

RMIT writing style guide

August 2021



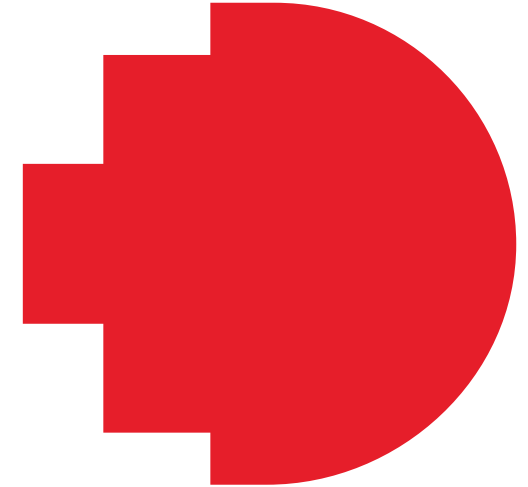
What's next...



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For writing queries including briefs, brand guidelines, campaigns and approvals, please consult the Creative and Production team through this [request form](#).

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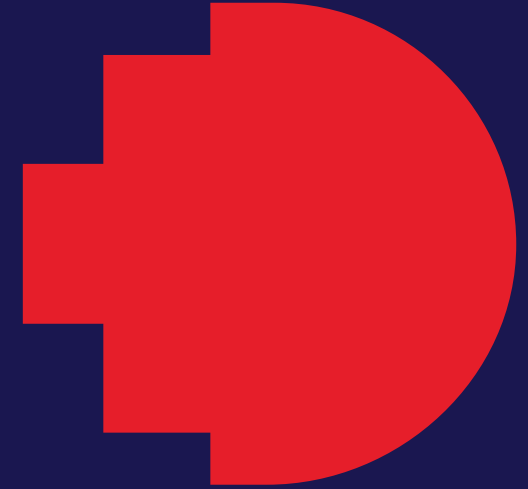
We all need to communicate with people at work. Whether we're engaging with students, lobbying for research funding or promoting the university, the language we use is an extremely powerful tool.

A content style guide aims to keep RMIT's voice, tone and messaging consistent across all platforms.

This guide governs writing conventions for RMIT's website, social media channels and print publications. It includes general rules about aspects of writing, as well as more specific rules and instructions.

If you have questions regarding grammar, spelling or mechanics that are not addressed in this guide, you may consult:

- The Macquarie Dictionary fifth edition as standard for spelling
- The ABC's style guide for editorial conventions
- The Australian Government Style Manual: <https://www.stylemanual.gov.au/>



Why our language matters

RMIT is a commercial organisation and we need to clearly communicate what sets us apart from other universities.

The way we look, the way we sound and the way we behave are communicated to our audience. As well as our visual identity, our verbal identity is a crucial part of who we are and how we connect with people, whether it's our colleagues, students or industry partners. It comprises our tone of voice, our stories and our names.

Consistency is key

The more consistent we are, the more likely it is that people will understand what makes us unique. The way we express ourselves needs to be cohesive so that our audience recognises, relates to, and trusts us. If we say we're creative and bold in our communications, then our language needs to reflect this. We need a strong verbal identity that we all understand and know how to apply.



Our mission and values

Brand vision

The brand vision sets out the ambition for RMIT – establishing a destination that the whole organisation can strive towards.

To be a leading global university of technology, design and enterprise that creates life-changing experiences and shapes the world.

Brand mission

The brand mission lays out how RMIT will make its vision a reality. It describes the means by which the brand will set itself apart and deliver value.

RMIT exists to create transformative experiences for our students, getting them ready for life and work, and to help shape the world with research, innovation, teaching and engagement.

Values

The RMIT values stand at the very core of the brand. They're the principles that guide the brand to pursue its mission.

Passion | Impact | Inclusion

Courage | Agility | Imagination



Our tone of voice

We use the RMIT voice across all our platforms and products. Our voice is based on RMIT's core values and is unchanging.

We use the same voice all the time, but our tone changes. You wouldn't use the same tone of voice with someone who's upset as you would with someone who's happy or celebrating. Our voice doesn't change much from day to day, but our tone changes all the time.

Our voice is our identity. Our tone is how we express that identity.

In other words, voice is our personality, while tone is our mood.

What we say is dictated by our principles, experiences and aspirations.

How we say it is informed by our personality.

All of this means that when we write copy:

- **We are plainspoken.** We strip away the unnecessary and try to avoid over-intellectualised or esoteric language. We value clarity above all. We avoid jargon and speak in terms that can be universally understood.
- **We are authentic.** This means we relate to students' and customers' challenges, passions and interests, and speak to them in a familiar, inclusive and accessible way. We're never condescending or exclusive.
- **We are informative.** As a tertiary institution, we're known for our discovery, dissemination and application of knowledge. Only experts can make something complex sound straightforward, and it's our job to demystify our research and learnings in a way that educates and engages. We aim to be both informative and affective.



General copy style

How we refer to ourselves

Spell out RMIT University the first time and then just RMIT, as our style is conversational.

Use an upper case 'U' when referring specifically to RMIT. At other times, 'university' or 'universities' is not capitalised, unless it's as part of the name of a particular university. Use university or universities when you are not referring to the university by its proper name, e.g. RMIT University, Swinburne University and Victoria University are three of Australia's dual-sector universities.

In external news and media communications, we always refer to ourselves as RMIT.

In marketing and advertising communications it's acceptable to use 'RMIT' in the first instance and then 'we/our'.

In student communications or advertising copy, replace references to 'students' or 'applicants' with 'you' where relevant. This style of writing (second person rather than third person) is more conversational and in line with RMIT's image as an accessible and open university.

Campaign messaging

The RMIT brand platform is 'what's next'. When used as a tagline alongside the RMIT logo it should be written with the ellipsis: 'what's next...' not 'what's next?'. The 'n' in 'next' is never capitalised and the 'w' is not capitalised unless at the beginning of a sentence.

'What's next...' supports our future-focused brand story: we exist to help people who know where they're heading, and to get them there. It's inclusive and empowers our audience by asking what's next for them.

In a sentence it can be used two ways:

With a verb in front of it relative to the study area, e.g.,

Imagine
Shape
Design
Build
Code

Engineer What's next...

Create
Research
Inspire
Lead
Rethink

As part of a sentence or a quote, e.g.,

- Upskill for what's next.
- What's next for you?
- "What's next for me is getting my commercial and instrument rating so I can be a commercial pilot with an airline."
- "The technology sector changes every day, so we have to ensure we're keeping up with what's next to deliver a cutting-edge student experience."



General copy style

Respectful and appropriate language and terminology

An inclusive collective term for Indigenous Australians is 'Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Peoples'. This term should always be written in its entirety and never abbreviated.

If you are speaking to or of an individual, it is respectful to be as specific as possible about their cultural identity and/or language group. Ask the person for guidance and do your own research. Be aware that some Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples may relate to their culture but not know their specific language or cultural group due to being a child of, or related to a child of, the Stolen Generations and/or being displaced.

Staff organising high profile public events should organise a formal Welcome to Country. Less formal events and gatherings should have an Acknowledgement of Country. This is a statement that recognises the Traditional Owners of the land and delivering it is a simple way to recognise and show respect to shared connection to the oldest continuing cultures on earth.

An Acknowledgement should ideally be given any time people gather to conduct RMIT business. The Ngarara Willim Centre page on the RMIT staff site has further information about organising or delivering a Welcome to Country or Acknowledgment of Country.

Accessible

Use meaningful, and unpretentious language that readers will understand. Aim for strong writing with precise, meaningful words and sentences. Avoid using vague or meaningless expressions, clichés and buzzwords, repetition or unexplained acronyms. Use technical jargon only if it will be understood by your audience.

For online content accessibility requirements, see the RMIT web accessibility policy: rmit.edu.au/utilities/accessibility

When producing printed publications, take care to comply with Vision Australia's guidelines to ensure that your content is legible and accessible to a broad audience. These guidelines set out minimum standards for font type and size, formatting, colour contrast and text layout. Find the guidelines on Vision Australia's website:

<https://www.visionaustralia.org/services/print-accessibility>.



General copy style

Inclusive

Refer to people or individuals 'of diverse genders, sexes and sexualities (DGSS)' when possible. This language and acronym are preferred in the first instance as it's believed to be the best representation of sex, sexuality and gender identity. Use lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, gender diverse, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ+) as a second option. The RMIT guide to inclusive language is a handy reference:

rmit.edu.au/staff/our-rmit/diversity-and-inclusion

Be aware of any expressions or language that could exclude people on grounds of age, ethnicity or disability/ability level, and avoid highlighting these factors when describing an individual unless necessary for a particular story.

When referring to groups rather than individuals, avoid gender-specific language by using the plural ('they must') instead of the third person ('he must', 'she must'). Use gender-neutral nouns ('chair' or 'chairperson' rather than 'chairman', 'actor' rather than 'actress', etc.).

When using pronouns, be mindful that a trans person, or a person who is of non-binary gender (e.g., somebody who does not wholly identify as either male or female) may choose to use the pronouns that best reflect their gender identity, and this may not be related to their biological sex. In some cases, a person may choose to use pronouns that don't reference gender at all (e.g., 'they'/'them'/'their'). If in doubt, ask a person privately and always be respectful of their preference.

Readable

Think about what you want to say, plan a logical structure, and write your message as clearly as possible. Write in language that is readable and natural. Aim to write the way you speak and change any stilted or verbose wording into everyday language that could be spoken out loud. If in doubt, try reading it aloud to yourself or a colleague.

Use consistent headings, line spacing and formatting to help readers interpret the content easily and find information quickly within the document.

Avoid writing long paragraphs of text. When writing online communications, consider the length and how the information will be read. Ask yourself: is the information duplicated in another section of the page, or could a link be used instead? Online readers tend to scan the information and large chunks of writing are less likely to get your message across.

Consider why you are writing (purpose), where your writing will appear (context) and who will read it (audience) and write in a tone that suits all three elements.

Active

In most cases, use the active rather than the passive voice.

Active: Ruth is preparing the letter.

Passive: The letter is being prepared by Ruth.

Despite what online grammar checks might indicate, the passive voice is not incorrect and is sometimes appropriate.

For example:

They were refused entry to the event.

The policy was drafted in April.

Both sentences are in passive voice and are perfectly acceptable. In the first case, it's not necessary or appropriate to name the person/s who refused entry. In the second case, the focus is on when the policy was drafted, not who drafted it.

Writing for an online audience

Writing for social media

Avoid using jargon and buzzwords that are overused and hold little meaning, like 'expert industry partnerships' and 'drive innovation and transformation'. Pretend you're explaining something to a smart 13-year-old and use language that can be easily understood.

Consider the audience of the platform you're writing copy for, and use clear and bold language that will catch the reader's eye.

Tips:

- Look up the latest character length/word count recommendations for the platform.
- Tag people and organisations where possible, especially on LinkedIn, to extend reach.
- Provide a clear CTA and link.
- Be consistent. Use the same tone of voice on each platform across both organic and paid posts so an audience sees a consistent brand voice, whether they're seeing an organic news story or a paid ad.
- Get to the point. Write in active voice and cut out unnecessary adverbs.

Writing Youtube video descriptions

Optimise your Youtube video by writing descriptive copy that includes keywords, information and multiple links.

- Write catchy titles that will appeal to a broad audience, ending in '| RMIT University'.
- Write long and informative descriptions with multiple keywords to optimise SEO.
- Include links to relevant study-with-us pages and links to engage with more content on the RMIT website.

Writing for Search Engine Marketing (SEM)

Tips for writing SEM copy

- SEM copy should be simple and to the point
- Leverage KSPs, USPs or statistics to make the ad unique
- Include the operative word in the headline, preferably the first headline.
- Ensure the content is relevant to the landing page and ad group

AD ▸ <https://www.rmit.edu.au> ▸

Engineering at RMIT- Flexible Engineering Program

Globally Ranked #55 For Graduate Employment, RMIT Graduates Are Among The Most Employable. Browse Available Courses & Find The Right Fit For You. Practical Learning.

AD ▸ <https://www.rmit.edu.au> ▸

Study At RMIT-#15 For Art & Design Worldwide

Gain The Confidence & Tools To Understand & Interpret The World Around You Through Art. Explore Your Unique Talents & Make The Most Of Your Creative Instincts. Practical Learning.

Writing Tips



Writing for SEM continued

We write in the Expanded Text Ad format, which is as follows:

3 headlines separated by vertical bar glyphs

Note: Each headline can be up to 30 characters (including spaces), but less is more.

2 descriptions

Note: Each description can be up to 90 characters each, but again, less is more.

The screenshot shows a Google search for 'atar'. The search results display an expanded text ad from RMIT.edu.au. The ad components are as follows:

Component	Text
AD	https://www.rmit.edu.au
Headlines	1. Just Received Your ATAR? 2. It's Your Chance to Choose 3. RMIT.edu.au
Descriptions	1. See Where Your ATAR Can Take You. Speak To Us About Your Study Options In 2020. 2. Get Answers To Commonly-Asked Questions About Pathways, Offer Dates & More.

Capitalisation

To enhance ad performance when writing for SEM, we use a capital letter to start most words. This is because:

- a) they take up more ad-space real estate, and
- b) they give the ad a more authoritative tone.

Our AB testing supports this idea.

As a rule, you should capitalise the first word, all nouns, all verbs (even short ones, like 'is'), all adjectives and all proper nouns, as you would if you were writing the title of a book or movie. Use lowercase for all articles, conjunctions and prepositions, like 'of' and 'at'.

Master of IT at RMIT | Step Into An In-Demand Career | Find Out More

AD www.rmit.edu.au/study-with-us

Develop Expertise in Algorithms, Analytics, Data Mining, Cloud Computing & Programming. Browse Available Courses & Find The Right Fit For You.



Writing Tips

Avoid uncommon abbreviations

It's okay to abbreviate words in SEM, but try to avoid abbreviations that aren't commonly used. Sometimes, due to ad copy character limits, abbreviations may be necessary.

Common abbreviation examples:

- IT (for information technology)
- APAC (for Asia-Pacific)

Uncommon abbreviations examples:

- InfoSec (for information security)
- Dip (for diploma)

Search algorithms cater to how people actually search, so abbreviations that are uncommonly used in real life won't perform as well when used in an ad.

For example, in the headline below, the full spelling of "Certificate" will perform better than "Cert" when used in an ad.

RMIT Certificate In Laboratory | What's Next For You | Find Out More

AD www.rmit.edu.au/study-with-us

Gain Vital Skills To Become A Lab Technician. Browse Available Courses & Find the Right Fit For You.

Cert IV In Lab Technique | Make A Difference | Find Out More

AD www.rmit.edu.au/study-with-us

Gain Vital Skills To Become A Lab Technician. Browse Available Courses & Find the Right Fit For You.

Writing for eDMs

eDMs speak directly to people who have registered their interest, contacted us or require our assistance with enrolling into a course.

In other words, we know they want to hear from us, so our universal eDM tone is confident, personal and informed.

eDM audiences determine the nuances within this universal tone. For example, a postgraduate eDM may adopt an informative, researched tone, while a school leaver eDM may be more colloquial and enthusiastic.

Subject line and preheader

The subject line and preheader is the most important part of an eDM. It should speak directly to the needs of the audience, grab their attention and communicate the contents of the eDM, while remaining short enough to appear in the inbox preview. A good subject line should be able to answer the question, "What's in it for me?"

Although the below subject line states why the eDM is being sent, it's lengthy and vague about the contents of the eDM.

Subject: An update from RMIT - Free TAFE for Priority Courses

Instead, this subject line piques the audience's interest and is upfront about the purpose of the eDM.

Subject: Free TAFE has 10,000 new places available



Writing Tips

Banner and main body copy

The main body copy should generally follow this structure:

- **Personalised greeting**

Hi there,

- **Hook**

Did you know that 69% of adults are prepared to upskill or reskill in order to improve their future employability?*

- **Key selling points**

If you're one of the forward thinkers, now is a great time to make your goals happen with a postgraduate degree at RMIT University.

At RMIT, you'll learn by applying theory in state-of-the-art facilities alongside leading industry partners. You'll graduate ahead of what's next, prepared to lead change, become a specialist or change careers.

- **Action statement**

Apply for your postgraduate degree directly with RMIT, and get ready to experience industry-led online and on-campus learning in March.

- **Main call-to-action (CTA) button**

Apply for a postgrad course

- **Source (if applicable)**

*PwC 'New World. New Skills' survey 2020

Tips:

- The main banner image should include minimal text. This typically aligns with 'What's next' campaign messaging, but may also be used to promote event titles and dates.
- Remember that the length of the main body copy impacts the position of the main CTA button. Keep the main body copy tightly edited so both desktop and mobile users reach the button quickly.
- For international students in particular, avoid the use of uncommon words, lengthy sentences and terminology used in the domestic calendar, such as 'semester'.
- When personalising copy, always ensure the default text still aligns well with the rest of the sentence.

Below, a user has not registered their lead with their first name. With the absence of default text, this appears as a blank space.

Hi ,

Whether you are thinking of a career change or the next step up at work, there has never been a better time to take the lead with postgrad study.

Below, default text has been included, correctly appearing as a full greeting.

Hi there,

Did you know that 77% of 18—34 year olds are prepared to upskill or reskill in order to improve their future employability?*



Writing Tips

CTA buttons

CTAs are short, sharp prompts that link to the RMIT website. They should be clear about which page the user can expect to land on if they click the button. Examples include:

- Read more
- Learn more
- Register now
- Explore courses
- Book a consultation

Secondary stories

Secondary stories are the additional content fragments that appear below the main CTA. This section can be used to promote:

- Upcoming events
- Program interventions
- Student support services
- Content pieces

It's best practice to minimise the number of modules appearing in this section and position them in order of priority, with the most important piece closest to the main CTA. Few users venture past the main CTA, so a strong hierarchy will help you maximise engagement.

These secondary stories are vague, incorrectly formatted or easy to miss.

In contrast, this secondary story section is balanced, clear and engaging.

Be in the know

Better business through design thinking

Organisations across the globe are continually searching for ways to innovate.

[Learn more](#)



7 reasons why a career in art, design and architecture is right for you. Check them out below.

[Learn more](#)



Step 1: discover the jobs you'll be great at

It's okay not to know whether you'll end up as a photographer, nurse or businessperson one day. But if you're wondering where you might thrive in the future, sign up to take our personality quiz! We'll find your career match options in a flash

[Sign up now](#)



Step 2: search, save and compare related courses

Explore RMIT's courses by searching for the future career suggestions you got from our quiz. Hit "Compare" to save courses in your comparison dashboard, where you can easily weigh up things like ATAR requirements, duration and more.

[Sign up now](#)



Email signatures

Email signatures should be consistent across the university.

Guidelines for email signatures:

- Arial font is our system typeface and is recommended for use in email signatures, in size 10 or 12. Avoid 'personality' fonts like Comic Sans and large font sizes.
- Use standard RMIT signatures that include the necessary details: name, title, school/unit name, email address, phone number and link to RMIT website.
- Because our core information (ABN, CRICOS and RTO codes) are in the footer of our website, it's an appropriate safety net for all external emails to include a link to **rmit.edu.au**.
- Publications and emails should always include a way for the reader to respond by telephone and email.
- The use of large images or motivational quotes is not encouraged in email signatures. Email signatures using the RMIT Indigenous design artwork are available to download from the brand and templates page on the staff site:
rmit.edu.au/staff/services-and-tools/communications-and-brand/brand

Optional text add-ons to the end of your email signature:

- RMIT values: Passion | Impact | Inclusion | Agility | Courage | Imagination
- Rethink–Reduce–Reuse–Recycle. Please consider the environment before printing this email.
- Work flexibility: We work flexibly at RMIT. I am sending this email now because it suits me. I do not expect that you will respond or action this outside of regular hours.
- RMIT Ally
- RMIT's Acknowledgement of Country

Example email signature:

Staff name, position title
Department, portfolio

RMIT University
Tel +61 3 99250000
staff@rmit.edu.au
www.rmit.edu.au
CRICOS provider number: 00122A

Optional:
Days in office
Add-on text/affiliations

CRICOS code

Our CRICOS number should be used in any communication that could constitute marketing activity or when promoting courses to prospective students. This includes emails as well as eDM newsletters, posters and online banners.

For anyone chasing leads or interacting with students, it's appropriate to include the CRICOS number in your email signature.

It's generally appropriate as a risk management strategy to include a statement like 'This email may include confidential information. If you've received it in error, please contact the sender to let them know and then delete it.'

Grammar and mechanics



Search editorial conventions on the Australian Government Style Manual:

<https://www.stylemanual.gov.au/style-rules-and-conventions>

A

Acronyms

Spell out any acronyms in first reference with the abbreviated form in brackets following the word, then use the acronym only in second and subsequent references. E.g. The RMIT University Student Union (RUSU) is hosting a celebration across all campuses. All RUSU members and RMIT staff are invited to attend.

Be mindful of RMIT jargon or acronyms that may not be well known in the wider community, for example NAS, DSC, AMP and VE.

B

Bulleted and numbered lists

Bulleted lists consist of a series of bullet (or dot) points or numbered items. They can be easier to read than a block of text and can help the reader digest complex or important information quickly. In print, be careful not to overuse this device or to have very long lists of bullet points (generally there should be no more than 10 items in a list).

Each series of bullet points should have an introduction – usually a short sentence ending in a colon.

C

Capitalisation

As a rule, initial capitals are used to distinguish the particular from the general.

Particular	General
I saw Professor Jane Smith	I saw one of the professors.
School of Accounting	RMIT has 24 schools across three colleges.

Capitalisation should be applied consistently throughout the piece of communication.

Our writing style uses minimal capitalisation, where an initial capital is used only for the first word and any proper names. This style applies to the headings of articles and RMIT News stories.

For example: Marketing students received Australia Post internships.

Maximal capitalisation is used in the titles of books, songs, films, events and publications, where every word is capitalised except articles ('the', 'an' etc.), prepositions and conjunctions.

War and Peace, The Devil Wears Prada, Health, Safety and Wellbeing

Grammar and mechanics



Capitalisation of interest areas

Capitalise RMIT interest areas and course names only in headings and subject lines, or when referring to the course name. In description and body text, don't capitalise. For example:

Heading text: Game Design student Phoebe Watson shaking up the industry.

Body text: While studying the Bachelor of Design (Games), Watson found work as an Indigenous game designer. Watson's role was to integrate Indigenous culture within the game design elements.

Campuses

The word 'campus' is not capitalised: Melbourne City campus, Brunswick campus, Ho Chi Minh City campus, Hanoi campus.

Some RMIT locations are known as sites, not campuses: Hamilton site, Point Cook site.

Refer to the maps webpage to check the spelling, locations and building names of RMIT's campuses.

Colleges and schools

The complete name of organisational units has initial capitals. Use lower case when not referring to a particular unit:

- STEM College
- School of Applied Sciences
- Forms should be lodged at your school
- RMIT offers programs in 24 schools across three academic colleges.

Currencies

Money is written as follows:

- \$50
- \$10.35
- 85 cents (in general text)
- \$100,000
- \$1.26 million
- AU\$20, US\$20



D

Dates

Write dates as day, month and year with no comma:

Correct	Incorrect
17 August	the 17th of August
17 August 1982	17 August, 1982
Monday 1 August 2017	Monday, 1st August 2017

Decades should be expressed as: the 1980s, the mid-1980s, the late 1980s. There is no apostrophe before the 's'. Centuries should be written in numerals: the 20th century (not the 20th century).

E

Em dash

RMIT uses the em dash (—) as a stylised short line or 'pipe' above headlines and titles. Refer to page 63 of the brand guidelines for more information about using an em dash.

Use these keyboard shortcuts:

PC: Alt + 0151

Mac: Shift + Option + hyphen

En dash

Use an en dash (–) within text, with a space either side, to signify an abrupt change, to introduce an explanation or to set apart parenthetical elements within a sentence.

Albert Einstein authored many scientific theories – the Theory of Relativity being the most famous – which changed our perceptions of the world.

En dashes are also used to mean 'to' in spans of numbers and time (see Spans of date, time and numbers above) and in expressions such as 'Sydney–Melbourne train line'. They can also indicate an association between words, e.g. 'cost–benefit ratios'. In these cases, the en dash is unspaced.

Grammar and mechanics



H

Hyphenation

The general rules are:

Hyphenate compound adjectives: hands-on learning, first-year student, government-owned facility, disability-related requirements, heritage-listed building, 230-seat lecture theatre.

When the expression does not form a compound adjective, no hyphen is used: a plan for the long term; the first year of the course; she is four years old; this doctor is well known within the community; at the cutting edge of technology.

We don't hyphenate compound adverb ending in -ly. E.g. Widely known cause not widely-known cause.

N

Numbers

Spell out numbers between one and nine. Use figures for 10 upwards (except at the start of a sentence), in percentages (see below) or in decimals (3.5). Use commas (not spaces) within all numbers beyond 1,000.

Where ordinal numbers are written in numerals, do not use superscript: an 18th-century sculpture (not 18th).

Use roman numerals for certificate qualifications - Certificate III, not Certificate 3. And world wars - World War I, II ('the First World War' is also acceptable).

P

People

Students – use their surname after the first time.

Academics — full title and name at first mention (Pro Vice-Chancellor Design and Social Context and Vice-President, Professor Paul Gough), then title and name thereafter (Professor Gough).

The abbreviations 'Prof' or 'Assoc' are never used.

Occupations, names and titles (e.g. accountant, program manager, elder) should not be capitalised when used generally and not in reference to a specific person. However, individual titles and unit names are capitalised, e.g. Executive Director Human Resources; Academic Registrar's Group.

Grammar and mechanics



Programs and courses

Take care to always use the exact program title: Master of (not Masters of), Certificate in (not Certificate of), Bachelor of (not Bachelor in), Diploma of (not Diploma in).

Correct	Incorrect
Diploma of Languages	Diploma in Languages Languages Diploma
Master of Engineering (Electrical Engineering)	Master's of Electrical Engineering
Certificate IV in Education Support	Certificate of Education Support

To check the exact name of a particular program or course, refer to the RMIT website.

Non-specific references to programs, courses, disciplines and qualification levels are not capitalised.

Students enrolled in a Bachelor of Engineering program can major in computer and network engineering. The University also offers a growing number of associate degree programs, including the Associate Degree in Design (Furniture).

Full program titles only are capitalised, e.g. Bachelor of Applied Science, the applied science degree.

Advice on 'courses' and 'programs'

When marketing and selling our programs to students, the official compliance and legal advice is that we can use the word 'courses' (lower case 'c') as it is speaking to the consumer in their language about the study or credential or qualification that they want.

In our marketing communications we use lower case 'c' when we say 'courses'. It's fine for us to purchase ad words or use marketing terms that include 'courses' and any other relevant study-related terms, such as 'degree', 'program' or 'subject'.

Refer to capital 'C' Courses in a formal unit/subject description sense and in our Course Guides and formal enrolment information pages about our individual units of study. When talking about degrees/qualifications, refer to 'Programs'.

Where we need to be 100% clear is when a student is enrolling and making a commitment, including financial. We need to be very explicit about what a Program is – e.g., Juris Doctor, and what a Course is – e.g., Contract Law LAW1021, so that a student understands that a Course will cost \$5,000 and the Program in total will cost \$114,000.



Q

Qualifications

The standard shortened form of program titles is used with a person's name, without full stops or other punctuation, e.g. Chris Carter PhD Melb; Ho Mei Ling BSc(Hons) RMIT.

Academic qualifications should be listed as follows:

- Lower degrees precede higher degrees
- BEng, MEng RMIT
- All degrees from each institute are grouped
- BBus, MBA RMIT, BSc Melb
- Associate diplomas are listed after degrees BArch, AssocDipMaths RMIT
- Professional qualifications are listed after academic qualifications
- BScQld, PhD Melb, ARACI

Quotations

Use double quote marks only for quoted speech. Otherwise use single.

Quotes within quotes take single quotation marks. *"When people ask, 'Is this important?', I tell them it's vital," he said.*

Use double quotation marks for quoted words: *He described the new technique as "a winner".*

R

References

Include a written location, author and date when referencing in your writing online. Web links can break or move location, so your reference source won't be able to be found if it's just been hyperlinked.

The RMIT library site has guides for referencing styles:

rmit.edu.au/library/study/referencing

The MLA 8th edition style is suitable for referencing in online content.

MLA 8th Edition

Yousif, Khalid. 3D Simultaneous Localization and Mapping in Texture-less and Structure-less Environments Using Rank Order Statistics. RMIT University, 2016.

<https://researchrepository.rmit.edu.au/esploro/outputs/doctoral/3D-simultaneous-localization-and-mapping-in-texture-less-and-structureless-environments-using-rank-order-statistics/9921863637601341>. Accessed 10 June 2021.

Grammar and mechanics



S

Semesters

Use the format 'Semester Number Year'.

Correct: Semester 1 2018

Incorrect: Semester One, 2018, 1st Semester 2018

T

Time

Use numerals for units of time, lower case, no spaces, no colons and no full stops (pm, not p.m.). Examples: 8pm, 7:30am

Use 'noon' and 'midnight' where '12am' or '12pm' could cause confusion.

Use an unspaced en dash to show a span or range in numerals, such as a range of values or a financial year, e.g. 'the 2019–20 budget' and '7am–9am'.

You can also indicate spans by using the phrases:

- 'from' paired with 'to' – for example, 'from 57 to 65 years'
- 'between' paired with 'and' – for example, 'between Monday and Friday'.

U

Universities

When referring specifically to RMIT, use an upper case 'U'. At other times, 'university' or 'universities' is not capitalised (unless as part of the name of a particular university). Use 'RMIT University' at first mention and 'RMIT' thereafter. ('Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology' is used only in financial statements and at other times required by legislation.)

- RMIT University
- RMIT is a global university of technology and design.
- The University is committed to diversity (when referring to RMIT)
- This is a problem for every university in Australia.

W

Website

Website conventions: for printed publications, format URLs in bold black text, without underlining.

Do not include 'https://' unless there is no 'www.' e.g. the RMIT Advanced Fashion Studios website <https://afs.rmit.fashion>

Preferred spellings and terminology



Use English or Australian spelling, not US: colour (not color), honour (not honor), globalisation (not globalization).

However, retain actual spellings in organisation names, book titles, etc.: World Health Organization, US Center of Military History, UN Global Compact Cities Programme.

Refer to the Macquarie dictionary for Australian English spelling.

A

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

Aboriginal – adjective, u.c. when referring to Australia's Aboriginal population. NB: Indigenous is preferable.

accessible toilet (or disability access toilet) – not disabled toilet. Refer to the Macquarie dictionary for Australian English spelling.

Acknowledgement of Country

alumni – plural

alumnus – singular (do not use alum, alumna or alumnae)

ancestors (l.c.)

ANZAC – not Anzac

Asia-Pacific region

B

bachelor's degree (general reference)

C

certificate (general reference)

continuing students (not returning, ongoing or re-enrolling)

cooperate, cooperative

coordinate, coordination, coordinator

co-requisite

country (but Welcome to Country)

COVID-19, COVIDSafe

co-worker

CRICOS provider code: 0022A

criterion (plural – criteria)

cross-cultural

cross-disciplinary

curriculum vitae, CV

D

data (plural and singular – not datum)

database

daytime

day-to-day activities

decision-makers

diploma (general reference)

domestic student (not local student)

double degree

dual-sector university

E

e-book, e-commerce, e-learning, e-resources

e.g. or eg (not eg.) also use 'for example'

elders (not Elders)

electrotechnology

email

end-user

enrol

enrolled, enrolling

entry-level English

everyday (as an adjective, otherwise every day)



Preferred spellings and terminology

F

facade (not façade)
face-to-face teaching
fee-for-service basis
FEE-HELP
flyer (meaning brochure – not flier)
focused, focusing
focuses (plural – not foci)
formula (plural: formulas, except use “formulae” if referring to sets of scientific symbols)
form (not proforma/pro forma)
Free TAFE
fulfil, fulfilment, fulfilled, fulfilling
full-time and part-time students

G

Government — use Australian Government and Victorian Government, not Federal Government and State Government
go-live date (but “will go live ...”)
Grade Point Average
ground-level office (adjective)

H

handbook
HECS-HELP
helpdesk (but IT Service Desk)
Higher Degree by Research
Higher Education (noun)
higher education sector (adjective)
homepage

I

i.e. or ie (not ie.)
in-depth (adjective – in-depth examination)

Indigenous – capitalised when referring to Australia’s Indigenous population and preferable over Aboriginal. Describe individuals according to their preference. Some use a specific country or language descriptor relating to the land they’re connected to, rather than simply “Indigenous”. For example, “who was born and raised on Wurundjeri land”, a Yawuru man or a Barada and Gabalbara woman originally from Queensland.
in-house
intake
interdepartmental
interdisciplinary
internet, intranet

J-K

judgement
JobTrainer
kickstart
kilometre, km
Koori

L

labour (but Australian Labor Party)
learning and teaching – not, teaching and learning (capitalised as “Learning and Teaching” for specific organisational names and position titles only)
Library – use RMIT University Library, then “the Library”
life-changing experiences
lifecycle
lifelong learning
life skills
LinkedIn
login – noun/adjective (“login details”)
log in to (not log into, or login to)
low-income families (adjective)



Preferred spellings and terminology

M

master's degree (general reference)
megabyte, MB
Melbourne City campus
memorandum (plural: memoranda)
microeconomics
mid-July etc.
mid-semester
mid-year
multidisciplinary
multimedia

N

nanotechnology
nano-materials
names — use the person's full title and name in the first reference and then their surname with no honorifics in second and subsequent mentions.
non-compliance
non-existent, non-existence
non-profit organisation
no one

O

-odd (150-odd guests)
offshore
OHS (not OH&S)
on-campus – adjective (on-campus housing). otherwise 'she works on campus'
onshore
OS-HELP

P

Page 1 (capitalise first letter), or p1
Pages 3–26
paraprofessional
partner institutions outside Australia (not offshore partners)
part-time
% (per cent or percent)
person with a disability (not disabled person)
postdoctoral
postgraduate
prerequisite
preselection
Pro Vice-Chancellor
program (not programme – for all audiences, domestic and international)
pro rata

R

re-allocate
redevelop
re-enrol
re-evaluate
RMIT students studying at Singapore Institute of Management (not Singapore Institute of Management students)
résumé (to avoid confusion with "resume")

S

school-based
short-term funding
smartphone
student services and amenities fee (SSAF)
state-of-the-art facilities
stand-alone course
STEM (not STEMM)
student-centred learning
student number (not student ID)
syllabuses (not syllabi)



Preferred spellings and terminology

T

TAFE

teammate

tense - use past tense as standard, e.g. 'said' not 'says'. A feature news story can be present or past tense.

temperatures - don't spell out Celsius. 7C or 34C is fine.

textbook

thesis (plural: theses)

timeframe, timeline, timescale, timetable

titles - don't write RMIT before someone's title on our own channels. Use professor or other senior titles rather than doctor. Don't abbreviate to Prof or Ass Prof.

traditional owners (or custodians)

transdisciplinary

transnational

T-shirt

tweet, Twitter

U

undergraduate

upskill (not up-skill)

up to date

usable

the US (no full stops and not 'the USA')

University (when referring to RMIT)

University-wide

V

VET FEE-HELP

VET Qualification statement

VET Student Loan

Vice-Chancellor - the Vice-Chancellor is an exception to our rule of using surnames in second and subsequent references. Make sure to include the post-nominal titles after the Vice-Chancellor's name in the first reference and in second and subsequent references use Vice-Chancellor, or alternatively, the Vice-Chancellor's first name.

Vice-President

Vocational Education (noun) – do not abbreviate to VE

vocational education sector (adjective)

W

webpage or web-page

website

Welcome to Country

wellbeing

Western society (u.c. on "Western")

Wi-Fi

workforce

work-based learning, industry-based learning

work-integrated learning

work-life balance

workplan

workplace

world-class institution

worldwide (adjective)

World War I, World War II (roman numerals)

workplan

X–Z

Year 11, Year 12

year-long

YouTube



What's next...