |              |         |      |             |      |              |        |            |         |                        |       |                   |    |                                      |      |         |        |                   |
| Apostrophes        | <p>An apostrophe is used to indicate possession as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Singular nouns use an apostrophe before the s, e.g., 'the student's toys' means the toys that belong to one student <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Singular nouns that end with an s (or a z sound) may use an apostrophe alone, or an apostrophe and add an s. Choose one and use it consistently based on whichever sounds best, e.g., 'the boss's laptop' or 'Mrs Jones' laptop'</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Plural nouns ending with an s use an apostrophe after the s, e.g., 'the students' toys' means the toys that belong to several students</li> </ul>   |              |         |      |             |      |              |        |            |         |                        |       |                   |    |                                      |      |         |        |                   |

| Topic          | Preference  |
|----------------|---|
|                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plural nouns that do not end with an s use an apostrophe before the s, e.g., 'the children's toys' means the toys that belong to several children</li> <li>• Time and money references use the normal conventions for single or plural nouns, e.g., one hour's time, two weeks' holiday, 35 years' experience, a dollar's worth, five dollars' worth</li> <li>• Yours, his, hers, ours, its, theirs, and whose do not use an apostrophe.</li> </ul> <div data-bbox="502 427 1428 595">  <p>Apostrophes are <u>not</u> used in dates (e.g., the 2010s) or to show plurals. However, both of these are common errors – especially for plurals of acronyms – so look out for and remove them in submissions.</p> </div> <p>Only use an apostrophe in a business name if you can confirm the business itself uses one.</p>  |
| Brackets       | <p>If the text in brackets is a full sentence, capitalise the first letter of the first word and place the concluding full stop inside the brackets, e.g., '(The research was conducted in June 2022.)'</p> <p>If the text in brackets is only part of a clause or sentence, then do not use a capital letter for the first letter of the first word and place punctuation marks such as a full stop or comma after the final bracket, e.g., 'The research was deemed to be very insightful (even if the feedback was negative).'</p>   |
| Bullet points  | <p>The following list outlines the rules for formatting bullet point lists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce the list with a colon (:)</li> <li>• Start every bullet point with a capital letter</li> <li>• Avoid punctuation at the end of each line (e.g., commas or semicolons)</li> <li>• Use a full stop after the final point</li> <li>• Start each point with the same part of speech (e.g., verbs, adjectives, or nouns).</li> </ul> <p>Bullet points composed of two or more sentences complicate formatting as you will need to use punctuation. Try to rephrase the lengthy point by using sublists, brackets or dashes to separate the statements.</p> <p>If possible, limit bullet point lists to 7 or fewer items to help readers absorb all the information.</p> <div data-bbox="502 1424 1428 1592">  <p>Use the <i>Keep with next</i> function in Word to ensure that lead-in sentences remain on the same page as the first item of the list they introduce. This should also be used with the penultimate item in the list so that it stays with the final item.</p> </div> |
| Capitalisation | <p>There are 3 basic capitalisation styles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sentence case</li> <li>• Title Case</li> <li>• ALL CAPS.</li> </ul> <p>Use sentence case as your default to minimise the amount of capitalisation in the submission. You may use either sentence case or title case for headings as long as you choose one and apply it consistently across all documents.</p> <p>The words 'government' and 'state' are only capitalised when referring to a specific state or government, e.g., 'Approval from the State Government or New South Wales...'</p>   |

| Topic        | Preference   |
|--------------|--|
|              | <p>Only use capital letters for titles when referring to a specific person, e.g., the Engineering Manager.</p> <p>Avoid capitalising disciplines and services. Although authors often capitalise each instance of words such as 'engineering', it is an error that should be removed.</p>  |
| Colons       | <p>A colon signals to the reader that what follows proves and explains a statement, or simply provides additional details relating to the statement, e.g., 'He provided all of the equipment: concrete, screws, and steel uprights.'</p> <p>Always use a colon to introduce a bullet point list, e.g., 'He provided all of the equipment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concrete</li> <li>• Screws</li> <li>• Steel uprights.'</li> </ul> <p>Use a capital letter for the first letter of the first word after the colon if the text can be read as a new, complete sentence. If the text is a continuation of the sentence that preceded the colon, do not use a capital letter.</p>   |
| Commas       | <p>Commas prevent misunderstanding by signalling to the reader where one thought or statement finishes and the next begins. A comma in the wrong place can completely change the meaning of a sentence. Below are basic contexts where commas are used:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After introductory statements, e.g., 'Importantly,...'</li> <li>• To indicate where the reader can pause, e.g., 'After the program, the team then...'</li> <li>• To mark additional information not directly related to the point of the sentence, e.g., 'The program, which is constantly monitored, results in team behavioural changes ...'</li> <li>• To separate items in a non-bulleted list, e.g., 'The Engineering Manager, the Communications Manager, the Safety Manager, and the Operations Manager...'</li> <li>– It is important to consider whether your list requires a comma before the final item. This is called an Oxford comma and suggests that what follows only applies to the final item and not the entire list.</li> <li>– If the items in the list are complex phrases (e.g., they contain conjunctions or other commas), consider using semicolons to separate them or simply formatting the list as bullet points instead.</li> <li>• To separate street names from suburbs (e.g., '230 Brunswick Street, Fortitude Valley') and cities from states (e.g., 'Brisbane, Queensland')</li> <li>• To separate numbers in the thousands, e.g., 5,000</li> <li>• To introduce direct quotes, e.g., the Submissions Coordinator said, 'We still need to attach the two addenda.'</li> </ul> <div style="border: 2px solid orange; padding: 10px; margin-top: 10px;">  <p>Commas are generally used before conjunctions such as 'and', 'or', 'but' and 'so'. However, a comma is not needed between two clauses with the same subject, e.g., 'I have started reviewing the design schedules but won't be able to finish before this afternoon's catch-up.'</p> </div> |
| Contractions | <p>Contractions such as 'don't' should be avoided in submissions because they read as informal.</p>  |
| Dashes       | <p>Use an en dash ( – ) with a space on either side to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Show a span or range, e.g., 6 – 10 years; pages 35 – 40; July – August</li> </ul>   |

| Topic      | Preference   |
|------------|--|
|            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insert information that expands on the point of the sentence – like this – similar to a pair of commas</li> <li>• Indicate a pause for emphasis, e.g., 'We have identified three major strengths – technical expertise, systems, and stakeholder engagement.'</li> <li>• Join two coordinate nouns, e.g., 'a Perth–Adelaide flight'.</li> </ul> <p>Insert en dashes by inserting a minus sign with a space on either side. When you continue typing, Word will lengthen the minus into a dash. Alternatively, if you are using a keyboard with a number pad, press Ctrl+minus (this only works with the <i>Minus</i> key on a number pad).</p>  |
| Dates      | <p>Write dates by spelling out the month in full and use numbers for day and year. Use the Australian convention of day–month–year. Do not use punctuation in dates, e.g., write 14 February 2020 and <u>not</u> February 14, 2020.</p> <p>Do not use ordinals such as '14th' in dates.</p> <p>If you include the day of the week, place it first. No commas are required, e.g., Tuesday 14 February 2020.</p> <p>In graphics, choose any of the following abbreviated forms and apply it consistently: 14/02/20; 14/02; 14/02/2020.</p>   |
| Full stops | <p>Full stops ( . ) are used at the end of every sentence. Do <u>not</u> use full stops in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Headings</li> <li>• Acronyms</li> <li>• Metric units (e.g., km)</li> <li>• Titles (e.g., Ms, Dr)</li> <li>• Bullet points, except after the final item in the list.</li> </ul> <p>Do not use a double space after full stops. A single space is sufficient.</p>   |
| Headings   | <p>You may use either sentence case or title case for headings as long as it is applied consistently across all documents in the submission. However, if you use title case ensure the following words are not capitalised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Articles ('a', 'an' and 'the')</li> <li>• Conjunctions (e.g., 'and', 'but', 'or')</li> <li>• Prepositions (e.g., 'by', 'of', 'to')</li> <li>• Words that follow a hyphen, if they would not be capitalised standing alone.</li> </ul> <p>Keep headings concise – if possible, aim for 70 or fewer characters including spaces – and specific. Readers should have clear expectations for each section of the document. In general, if you have to include punctuation marks in a heading, it may be too complex.</p> <p>Always use the heading and subheading paragraph styles set up for your submission template. Submission templates use a hierarchy of heading styles to show readers how information is related.</p> <div style="border: 2px solid orange; padding: 10px; margin-top: 10px;">  <p>Use the <i>Keep with next</i> function in Word to ensure that headings remain on the same page as the first paragraph of the text they introduce. Some heading paragraph styles may already have this function turned on as standard.</p> </div> |
| Hyphens    | <p>Hyphens ( - ) are commonly used to show a connection between a word and a prefix or suffix. Hyphens are also used to join ordinarily separate words into single words, such as for adjectival phrases, e.g., whole-of-life cost, state-of-the-art technology.</p>   |

| Topic   | Preference   |
|---|--|
|   | <p>Hyphens should be used without spaces.</p> <p>Do not confuse hyphens for en dashes as they have different functions. You can remember the difference as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hyphens are used when the meaning of a word changes, e.g., the prefix 'self' in 'self-assessment' denotes a specific type of assessment</li> <li>En dashes are used when the meaning of neither word changes, which is much rarer, e.g., the Murray–Darling basin.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Numbers</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Choosing numerals or words</li> </ul> | <p>Use words to write numbers zero to nine and numerals for numbers 10 and over. Continue this even when numbers below 10 and above 10 appear in the same sentence.</p> <p>Use a combination of numerals and words for 1 million, 1 billion, etc.</p>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ages</li> </ul>                                      | <p>Ages are always written using numerals.</p>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Currency ( \$ )</li> </ul>                           | <p>All values are in Australian dollars unless specified, so there is no need to include 'A' or 'AUD' before the dollar sign. Write dollar values as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$50,000 (use a comma to separate thousands)</li> <li>\$120m (no space and lower case m to indicate million)</li> <li>\$1b (no space and lower case b to indicate billion).</li> </ul>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fractions and decimals</li> </ul>                    | <p>Write fractions using words, e.g., two thirds.</p> <p>Write decimals using numerals. Decimals less than zero must have a zero in front of them, e.g., 0.75.</p>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Measurements</li> </ul>                              | <p>Write measurements using abbreviations and lower case letters, e.g., km for kilometres. Do not insert a full stop after these abbreviations unless they end a sentence. It is not necessary to define the abbreviation on first use as is normally done for acronyms unless the unit is not widely known.</p> <p>Do not insert a space between the number and its unit of measurement, e.g., 2.1km.</p> <p>Use a slash to indicate 'per' with symbols, e.g., km/h <u>not</u> kph.</p> <p>Both parts of a compound unit should be abbreviated, e.g., km/h, <u>not</u> km/hour.</p> <p>Symbols do not take a plural, e.g., write 25km <u>not</u> 25kms.</p> <p>In a span of numbers, do not repeat the unit, e.g., 300 – 350mm.</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ordinals</li> </ul>                                  | <p>Write ordinals using words from 'first' to 'ninth', 'millionth' and 'billionth'. However, editions of a referenced publication are always written as numerals, e.g., the 2nd edition.</p> <p>Write ordinals using numerals for '10th' and above. However, the suffix ('st', 'th', etc.) should not be written using superscript.</p>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Percentages</li> </ul>                               | <p>Always write percentages as numerals. Use the % symbol afterwards unless the percentage appears at the start of a sentence. In this case, use the word 'per cent', e.g., 'Seventy-five per cent of our projects...'</p>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Phone numbers</li> </ul>                             | <p>Phone numbers are written using one of the following formats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mobiles – 'XXXX XXX XXX'.</li> <li>Landlines – 'XX XXXX XXXX'.</li> <li>1800 numbers – 'XXXX XXX XXX'</li> <li>1300 numbers – 'XXX XXX' or 'XX XX XX'.</li> </ul> <p>Use non-breaking spaces to separate the chunks of numbers. For international formats, insert '+' and the country code at the beginning of the number.</p>   |

| Topic  | Preference   |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ratios</li> </ul> | <p>Write ratios using numerals. Separate the numerals with either an unspaced colon or the word 'to', e.g., 10 to 1 or 10:1.</p>   |
| Place names  | <p>Write Australian place names using sentence case unless the client's documents consistently write it in title case.</p> <p>You may either write out the name of Australian states and territories in full or use an abbreviation, e.g., QLD. This applies to documents and graphics. If you use abbreviations, be consistent about when you are using them, e.g., in all contexts, or only when writing addresses.</p> <p>Do not capitalise types of building such as 'bridge' or 'station' unless they are part of a specific place name, e.g., Central Station.</p> <p>Do not capitalise types of thoroughfare such as 'street' and 'road' unless they are part of a specific place name. You may also shorten the type of thoroughfare if it is shortened in the client's documents, e.g., Mt Derrimut Rd.</p> <p>In general, place names are not written using apostrophes or hyphens.</p>  |
| Quotation marks  | <p>A pair of single quotation marks ( ' ' ) is used to show a direct quote from speech or written text. Direct quotes must be accurate and retain their original meaning.</p> <p>Use quotes sparingly to keep documents readable, and avoid quotes within quotes. If it is absolutely essential to include a quote within a quote, write it between a pair of double quotation marks ( " " ).</p> <p>If a quote is longer than about 30 words, consider putting it in a callout box (see <i>Callout boxes</i>).</p> <p>Insert '(sic)' after any factual or grammatical errors in a quote to show readers that the error comes from the source and not your document. Retain the spelling – including capital letters – and punctuation of the original quote even if it conflicts with other advice in this guide. The exception to this is full stops, which should only be placed inside the quotation marks if you have quoted the complete sentence. In this case, <u>do not</u> place a full stop outside the quote as well, e.g., She said, 'Let's book the meeting for 9:30.'</p> <p>Some authors also put words in single quotation marks to emphasise them, e.g., the 'McConnell Dowell way'. This can read informally and be distracting, so discourage it or remove the quotation marks as much as you can.</p> |
| Semicolons   | <p>A semicolon ( ; ) has two main purposes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To link two parts of a sentence that share or develop an idea; the division here is stronger than a comma but less than a full stop <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overusing this type of semicolon hinders readability. To avoid this, in most cases you can simply use: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a full stop to separate the ideas into two (or more) short sentences</li> <li>a comma followed by a conjunction between each idea.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>To make meaning clear in a sentence where commas are being used for other purposes, e.g., 'I travelled to Cambridge, England; Auckland, New Zealand; and Paris, France.'</li> </ul> <p>Semicolons are always followed by a lowercase letter unless the first word after the semicolon is a proper noun. Ensure there is no space before the semicolon but a single space after it.</p>   |
| Slashes  | <p>A forward slash ( / ) may be used to indicate alternatives, i.e., as a substitute for the word 'or', e.g., a 'high/low setting'.</p> <p>Do not use slashes to link words, i.e., as a substitute for the word 'and'. Instead, write the word 'and' each time, e.g., write 'operations and maintenance', <u>not</u> 'operations/maintenance'.</p>   |

| Topic       | Preference   |
|-------------|--|
| Superscript | Superscripts are only used for trademarks, copyright, and registered trademark symbols, e.g., Creative Construction™<br><br>Do not use superscript with numbers. |

## Punctuation to avoid

Do not use the following punctuation marks in submissions:

- Ellipses ( ... )
- Em dashes ( — )
- Exclamation marks ( ! )

## Word special character shortcuts

See below for the keyboard shortcuts to insert special characters and search Word documents for where they may have been used.

| Special character        | Shortcut to insert | Shortcut to search |
|--------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Non-breaking space       | Ctrl+shift+space   | ^s                 |
| Non-breaking hyphen      | Ctrl+shift+hyphen  | ^~                 |
| Paragraph break          | Enter              | ^p                 |
| Line break (soft return) | Shift+enter        | ^l                 |
| Tab                      | Tab                | ^t                 |
| En dash                  | Ctrl+minus         | ^=                 |

# 5 Other parts of the document

## Table and graphs

Tables and graphs must be referred to within the document text and located as close as possible to the text that refers to them. Insert the table or graph either on the same page as the text, or the next if they are too large. A simple way to refer to tables and graphs in text is to insert a cross-reference to the caption (see below).

Submission templates are typically set up with pre-formatted table styles. These can be found by clicking into a table and navigating to the **Table Design** menu at the top of the screen. It is crucial to use only the pre-formatted table styles across all documents in a submission.



If a table is full size, navigate to the **Layout** menu and select *Autofit > Autofit window* to keep the columns a consistent width.

If a table extends across multiple pages, ensure the header repeats across each subsequent page by doing the following:

1. Highlight the header row with your mouse.
2. Right click and select *Table Properties*.
3. In the **Table Properties** menu, select *Row > Repeat as header row at the top of each page > OK*.

Insert table captions above the table. Captions may be either left or centre aligned as long as you choose one and apply it consistently across all documents in the submission. As mentioned above, you can insert captions that Word automatically updates (if the table or figure number changes) by navigating to the **References** menu and using the *Insert Caption* function.



Check whether your template has a 'Table caption' paragraph style. If it does, remember to use it for all captions.

## Images

Only use approved, high-quality images that are relevant to the submission. Images should be referred to within the document text and located as close as possible to the text that refers to them. A simple way to refer to images in text is to insert a cross-reference to the caption (see below).

When placing an image in your document, right click on it to navigate to the **Wrap Text** submenu. Using the text wrapping options, you can embed the image in the document and move it easily. Do not use the 'Enter' key to position the image on the page – this can send the formatting awry.

Insert image captions below the image. Captions may be either left or centre aligned as long as you choose one and apply it consistently across all documents in the submission. As mentioned above, you can insert captions that Word automatically updates (if the image number changes) by navigating to the **References** menu and using the *Insert Caption* function.

## Callout boxes

Callout boxes are most effective when used sparingly. Use them for expanded ideas, short summaries of our experience, examples or pull quotes that complement our response and warrant being highlighted. Do not include a callout box simply because the team could not agree on how to incorporate the text elsewhere.

You may use a dedicated 'Callout box' paragraph style to help the text stand out as long as it is applied consistently.

If you plan to reference callout boxes elsewhere in the text, it may be helpful to add a heading or number to each box. If you choose to do this, ensure it is done consistently across all documents in the submission.

## Footnotes

Footnotes may be used to:

- Provide optional clarifications or asides
- List external references instead of in-text referencing.

Footnotes are marked using a numbered superscript at the relevant point in a paragraph. The expanded footnote is then included immediately below the paragraph, or at the bottom of the relevant page. You may



choose either position for your footnotes as long as you use it consistently across all documents in the submission, e.g.:

McConnell Dowell's *Submissions writing style guide*<sup>1</sup> explains grammatical concepts and how you can put them into practice.

<sup>1</sup> Owned and maintained by the National Submissions team.

Keep footnotes focused. If the footnote text is longer than a paragraph, it is either veering off topic, or so important it can no longer be a footnote. Similarly, limit the number of footnotes per page as they can make documents harder to read when used excessively.

## References

### Locations in the same document

Reference locations in the same document using the *Cross-reference* function in Word. Remember to italicise the cross-reference once it is inserted.

### Other documents in the submission

If you reference other documents in the submission, write the title and italicise it.

### External publications and copyright

Unless images or text are in the public domain, they are protected by copyright. If you use material from an external publication in a submission, be sure to comply with copyright law. This applies to both online resources and printed media. You may use brief excerpts from a published article or book if you provide publication information. However, to quote an entire article or book chapter, etc., you must first get permission from the publisher. Similarly, you must obtain permission from companies and organisations if you wish to use their logos.

If you reference an external publication, capitalise the title exactly as the publication itself capitalises it (usually, this will mean that the first letter of each word is capitalised except for conjunctions and prepositions). Titles are also italicised, e.g., *Special Commission of Inquiry into the Waterfall Rail Accident*.

Note that when referencing legislation, the date of the Act is italicised but the jurisdiction (enclosed in brackets) is not, e.g., *Rail Safety Act 2002* (NSW). Regulations and other forms of delegated legislation are not italicised. Road Safety (Traffic) Regulations 1988.

When using a quote from an external publication, include the author (if known) and publisher using one of the following styles. Choose one and apply it consistently to all documents in the submission.

| Referencing style   | Example  |
|---|--|
| Immediately after the quote                                   | 'Hundreds of design decisions can impact a building's energy efficiency, making fossil-fuel-free structures more or less workable. Multilayered window designs can trap heat, making climate control systems more efficient.' Emily Folk, ConstructionGlobal.com, 6 September 2020.                              |
| Footnote (place below the quote or at the bottom of the page) | 'Hundreds of design decisions can impact a building's energy efficiency, making fossil-fuel-free structures more or less workable. Multilayered window designs can trap heat, making climate control systems more efficient.' <sup>1</sup><br><sup>1</sup> Emily Folk, ConstructionGlobal.com, 6 September 2020. |
| In running text   | In an article on ConstructionGlobal.com, Emily Folk writes, 'Hundreds of design decisions can impact a building's energy efficiency, making fossil-fuel-free structures more or less workable. Multilayered window designs can trap heat, making climate control systems more efficient.'                        |

## Appendices and attachments

Appendices and attachments must have a clear relevance to our response. Do not separate content into an appendix or attachment simply because the team could not agree on how to incorporate it into the submission schedules.

The submission schedules must reference any appendices or attachments so that readers do not miss them. In general, it is sufficient to briefly summarise the topic covered in the appendix or attachment followed by '(see *Appendix/attachment name*)'.

