

STYLE GUIDE – WRITING & GRAMMAR

Introduction

This style guide helps SU Australia work to a common, agreed set of rules about the branding, style and language to be used in all our documents.

Style includes things like how you format dates and numbers; whether terms should be capitalised; guidance on punctuation and grammar; and the agreed formatting for documents.

The guide is intended to improve the quality and consistency of all SU Australia's communications, including magazines and newsletters; media releases; electronic communications; marketing material, including advertisements and website copy; reports; Government submissions and grants; and other written material.

The guide aims to make the task of writing good quality internal and external communications easier, more efficient and clearer. It is important that SU Australia uses consistent language so everyone internal and external to the organisation knows what we stand for.

In addition to written and grammatical rules, commonly encountered errors are used as examples. These Guidelines, however, are not comprehensive. For further details consult the [Australian Government Style Manual](#) published by the Australian Public Service. Web pages of the Style Manual are referenced as a guide for further detail.

The Macquarie Dictionary is used as the primary reference at SU Australia for accepted spelling.

Further information about issues of style please contact the Marketing & Communications team.

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**Glossary of commonly
misused or misspelt words**

Language and style

Telling the SU Australia Story

At SU Australia, our heart is to see children, **young people, and their families discovering life in God's Big Story**.

Our story is one of hope as young people are invited to be part of something bigger than themselves – to find purpose and connection. Together with supporters, volunteers, staff, and through our church networks and broader communities, we are working to see every child and young person given the opportunity to experience this story.

In all of our communications – from newsletters, to appeal letters, to social media updates – we have an opportunity to **motivate people to partner with us** and through us in our work.

In order to stay on message, we approach communications by asking ourselves these questions:

Is SU Australia's purpose communicated prominently?

Our purpose is to see generations of children and young people discovering life in God's big story. Will the reader understand through our communications that through SU they can:

- SU is working to help young people discover life?
- we're inviting young people to be part of something bigger than themselves?
- in the midst of a world of pain and complexity, they too can helping young people find belonging, purpose and hope?

Is at least one element of SU Australia's DNA communicated clearly?

Our DNA encompasses the following five aspects:

- Meeting young people where they're at
- Championing Bible engagement and prayer
- Equipping and releasing volunteer leaders
- Exploring innovative ways for connection and community
- Partnering with and through others.

Is at least one of these present in your writing? Does the story you are telling represent the outworking of at least one of these DNA points?

NOTE: Although it is not always be possible to meet all of the above communications goals, we aim to to ensure the SU Australia vision is the basis of our communications. Our referencing may be indirect, rather than overtly referencing our purpose and DNA.

How to tell the SU Australia Story

Once you are sure that your communication is aligned with the SU Australia brand, it is important to communicate in an engaging way that reflects our tone of voice.

Direct and Simple

Communications that come from SU Australia must seek to clearly and effectively inform readers of facts and information. Our style is assured, simple and to the point.

- Use shorter sentences and simple language. Don't use a long word when a short one will do (e.g use 'about' not 'approximately', 'end', not 'terminate' etc.)
- Avoid jargon as much as possible. Define terms when you first use them in every piece of communication.

Relational & Friendly

Warmth in our writing will help us to engage readers. Use personal pronouns to convey warmth and enthusiasm: friendly and familiar language, even informal, where appropriate.

- Tell readers what they want to know, not just what we want to tell them. We write to our audience, not at them. We are looking for a connection.
- e.g. 'we'll teach you', use 'you'll learn', which emphasises their involvement.

Inclusive

Our communications are to be focused on the supporter and the vital part they play in making the work of SU Australia possible. This can assist particularly in raising support, where focusing on readers will help them understand that they are part of a team.

- Give people a clear action point so they know how they can help/get involved..
- Focus on building the partnership between you and them.
- Avoid assumptions or inside knowledge – provide background information.

Active & Upbeat

The choice of words affects the tone of a document. Write in active voice, rather than passive voice, where the subject of the sentence performs the action stated,

- **active:** 'we plan to', **passive:** 'we are planning to'
- Use positive words. Focus on solutions, rather than problems.

Trustworthy

In order to build trust, we ensure that our communications are carefully written, well-researched, and where applicable, we consult with key stakeholders in the community.

In our communications we aim to:

- Carefully check facts, names, times and figures are accurate
- Write about what matters to our audience.
- Ask for feedback in our communications and integrate where possible.

Proofreading

Proofreading is an essential element of effective communication. A document that contains spelling and punctuation errors will look unprofessional and distract readers from fully comprehending the material.

Proofreading not only involves checking the text for errors, but also scrutinising photographs, diagrams, and graphics.

Never trust a computer spell check to do your proofreading for you. For example, the computer cannot determine whether a 'got' should be a 'not'.

Proofreading hints include:

- Use tracked changes in Microsoft Word when getting other people to proofread your work.
- Have one person read the manuscript aloud while another follows the reading and marks the proofs. A hardcopy printout is often easier to spot errors
- Always check your new copy against the original after the first changes have been made.
- Check that pages do not finish with a header or begin with the last word of a sentence
- Ensure there are no noticeable irregularities in spacing between words, or between headings and words
- Check consistency of font, especially in headings
- Check that photograph captions relate to the subject described
- If you find an error, read the sentences just before and after it — an error signals a lack in concentration and there are often other mistakes nearby
- Check that the same word hasn't been used in several different headlines through your publication

Preferred language

- Use 'children' or 'young people', rather than 'kids'
- Use 'chaplain' / 'chaplains' / 'Chaplaincy Week' for national publications.

The term 'chappy' / 'chappies' / 'Chappy Week' may be used in exclusive communications to Qld based regions, appropriate to the context.

- First Australians, not 'Aborigines'.
- SRE/RI and Chaplaincy as a whole are referred to as 'Schools Ministry' instead of Schools Ministries or School Ministries.

Non-discriminatory language

All documents and publications must be culturally sensitive, free of political bias and presented in language that reflects standards of community acceptance.

All SU Australia publications should be written in language which does not discriminate, either overtly or by implication, against any group. All people should be treated fairly, without prejudice based on gender, culture, race, religion, age or disability.

Discriminatory language can also be used by focusing on differences. Some examples (with suggested alternatives) include:

e.g. disabled person (person with a disability)

e.g. elderly teacher (teacher)

e.g. Asian doctor (doctor)

There are times when it is necessary to discuss the implications of gender, race, cultural background or disability, particularly in a research context. This should be done sensitively and, where possible, with reference to the people or groups concerned to confirm the way they prefer to be spoken about. Focus should be on the person rather than on the distinguishing feature.

Caution must also be used to avoid assumptions, generalisations or stereotyping of a person or group. Avoid tokenism in our publications (i.e. including a person in a story or photo simply to 'tick a box').

Formatting

Documents should be consistently formatted. Please note the following guidelines:

- use **flush left alignment** wherever possible, no centred text alignment
- **single line spaces** between words and sentences
- **only one space** after a full stop
- **spell checks completed** and documents proofread before publication
- **bold text used sparingly**
- **no line returns** unless between paragraphs (one return)
- **no forced hyphenation**
- **standard indenting of dot points** - note on the hard copy where certain sections should be further indented
- **no word orphans** (short lines that appear at the end of a paragraph) **or widows** (paragraph-closing lines which were pushed to the next page/column). Try to extend the ending line of your paragraphs past the midpoint of the body text through tightening/loosening the text.



Grammar and Punctuation

Abbreviations

In keeping with SU Australia's 'everyman' brand archetype and personality, newsletters and appeal communications can and should include the use of abbreviations.

Abbreviations are to be avoided in formal communications, such as grant applications and other formal documents.

Examples

'examination' NOT 'exam' 'Mathematics' NOT 'Maths'
'and' NOT '&' 'for example' NOT 'e.g.'
'that is' NOT 'i.e.'

[Further Reference](#)

Acronyms

An acronym is an abbreviation formed from initial letters (e.g. SCC)

Explain abbreviated names of organisations, places or activities by **including their full name** followed by the abbreviation in parentheses. The abbreviation can then be used throughout the article e.g. Northern Territory (NT), Scripture Union Primary Age (SUPA).

[Further Reference](#)

Addresses

Suburbs are in capitals in all local correspondence.

Example

Mr J Smith
29 John St
SOMETOWN NSW 2999

NB Suburbs are in lower case for international letters when followed by AUSTRALIA in capital letters.

[Further Reference](#)

Ampersands (&)

Do not use an ampersand instead of the word 'and'. Only use it when part of a company name, such as Marks & Spencer.

Apostrophes

An apostrophe indicates possession with nouns (e.g. the student's textbook).

The pronouns hers, its, theirs and yours are already possessive and do not need the apostrophe.

Examples

Singular Possession

'the carer's responsibilities' (one carer).

Plural Possession

'The carers' responsibilities' (more than one carer).

Possession with Name ending in 's'

'Mr Charles' class' or 'Jesus' words' NOT 'Mr Charles's class' or 'Jesus's words'.

Do not use apostrophes with these possessive pronouns:

my, your, his, her, its, our, their, mine, yours, his, hers, ours, theirs

NB 'it's' means '**it is**', while 'its' means 'belonging to it'.

Do not use apostrophes in ages and decades

'She was in her 30s.' NOT 'She was in her 30's.'
'in the 1960s' NOT 'in the 1960's'

[Further Reference](#)

Bible References

The New International Version (NIV) is the preferred version for Bible references in SU Australia publications.

Bible references should appear as follows: **2 Corinthians 3:14 (NIV)**

Include the Bible translation version, or unless otherwise stated, all biblical quotations are from the ____ version (at the start of the publication).

The Bible reference should be listed at the end of a verse:

Delight yourself in the LORD and he will give you the desires of your heart. (Psalm 37:4)

Brackets

Parentheses (brackets) should be used to enclose expressions which are not essential to the meaning of the sentence, but amplify or clarify a message.

e.g. He behaved unfairly or (as some claim) with prejudice.

A complete sentence in brackets has its punctuation marks within the parentheses. Items in brackets should still be punctuated consistently with the rest of the publication.

[Further Reference](#)

Capitalisation

Initial capitals to be used for:

- **Proper names** (specific names of people, places, organisations, objects), 'Agatha Christie', 'Rome', 'Parliament House', 'Aboriginal', 'Australian Christian Lobby', 'Netflix'
- **Days of the week and months**
- **Subject names** e.g. 'He is an excellent Music student.'
- **Topic names** e.g. 'Civics and Citizenship'
- **Year names** e.g. 'Year 10' NOT 'year 10'
- **Year divisions** e.g. 'Term 1' or 'Semester 2' (but not if you use 'the first term' or 'the second semester')
- **Job titles** 'Chief Executive Officer', 'Bequest Manager'
- **'Bishop', 'Diocese', 'Parish'** where a specific one is referred to, even if the title is not in full. 'The Bishop said that he would like everyone in the Diocese to'
- **'Church'**- where it refers to the worldwide Church or a collective denomination such as 'the Anglican Church', 'the Catholic Church', as opposed to a generic reference to a single church or churches.

Do *not* capitalise:

- **Contents of topic area** e.g. 'Her understanding of algebra was excellent.'
- **Seasons** e.g. 'autumn, winter, spring, summer'
- **Sports** e.g. 'rugby league' NOT 'Rugby League' (unless it is a name of a team or part of an association – e.g. 'Under 16 Netball Team' or 'National Rugby League').

- **‘bishop’, ‘diocese’, ‘church’, ‘parish’** if it is a generic term. E.g. ‘Newcastle is a large diocese’.
- **The pronouns ‘him’, ‘he’ ‘his’** when referring to God.
- **General regions and areas** ‘the western suburbs’, ‘the northern Brisbane region’ (not Western or Northern)
- **Words for emphasis.** Use italics instead – ‘He will *not* be coming’, rather than ‘He will NOT be coming’

[*See the Glossary of Misused or Misspelt Words for more information.*](#)

[Further Reference](#)

Colons

Colons are used to link two clauses but the first must be able to stand alone, while the second adds information.

e.g. The course is divided into three parts: beginning, middle and end.

Colons are used to introduce quotations:

e.g. She said: ‘I am happy.’

Colons are used to introduce lists.

e.g. You will need the following:

- shoes
- boots
- socks
- trousers

[Further Reference](#)

Contractions

Contractions are the formation of one word from two (e.g. doesn't)

Avoid contractions.

Examples

‘should have’ NOT ‘should’ve’

‘it is’ NOT ‘it’s’

‘she is’ NOT ‘she’s’

[Further Reference](#)

Commas

Commas are a much used and abused form of punctuation. They give pause and separate discrete clauses in a sentence. Space does not permit an exhaustive analysis of commas, however, they are often overused.

Some common uses of the comma are for:

- **a series or a list** (do not place a comma before the 'and' unless ambiguous)

e.g. 'The details required are a name, date of birth, address and telephone number.'

e.g. 'They should seek the support of landholders, philanthropists, government, and community and industry groups.'

- **a string of adjectives** (place commas unless they are of the same type)

e.g. 'Success will depend upon hard-working, committed residents.'

e.g. 'Success will depend upon hard-working, committed local residents.'

- **avoidance of ambiguity** and confusion

e.g. 'He was not run over, mercifully.' NOT 'He was not run over mercifully.'

e.g. 'By 1980, 333 men had registered' NOT 'By 1980 333 men had registered.'

- **introductory expressions and statements**

Words such as 'however', 'therefore', 'furthermore', 'in contrast' are followed by a comma when introducing a statement and set apart when they appear elsewhere in the statement

e.g. 'For example, single income families would be most affected.'

e.g. 'Single income families, however, would be most affected.'

- **separating names and titles**

e.g. 'The chaplain, Mary Bloggs, responded immediately.'

Do not use a comma:

- **between a subject and verb** (used mistakenly at times in a long sentence)

e.g. Pensioners whose aids require battery types not normally in stock, will have to buy their batteries from commercial outlets. (Incorrect use of comma before 'will'.)

- **in dates** e.g. 30 June 2008 (see also 'Dates' below)

[Further Reference](#)

Courtesy Titles

Courtesy titles are a form of address before a name such as 'Mr' or 'Mrs'

These are set out **without full stops**. Use 'Rev' for ordained ministers or where appropriate.

Titles should be followed by first names and surnames.

Title	Correct Usage	Incorrect Usage
Rev	Rev Tom Smith	Rev. Tom Smith
the Rt Rev	the Rt Rev Tom Smith	Rt Rev Tom Smith
Pst	Pst John Brown	Ptr John Brown
Dr	Dr Owen Lewis Dr Lewis	Dr Lewis, Owen Dr. Lewis
Mr, Mrs, Ms		

Dashes (em dash, en dash)

Use dashes in the following ways:

Type		Usage	Example
Em dash	—	Middle of sentences	I — not they — know
En dash	–	Numerical ranges Expressions of time	1990–91 May–September
Hyphen	-	middle of words (see hyphenation below)	self-esteem

[Further Reference](#)

Dates

Set dates out in the following form with no punctuation:

30 June 2022 (Day Month Year)

Not 'June 30' not '30th' or 'Thursday the 30th of June').

30.6.2022

The name of the day is optional and should precede the date.

Example: Thursday 30 June 2022

The Smiths will be speaking on Sunday 26 June 2022.

A span of years is separated with an en dash: e.g. 2015–18.

[Further Reference](#)

Ellipses (...)

The ellipsis (plural 'ellipses') is a character of exactly 3 dots. Ellipses show users that ideas or words are missing from a sentence or a quote.

Use the ellipsis if you omit words in quoted text or to mark an unfinished clause, phrase or sentence. Don't use ellipses to change the intent of the original source.

Use the symbol for the ellipsis rather than a string of full stops. Use a single space before and after each ellipsis.

[Further Reference](#)

Full Stops

Full stops are used to mark the end of a sentence. They should also be used after the abbreviations e.g. and ie. in normal text.

For example, there are many government departments, e.g. Child Safety and Communities.

Full stops should never be used:

- at the end of bullet points that are not complete sentences;
- at the end of titles, headings or sub-headings;
- after captions that are not complete sentences;
- after dates or signatures;
- within or after abbreviations or contractions; or
- after the symbols for units of measurement or currency.

[Further Reference](#)

Headings

When developing headings and sub-headings, it is important to **use sentence case**. Entire headings should not be in upper case. Only proper nouns should be capitalised in a heading.

Example

Incorrect headings:

CHAPLAIN'S BREAKFAST CLUB HELPS CHILDREN

Chaplain's Breakfast Club Helps Children

Chaplain's breakfast club helps children

Correct heading:

Chaplain's Breakfast Club helps children

In this example 'Breakfast Club' is a proper noun and is capitalised.

[Further Reference](#)

Hyphenation

The hyphen (-) is a short horizontal mark to connect words and syllables.

Most words with prefixes do not require a hyphen.

e.g. 'cooperate', 'coordinate', 'reorganise', 'unnatural'

Exceptions

- If the **meaning of the word is ambiguous** e.g. 're-sign' not 'resign'
- An **uncommon word with a double vowel** e.g. 're-enter'
- A **prefix and a capital letter or number** e.g. 'un-Australian', 'pre-1945'

- **Adjective compounds** or other words made up of two or more words e.g. 'the decision-making process' (but not 'your decision making is important') or 'owner-operator'
- A number **made up of two words** e.g. 'seventy-two'
- **Words beginning with 'self' or 'ill'** e.g. 'self-esteem', 'self-disciplined', 'ill-advised', ill-equipped'.

At the end of a line, avoid hyphenated wordbreaks. Take a word to the next line rather than breaking it, even in justified text.

[*See the Glossary of Misused or Misspelt Words for more information.*](#)

[Further Reference](#)

Internet Terms

Use the following expressions:

- email (no hyphen)
- PowerPoint (one word, capital 'P')
- Google (name of the search engine) vs google (adjective e.g. 'google a word')
- internet/intranet (lower case 'i')
- the web (lowercase 'w')
- website (one word).

Email addresses must be expressed carefully, as many addresses are case sensitive.

Italics

Italics should be used for full titles of books, plays, films, radio, publications and television programs

e.g. *The Book Thief*

e.g. *Financial Review*

e.g. *The Australian*

Other uses include:

- names of programs, eg. *Shine*, *Breakfast Club*, *Hope Reins*, *SU QLD-Schoolies*
- in some of our publications, calls to action are written in italics
- to emphasise some words, eg. "In the community, *for* the community"

Please note that articles within a publication should be named in quotes.

e.g. "Our God is faithful," *Southern Cross Magazine*

[Further Reference](#)

Lists (bullet points)

Lists can be created using bullet points, dashes or numbering. What is critical is the consistency across a document.

If each entry is a short sentence in itself, it should start with a capital letter and end with a full stop.

Example

The committee came to several important conclusions:

- Officers from the department should investigate the feasibility of legislated guidelines.
- Research should be funded in each area.

If the list runs on from a lead-in sentence in the text, each line should open with a lowercase letter and no punctuation after each sentence fragment – the last line ending with a full stop to conclude the extended sentence.

Example

Assistance is available in the following forms:

- monetary assistance
- equipment or environmental modifications
- advisory services.

Use numbers if the number of points are mentioned

e.g. 'this paragraph outlines three factors', followed by 1., 2., 3. in list form.

[Further Reference](#)

Numbers

- **Express numbers in words from one to ten**, and numbers thereafter, except when used, for example, in Year 1, Term 2, etc.
- Use numerals for **money, ages, times, dates and specific measures**.
- Use words **when a number or amount begins a sentence**
e.g. 'Twelve students attended class that day.'

- **Larger numbers use a space** rather than a comma
e.g. 56 789 345 birds NOT 56,789,345 birds

- **For spans of numbers** use the following:

1998–99	NOT	1998–9
1998–2001	NOT	1998–01
135–139 Davey St	NOT	135–9 Davey St

- **Expressions of numbers** with measures and symbols should be used in the following ways:

\$356 or 75c	(no space between currency symbol and number)
45°	(no space between measurement symbol and number)
1:50 000	(no space with colons in ratios)
25%	(no space between percentage symbol and number)
500 kg or 20 mm	(one space between measurement symbol and number)
15 x 3 = 45	(one space between mathematical symbols and number)

- See '[Times](#)' and '[Dates](#)' for other number expressions.

[Further Reference](#)

Plurals

Add '-es' to form the plural of names that end in 's':

e.g. 'the **Hayneses**', 'the **Prinses**', the **Douglasses**', 'the **Parsonses**'

(if this looks strange, write 'the **Haynes family**', 'the **Prins family**' etc)

Prepositions

Prepositions show the relationship of a noun to another word (e.g. under/before)

In most cases, **avoid ending sentences with prepositions.**

Example

‘She is not achieving the result **of** which she is capable’

NOT ‘She is not achieving the result she is capable **of**.’

Exceptions

However, the following example may sound better to end with a preposition:

‘This is the man I told you **about**,’ rather than ‘This is the man **about** whom I told you.’

Judgement needs to be exercised here; the style should remain formal without sounding stiff or awkward.

Do not use **unnecessary prepositions**

e.g. ‘The man descended **down** the ladder.’ ‘Down’ is unnecessary.

[Further Reference](#)

Qualifications

These are set out without full stops, e.g. BEd, BTeach, BEc, DipEd, MA.

Quotation Marks

Type		Usage	Example
Single quote mark	'...'	Use single quotation marks where no-one is actually speaking, e.g. uncommon or jargon words or phrases, highlighting words, titles of chapters etc.	He lives in the 'Bible belt'.
Double Quotation marks	"..."	Use double quotation marks when the words are spoken.	"The commission is a great place to work," she said.
Quotation marks	"...".	If a fragment (not a whole sentence) is quoted, the final full stop should be placed outside the closing quotation mark .	David explained, "The role of the day was to train people in music ministry".
Quotation Marks	"...".	If the entire sentence is a quotation, the final full stop should be placed inside the closing quotation mark .	"It takes a village to raise a child."
single quote within quotation marks	'... "b". ... c'.	use single quotation marks when quoting within a quote.	"Our Bishop spoke to us and said something like 'no pressure, but it's you or no one because we don't have anyone else to send,'" says Pato.
Quotation marks	".... "... ".	if quoting a large section of text begin each paragraph with a new quotation mark but only close the quotation marks at the end.	Bishop Garba says he is "grateful to God for counting us worthy. "This is a Muslim state with a few Christians. "Where we are doing our mission work is predominantly an animistic area full of traditionalists."

When quoting direct speech, take great care to be accurate. Writers and publishers have been sued for inaccurate quotations attributed as direct speech.

[Further Reference](#)

Referencing

Use the Harvard (Author–Date) System of referencing.

- **Reference at the end of a sentence**

e.g. 'The theory was first developed by Browne (Gibbs 1981).'

- **Reference in the middle of a sentence**

e.g. 'Gibbs (1981, p. 89) states that Browne was the first to develop the theory of...'

- **Reference when citing a direct quotation**

e.g. '... Australia is a settler society (Hudson & Bolton 1997, p. 9).

- **List of References**

The List of References in the Harvard system is a single list of all the books, journal articles and other sources you have referred to throughout a publication or assignment. A list of references should be laid out alphabetically by author surname and include details such as author/editor, year of publication, title, edition, place of publication and publisher as found on the front and back of the title page.

[Further Reference](#)

Semicolons – (;)

The semicolon is used to **separate parts of a sentence** that are too closely related to be broken into two sentences.

e.g. 'We expect ministerial approval next week; the work can then start immediately.'

Semi-colons may also be used to **punctuate run-on lists** with internal commas.

e.g. 'Participants came from Benalla, Victoria; Wellington, New South Wales; and Longford, Tasmania.'

[Further Reference](#)

Shortened forms

The preference is to spell out content in full. If space is limited, however, the following shortened forms are accepted and written as follows

Shortened form	Meaning
c.	circa
ch.	chapter
e.g.	for example
et al.	and others
etc.	and so forth, and so on
i.e.	that is
NB	take careful note
p	page
pp	pages
PS	postscript
v.	verse
vs	versus

[Further Reference](#)

Spacing

Use single spacing between sentences.

Spelling

- Follow spelling for **Australian English**, not American English.
- Use ***The Macquarie Dictionary*** as your authority for spelling.
- **Use 's' not 'z'**, e.g. organisation NOT organization, analyse NOT analyze.
- Use the **'—ise' ending**, not '—ize'.

[See the Glossary of Misused or Misspelt Words for more information.](#)

Suffixes

Spell all words with ‘-ise’, ‘-isation’, ‘-ising’, not ‘-ize’ where these are suffixes; e.g. organise, specialise, recognise.

Telephone Numbers

Phone/fax numbers use the following format and spacing:

04xx xxx xxx (mobile)

02 xxxx xxxx within Australia (no parentheses needed for area code)

+61 2 xxxx xxxx for international correspondence.

[Further Reference](#)

Tense

The verb and its subject must agree in number.

Examples

Her effort **has** been commendable.

Her efforts **have** been commendable.

Her effort to complete homework and do all work in class **has** been commendable.

Her completion of homework and her diligence in class **have** been commendable.

(Notice in example 3 the subject is ‘effort’ but in example 4, ‘completion and diligence’ is the subject.)

The range of mountains **is** quite diverse.

Exceptions

When a collective noun refers to many individuals (‘notional agreement’) the tense is plural.

e.g. ‘The police **have been** notified.’

[Further Reference](#)

Times

- Use the 12-hour system (except when quoting flight hours)

e.g. '9.15 am' or '9.00 am to 5.00 pm'

- Use a full stop (not a colon) between the hours and minutes

e.g. 9.00 am NOT 9:00 am

- No full stops in 'am' or 'pm', just use a space.

Two zeros indicate hours but are not essential, e.g. 9.00 am or 9 am

- For decades, no apostrophe is needed, e.g. 1990s NOT 1990's

- No full stop needed in AD or BC (just a space), e.g. 50 BC.

See comments under the headings 'Dates' and 'Numbers' for more examples.

[Further Reference](#)

Titles

Titles of books and newspapers are italicised, not underlined.

e.g. 'The class studied *Pride and Prejudice* on Tuesday.'

[Further Reference](#)

Glossary of commonly misused or misspelt words

Use the Macquarie Dictionary to refer to any words not featured in this list.

Correct Usage	Example of Usage
A	
accommodate	
'affect' (v) as opposed to 'effect' (n)	
analyse	not 'analyze'
At Risk Youth	'At-Risk Youth'; 'the children are at-risk'
B	
backup	
Beach Mission	
behaviour	
Bible	not 'bible'
Bible college	not Bible College (unless part of name 'Sydney Missionary and Bible College')
biblical	not 'Biblical'
C	
centre	not 'center'
chaplain vs Chaplain	use capital letter if part of a title 'Chaplain Susan Smith' otherwise just use lowercase 'chaplain'
chaplaincy vs Chaplaincy	use capital letter if referring to the program e.g. 'The School Chaplaincy program has been beneficial' otherwise just use lowercase 'chaplaincy'.
Christ	
Christian	
Christmas time	
church vs Church	'We partner with the local church' (lowercase) 'The Anglican Church' (capitalise)
classroom	one word

committee	
consensus	
cooperate	no hyphen
coordinator	no hyphen
Anglican Church or worldwide Church	
D	
definite	
dependant vs dependent	dependant (noun) - someone who relies on another dependent (adjective), usually followed by 'on' - e.g. 'He is dependent on his parents'
disappoint	
E	
Easter	
'Effect' vs 'affect'	effect (noun) - 'it will have an effect on him' affect (verb)
email	
enquire	not inquire
extraordinary	
F	
familiarise	
focused	not focussed
fulfil	
full-time vs full time	full-time work, full-time employee (when adjective modifies the noun) vs 'he works full time'
G	
gauge	
God	
God's word or	

word of God	
(the) Good News	when referring to the message about Jesus
gospel	when referring generically to the message about Jesus e.g. 'We need to reach out with the gospel'
Gospel of John	when referring to the four narratives in the Bible about Jesus.
H	
Heaven / Hell	capitalise Heaven or Hell when referring to the place use lowercase 'heavens' when generically to the sky - e.g. 'The heavens declare the glory of God'
he, him, his, you	when referring to God, use lowercase for pronouns
however	however, she didn't sleep well. she did listen, however, to her parents.
humorous	
I	
initiative	
inquire use 'enquire'	
internet	
its vs it's	its = belonging to something it's = it is.
J	
Jesus	
judgement	not 'judgment'
K	
kingdom of God	
L	
learned	not learnt
liaison	

Lord	
M	
maintenance	
mischievous	
Mothers' Day / Fathers' Day	not Mother's Day or Mothers Day
N	
naïve	
O	
occasion	
omission	
organisation	
P	
pastor	
Pastor Bill Smith	
PowerPoint	
practice vs practise	practice (noun) = 'Jill need practice' practise (verb) 'Jill need to practise'
privilege	
program	not 'programme'
Q	
Qur'an	
R	
recommend	
reverend	
Reverend Bill Smith	
rhythm	

roadshow	
S	
Saviour	capitalise when talking about Jesus
Scripture	
self-esteem	
semester	'this semester'
Semester 1	not 'Semester One' or 'semester 1'
separate	
Sunday school	not Sunday School
T	
term	
Term 1	
tomorrow	
U	
uninterested	Means 'bored' or 'unconcerned'. Often confused with 'disinterested' meaning 'impartial/unbiased'
W	
website, webpage	one word
weird	
well mannered vs well-mannered	well mannered = noun 'She is well mannered' well-mannered = adjective 'She is a well-mannered girl'
who withhold or that	Use 'who' for persons, 'that' for things
wilful	
Y	
Year 8	not 'Year 8' or 'year 8'

Childsafe

On our social media, we've referred to Childsafe as an 'SU Australia Family Member.' This phrasing can be used in Christian/church contexts. Otherwise, we can refer to them as 'partners.'