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I  Introduction

This style guide is for editors at Maastricht University (UM). It may also be of use to communications and other staff who regularly write documents in English, and editors at other Dutch universities. We have tried to cover the most common issues that arise in the Dutch university setting, using localised examples as far as possible. Note, however, that for academic papers being submitted to journals you will need to refer to their spelling and referencing styles; information on gender-inclusive and nonsexist language is not included here but is available on request.

This is a living document, and it will change. In all cases we have tried to use the most ‘progressive’ forms of usage to fit with UM’s desired profile, and to ensure that this document stays current as long as possible. Moreover, we envisage ‘international’ English as requiring as few rules or exceptions as possible to minimise idiosyncrasies for our non-native-speaking writers and readers. This manifests itself in several ways: while we opt for recognisably British spelling, we use the US variants where they are more regularised; in other cases (e.g. punctuation) we choose the option which is the same as or closest to Dutch.

This document first sets out the usual editing procedure used in the UM Translation and Editing Department. It then provides guidelines for dealing with the most regular types of information and documents. A section on the mechanics of editorial style follows, and finally a brief usage guide.

Thanks go to Corien Gijsbers and Casey Odell for their input. Comments and suggestions from editors and other staff are more than welcome: please send them to alison.edwards@languages.unimaas.nl.

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October 2008
II Editing procedure

Edit with the adversarial client in mind. This helps you think consciously about how you would justify your changes – and the best way to do that is to know you have support of established style guides. At UM the two most important are the European Commission style guide¹ and the Oxford Guide to Style² – these are must-reads. The Publication manual of the American Psychological Association (APA) is useful to have on hand for its referencing style, while useful usage guides include anything from the Plain Language campaign³ (but try to choose UK sources). Use the latest Oxford dictionary for spelling.

1 Make sure you have the track changes on (set to hide, if you prefer) and the language set to UK English.

2 Copyedit the entire document: this is a sentence-level edit in which you fix grammar, spelling, punctuation, capitalisation, word choice, references and so on. Highlight anything you cannot resolve immediately to come back to later.

3 Structural edit and proofread
   a. If you have not already, hide (but do not turn off) the track changes so they do not distract you.
   b. Go through the document a second time to structural edit. This involves taking a broader approach to aim for overall cohesion: adding connectors, splitting or joining paragraphs, comparing heading and citation styles, deleting or synthesising repeated information and logically restructuring.
   c. Deal with any parts you highlighted earlier.
   d. Check the spelling and wording of all proper names. Add any new proper names or other useful words to the word list appendixed to this style guide.
   e. Use comments to suggest changes if you are doubtful about whether to make the change yourself, or to ask questions of the author if the meaning is ambiguous – in which case, always provide a few options for the author to choose from.

In most cases you will do a to e and proofread (look for remaining typographical errors, run a spell check, etc.) at the same time. If you have more time and the client has explicitly asked for perfection, you can separate the structural editing and proofreading stages.

4 When you are finished, add your initials to the file name and record how long you spent on the document. A good average for editing is about 1500 words per hour. This might go up to 2000 or more for excellent documents, or down to 1000 for very ordinary ones. Be sure to also record any time you spend researching (the

³ www.plainenglish.co.uk
referring style, technical vocabulary etc.). You can charge this to the client within reason; however, if you spend time looking for something not strictly required for the text at hand but you think would be handy to know for the future, record it on your timesheet as ‘research’ but do not charge it to the client.
III  Document types

1  Journal articles

When you edit academic or scientific papers intended for publication, find out which journal the client is submitting too. You can then search the internet for the relevant submission guidelines/instructions for authors to check

- whether to use UK or US spelling
- the word count and required subheadings for the abstract
- the word count for the body text
- the referencing style. The two most common are APA and Vancouver. Having sources for these styles at hand is useful, but usually the journal itself will also provide a short sample reference list. You will often find small discrepancies between this list and the versions set out in the manuals. In such cases, copy the style on the journal website; this can give the journal editors no cause to complain.

Print the submission guidelines for each journal your clients submit to and archive the hardcopy. This will save you having to search for it again.

1.1  Terminology

Particularly in scientific writing, you will often come across vocabulary and grammar that seem odd to a nonspecialist. Always look up such cases on the internet (use the advanced search option to specify a country if necessary), because all disciplines have their idiosyncrasies. Having said that, if you find no instances of the word or phrase used in this way, it is likely a learner error rather than specialist usage. If you are really unsure, leave a comment in the text asking for clarification (and be sure to supply a few alternatives).

Use of the first person in academic texts is becoming more common and even encouraged, not least because one, this author, this researcher and other circumlocutions can sound pretentious and old fashioned, while writing around I and we often leads to passivity and wordiness. Do not deliberately impose the first person in all academic texts, but note that there is no real need to eliminate it either.

If a particular document reports the findings of more than one study, use an initial capital for Study 1, Study 2, etc. Likewise, write Experiment 4, Trial 5 and so on (but phase II trial).

1.2  Tenses

Pay attention to the tenses used in each section of academic papers. Try to follow the guidelines below.

- Introduction and outline (metalanguage in)\(^4\)

  Simple present:
  
  This paper investigates ...

---

\(^4\) The language we use when we write about our own writing or thinking.' Williams, J.M. (1995). Style: toward clarity and grace (p. 53). Chicago: University of Chicago Press
Chapter 2 deals with...

- Literature review
  
  *Simple past* (specified date):
  
  Van Rijn (2008) showed that...

  *Present perfect* (unspecified date to present):
  
  Studies have shown that...

  *Simple present* (established knowledge):
  
  Cancer is treated using...

- Method and results

  *Simple past*:
  
  The interviews were held...
  
  Incidence decreased...

- Discussion and conclusions

  *Simple present*:
  
  These findings suggest that...

- Tables and figures

  *Simple present*:
  
  Table 1 shows that...
  
  Figure 4 presents...

1.3 *Italics*

*Use italics*

- to set off items on a scale:
  
  The items ranged from 1 (*totally disagree*) to 5 (*totally agree*)

- for letters used as statistical symbols or algebraic variables:
  
  \[ t \text{ test: } t(75) = 3.11 \]
  
  \[ F \text{ test: } F(1, 53) = 10.03 \]
  
  \[ p = .03 \]
  
  \[ M = 3.45 \]
  
  \[ SD = 7 \]

1.4 *Symbols*

In text use spaces between symbols like +, -, =, <, > and \( \times \) to make them easier to read.

\[
\begin{align*}
  a + b &= c \\
  a &> b \\
  (a + b)/(c + d) \\
  10 \times 20 \text{ km} \\
  N &= 10,430 \\
  n &= 700
\end{align*}
\]

Note that the uppercase \( N \) signifies the whole sample, while the lowercase \( n \) is for groups within the sample (e.g. men, unemployed, smokers).

In tables, where space is tight, close symbols up to letters or numbers before and after them.
1.5  *Tables and figures*

Retain the client’s layout in tables and figures. If it is particularly poor, refer to the relevant sections in either the Oxford or APA manual, and provide suggestions in comments. You can edit the headings and data as set out in IV.11. TABLES & FIGURES.
2 Legal documents

Legal documents can be more difficult to edit than others because of the weight attached to precision. This may require, for example, leaving repeated nouns which you might otherwise replace with pronouns. But as your aim with all documents will be for clarity, there is no need substantially to change your approach here. Delete needless words as usual and untangle complex chunks to make them digestible. Garner\(^5\) points out that you should ‘draft for an ordinary reader, not for a mythical judge who might someday review the document.’ Writing for the reader helps prevent documents being litigated; writing for the judge only helps in the worst-case scenario of actual litigation (and fewer than 1% of legal documents are ever subjected to this).

2.1 Capitalisation

Capitalise articles, laws, acts and conventions (but not paragraphs) on specific references, but lowercase them for general references or those in any configuration other than the proper name.

- as referred to in Article 7.12 (4) of the Dutch Higher Education and Scientific Research Act (WHW)
- as referred to in all three higher education and research acts
- subject to the conditions set out in Article 2, paragraph 4, of the Collective Labour Agreement of Dutch Universities (CAO-NU)
- subject to the conditions of the Dutch universities’ labour agreement
- stipulated in articles 11 to 14 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)
- a number of UN conventions deal with children’s and women’s rights

2.2 Treaty names

In both legal and non-legal texts (but not legislation) you need only use the short names of treaties.

- EC Treaty → According to Article 78(2) EC, ...
- Euratom Treaty → Under Article 13(3) Euratom, first subparagraph ...
- Maastricht Treaty → As stated in Article 2 EU, ...

2.3 Italics

Legal documents often include lots of Latin loanwords. Italicise them if they are still seen as foreign, but not if they are in common English use (see IV.3.1. FOREIGN WORDS IN COMMON ENGLISH USE) unless they appear close to one which must be italicised.

Also italicise the names of parties in legal cases, e.g. Bakker v. Van Rijn (but note that the v. between them is set in roman type).

2.4 Words and phrases

Ease the burden on readers of legal documents by replacing legal jargon and archaic words with everyday words as far as possible. Words like henceforth, heretofore, and wherein

‘were perky in Shakespeare’s time, but they are no longer in common-enough use that they instantly convey our intent’.  


Likewise, remove unnecessary phrases and split up long sentences to make them more readable.

The electives may be earned by students by taking a course from another master’s programme at any other faculty or university provided that a proposal to that effect is submitted to the Education Desk for approval by the Director of Studies by means of a learning agreement (in accordance with the procedure governing the study period abroad of the IRO).

→ Students may take their electives elsewhere if they submit a learning agreement to the Education Desk in line with the IRO’s study abroad procedure, and if the Director of Studies approves this agreement.

Be wary of the ambiguity of *shall*: in legal writing it is supposed to mean ‘has a duty to’ but courts have variously ruled it as meaning *must, may, will and is*. US states have begun systematically replacing it in legal documents with *must* (for requirements) and *will or agrees to* (for contractual promises).

Encourage the client to minimise definitions and use informative headings for sections and articles rather than numbers alone (this makes it easier for readers to scan to the relevant section.

We use the following set phrases for appeals information and disclaimers.

- Pursuant to the General Administrative Law Act, you may lodge a complaint with the Executive Board against this decision within six weeks.

- Although this brochure was made with the utmost care, no rights can be derived from it.
3 Letters and emails

In letters and emails get to the point right away: readers want to know immediately why you have contacted them. Refer to yourself and your department/organisation in the first person – it will be clear from the address on your letter or below your email signature who you are. Aim for at most three or four sentences per paragraph.

3.1 Salutations

Dear student,

→ Best regards,

Dear Ms/Mr ...,

→ Yours sincerely,

The practice of using full names is also becoming increasingly common, to avoid the gender-specific Mr/Ms.

Dear Jannie Hanssen,

→ Yours sincerely,

In extremely formal letters when you do not know the recipients' names, you can use

Dear Sir/Madam,

→ Yours faithfully,

3.2 Openers

In response to your email of 15 April, ...

Thank you for applying for our course in ...

This is to inform you that ...

Thank you for your enquiry of 22 August.

Further to our telephone conversation, ...

I am pleased to inform you that ...

3.2 Closers

Please contact us if you have questions.

I trust this information is sufficient.

I would be grateful if you could forward me ...

We trust that you will give this matter your immediate attention.

If in the meantime you have already paid, please ignore this letter.

We look forward to seeing you then.
4 Meeting minutes

Use the following subheadings to open your meeting minutes:

- Date
- Location
- Present
- Absent/apologies

For the minutes proper, number each agenda item (and the subtopics within them) and highlight the action to be taken. A useful way of doing this is to use columns with the following subheadings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Situation, decision, results</th>
<th>Action by</th>
<th>When</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Classroom availability</td>
<td>Because more classes are running this year, we need to find more rooms to house them. Need to look into leasing rooms from local businesses.</td>
<td>Julia</td>
<td>1 Dec</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unlike in Dutch, write meeting minutes just as you would reported speech in English:

- am/are becomes was/were
- was/were becomes had been
- will becomes would.

Director: I am satisfied with the plans
   → The director said she was satisfied with the plans

Geert: I was ill last week
   → Geert said he had been ill the previous week

Chair: We have been looking into new assessment methods
   → The chair said they had been looking into new assessment methods

Investor: I will transfer the money
   → The investor said she would transfer the money

Spokesperson: We are satisfied the matter has been resolved
   → The spokesperson said they were satisfied the matter had been resolved

Department head: The management team will be looking into it
   → The department head said the finance team would be looking into it/would look into it

Jana: I would have finished the proposal but I ran out of time
   → Jana said she would have finished the proposal but she had run out of time

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8 Dutch business reports and meeting minutes tend to be written in the present tense, e.g. ‘In 2002 the following plants are introduced.’ Burrough-Boenisch, J. (1998). Righting English that’s gone Dutch (p. 93). The Hague: Kemper Conseil Publishing
5 Promotional material

Promotional material can include brochures, flyers, internal communication emails and website copy (see also 7. WEB-RELATED COPY). At the Language Centre and elsewhere in the university, we use it most often to advertise our educational products and attract visitors to events.

The most important principle of copywriting or editing promotional material – and one of the main tenets of the Plain Language campaign – is to address the reader directly. This has the most immediate impact, and helps you avoid abstract, vague writing as well as the need to use gender specific terms.9 Combine it with the present tense wherever possible.

Students will learn to combine theory with practice.
→ You learn to combine theory with practice.

The objective is to provide the participants with the professional knowledge, practical skills and decision-making competences which are necessary for the execution of management tasks.
→ The aim is to provide you with the professional knowledge, practical skills and decision-making competences you need to carry out your management tasks.

The Problem-Based Learning (PBL) study method provides students with a thorough knowledge base and is very effective in preparing them for their later professional careers.
→ Problem-Based Learning (PBL) provides you with a thorough knowledge base and effective preparation for your career.

Also use this technique in any documents that specifically address students, staff, or particular groups of them (such as instructions for handing in papers, calling in sick etc.).

Students must submit their papers at the front office before 23 July.
→ Submit your paper at the front office before 23 July.

International students with a non-EU/EEA nationality who will be doing a traineeship as part of their studies in the Netherlands do not need a work permit anymore.
→ If you do not have EU/EEA citizenship and will do a traineeship as part of your studies in the Netherlands, you no longer need a work permit.

In the case that an employee has a complaint about an incident that took place at a faculty, s/he should submit this complaint in writing to the dean.
→ To complain about an incident that took place at your faculty, submit a written complaint to the dean.

Likewise, do not be afraid of using the first person. You can certainly use ‘we‘ to mean your client’s office, department, faculty or the university, provided the reference is clear.

To make your document look readable, use lots of white space, split up long paragraphs, and use bullet lists where you can.

The course fee can be paid by students in person at the Language Centre by bank or credit card (payments by cash are no longer possible). They also have the option of transferring the fee to the Language Centre bank account. It is necessary for use that the students mention the course code and participant name when

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making the payment. Extra charges for international bank transfers from abroad are to be covered by the participant. Students can also pay by internal transfer using one of the following LC order numbers, stating the participant’s name and course code: 5010NL for Dutch language courses or 1020EN for English language courses.

→ You can pay the course fee:

• at the Language Centre by bank or credit card
• by bank transfer (you will need to pay any international transfer charges)
• by internal transfer using order number 5010NL (Dutch courses) or 1020EN (English courses).

For bank and internal transfers please state the course code and participant name.
6.1 Courses, programmes and exams

Lowercase bachelor’s and master’s unless used in an official degree name, and always use the possessive apostrophe.

- a bachelor’s programme
- the master’s thesis

The faculty has 700 bachelor’s and 400 master’s students

Use initial capitals for the official names of UM degree programmes, but lowercase references to general fields of study.

- BSc in Health Sciences
  - She is a third-year Health Sciences student
  - This is a common occurrence in the health sciences
- Master of Arts in European Public Affairs
  - He is studying European Public Affairs
  - European public affairs are becoming increasingly complex
- The Master in Media Culture is unique in Europe
  - The master’s programme in Media Culture is unique in Europe

Also use initial capitals for the names of courses and exams.

- She has signed up for Advanced Speaking Skills
- Intellectual Property Law starts on September 1
- The Cambridge First Certificate examination is held in Eindhoven
- The Health Services Innovation exam has been cancelled

6.2 Lectures and conferences

Use initial capitals for the names of conferences and symposia.

- Maastricht Behavioural and Experimental Economics Symposium
- 5th Conference on Computers and Games (CG2006)
- International Conference on Factor Structures for Panel and Multivariate Time Series Data
- 1st International Conference on Human–Robot Personal Relationships

Also use initial capitals for each word in the names of lecture series. For individual lectures, use an initial capital for the worst word only, and set the title in single quotation marks.

- The Science in the Modern World lecture series starts on Tuesday
- The first lecture in the Party Drugs series will be ‘Imaging the effects of ecstasy in the brain’
- The closing Pfizer series lecture was ‘Genome approaches to complex cardiovascular traits’

6.3 Positions

Too many capitals can make job names look pretentious and dated. Reserve them only for positions of extreme importance (Prime Minister Balkenende, Chancellor Merkel) and actual titles (i.e. honorifics: Professor Kools, Dr Jakobs). Minimise them in university positions by separating the job name from the personal name and using it descriptively.

- the dean, Dr Mieke Gijsbers, ...
- Franka Bruns, president of the Executive Board, ...
vice chair of the Examination Committee, Daan Visser, ...
Professor Jelle de Bruin, director of the institute, ...
the treasurer, Femke Janssen, ...
the newspaper’s editor in chief, Jannie Hiddinck, ...

Use the following pattern for academic chairs and professor-, lecture- and fellowships. Note that we use the British terms lecturer and senior lecturer (not assistant professor and associate professor).

the Geert Hofstede Chair on Cultural Diversity
Dr Michael van Asselt, special chair in European Institutions
Professor Lisa Bongaerts, chair of European Legal History
Miep Meltzer, professor of Comparative Literature
Lisa Waddington, Extraordinary Professor of European Disability Law
a lecturer in European and Comparative Law
the senior lecturer in Preventative Mental Healthcare
a research fellow at the Maastricht Centre for Human Rights
the Marie Curie fellow at the Centre of European Law and Politics (ZERP)

The teaching position below that of a lecturer is a tutor; reserve teacher for school teachers. Also, do not refer to staff as faculty. This is jargon, and can be confusing if you need to refer to an actual faculty in the same sentence.

Positions are normally expressed in full-time equivalents (fte) in the Netherlands. This is less widespread elsewhere, especially in English-speaking countries. In documents intended for non-Dutch readerships, provide a conversion into hours per week.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FTE</th>
<th>Hours per Week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.0 (38 hours per week)</td>
<td>0.5 (19 hours per week)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.8 (32 hours per week)</td>
<td>0.2 (8 hours per week)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.4 Titles
Dutch tends to use more honorifics than is usual in English; their overuse in English can look pretentious. There are two categories: social and academic titles.

6.4.1 Social titles
The only acceptable social titles are Mr and Ms. Reserve these only for letter salutations – in the vast majority of documents they can be omitted with no loss of courtesy or authority.

Dear Mrs Bakker, ...
→ Dear Ms Bakker, ...

Contact Ms van Kampen on 85132
→ Contact Katja van Kampen on 85132

Submit your paper to Mr G. Hagen
→ Submit your paper to Gerard Hagen

I would like to welcome Miss Prins to our team.
→ I would like to welcome Iris Prins to our team.

6.4.2 Academic titles
The only two academic titles in English are Dr and Prof. These need only appear on first reference to the person in a given document (unless the references are separated by many

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10 See ‘Nonsexist language reform in ESL institutions: Guidelines for gender-neutral language use at Maastricht University’ (2008; available from author)
pages, in which case you can repeat them). Write out Professor in running text. If the person referred to has no academic title, refer to them by full name on first reference and last name only on second and subsequent references.

Dr Grietje van Rijn has been awarded a Vici grant from KNAW. Van Rijn received the award for her research into...

Professor Odin Harmers and his team have discovered a new biomarker in the fight against heart infarctions. ‘It’s a great find’, says Harmers.

Faculty of Law student Monique Viviers has led the moot court team to victory. Viviers went up against last year’s winner from Luxembourg, ...

Avoid titles not normally used in English,\textsuperscript{11} e.g. drs., ir., mr., as few non-Dutch readers will know what they mean. Even if your text is for internal use only, keep in mind that over 30% of the university population is from abroad, and replace them with a suitable English equivalent.

\begin{tabular}{ll}

Drs. K. Molenaar & $\rightarrow$ K. Molenaar, MSc/MA \\
Mr. Johann Smeets & $\rightarrow$ Johann Smeets, LLB \\
Ir. Eefke Konijn & $\rightarrow$ Eefke Konijn, MSc
\end{tabular}

But be aware that degree abbreviations in English usually only appear when it is essential that the qualification be known (e.g. on a business card).

If no suitable abbreviation can be agreed upon (as is sometimes the case for people who graduated before the BA/MA system was implemented in the Netherlands), use the Dutch title but emphasise to the client that this could obscure their true qualifications. Italicise it to show that it is not an English word and stop titles like mr. and drs. being mistaken for spelling errors.\textsuperscript{12}

Likewise, avoid transferring multiple titles (e.g. Prof. Dr) from Dutch\textsuperscript{13}; usually English only takes the highest. If it is essential, put the degree abbreviation after the name.

Prof. Dr. A Janssen $\rightarrow$ Prof. A. Janssen, PhD

\subsection*{6.5 Faculties, departments and other bodies}

Use initial capitals for the official names of institutes, centres, committees, faculties, departments and so on. Lowercase them when you refer to them by just a descriptor. Follow the pattern below for other configurations, e.g. plurals.

- Maastricht University
  $\rightarrow$ the university, Maastricht and Leiden universities
- The Randwyck Learning and Resource Centre
  $\rightarrow$ the centre, the learning and resource centres in Randwyck and the inner city
- The Student Introduction Committee
  $\rightarrow$ the committee, the Student Introduction and the Orientation Week committees

\textsuperscript{11} E.g. European Commission Directorate-General for Translation (2007). English style guide: a handbook for authors and translators in the European Commission (5\textsuperscript{th} edn, p. 49)
the Executive Board
→ the board; the Executive, Faculty and Library boards

Use these guidelines for departments and faculties.

the Department of History
→ the department, the history department, the history and philosophy departments, the departments of History and Philosophy

the Department of Pathology, the Department of Anatomy and Embriology, and the Department of Phramacology and Toxicology
→ the departments of Pathology; Anatomy and Embriology; and Phramacology and Toxicology

the Faculty of Law
→ the faculty, the law faculty, the law and psychology faculties, the faculties of Law and Psychology

the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, the Faculty of Law, and the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration
→ the faculties of Arts and Social Sciences, Law, and Economics and Business Administration

the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences and the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration
→ the faculties of Arts & Social Sciences and Economics & Business Administration

See also IV.2.4. CAPITALISATION: COMPANIES, INSTITUTIONS & ORGANISATIONS

6.6 Rooms, lecture halls and buildings
Keep capitals to a minimum in the names of rooms, lecture halls and buildings.

Her office is in room 402
You can find us in room 0.034
The lecture will be in the Blauwe zaal
The Karl Dittrich zaal is free then
It starts in lecture hall A-101 at 19.30 sharp
The cafeteria is in the UNS40 building
The C-building is closed for renovation
We are located at SSK39
Write website copy using the same principles as for promotional material: directly address your reader wherever possible, and use short sentences and paragraphs. Your reader should not have to scroll too much, so use bookmarks or split long texts over several linked pages.

7.1 **Commands/instructions**
Use initial capitals for all words indicating keys, boxes, buttons, tabs, icons, menus and menu items, and drives.

- Press the Home key to move the cursor to the start of the line.
- In the Customise Toolbar box, click on Add New Toolbar.
- Select the Settings button.
- In the Audio tab, set the volume to mute.
- Right click the Scense icon and select Open Scense.
- Go to the File menu and select Open.
- Double click on the I: or J: drive, depending on where you want to save your work.

If any of the above has four or more words, use an initial capital for the first word only and set the phrase in single inverted commas.

- In the Time Zone box, select ‘Automatically adjust clock for daylight saving changes’.
- Under ‘Add or remove programs’, click on ‘Set program access and defaults’.

You can also use the > sign to indicate sequential steps. Here you do not need inverted commas for longer commands; because you are not using full sentences between the symbols, it is clear that all words belong to the command.

- For more information, go to Help > Guided Tour
- Go to Start > Control Panel > Accessibility Options > Show extra keyboard help in programs

Use + to indicate that keys must be pressed simultaneously.

- Press Ctrl+A to select all text.
- If the screen freezes, press Ctrl+Alt+Del.

7.2 **Web and email addresses**
To insert web and email addresses in digital documents

- add a hyperlink over the relevant word(s)
- use a full stop after a hyperlink only if it appears in a full sentence in running text.

The exams are organised externally by the [British Council](http://www.britishcouncil.org).
More information is available via the [Complaints Committee](http://www.complaintscommittee.org).
For an appointment, contact Careers Services counsellor [Jeanne Bruin](mailto:jeanne.bruin@university.com).
Send your suggestions to the [translations department](mailto:translationsdepartment@university.com).
Contact Marianne de Beurs by [email](mailto:marianne.debeurs@university.com) or phone 87398.
Dick Kraft: 043 887 398/[email](mailto:dick.kraft@university.com)

In hardcopy documents

- try to put web and email addresses that appear in body text in parentheses so they do not interrupt flow
- use lowercase letters and underline the address
- do not include the prefix http://, as it is added automatically by internet browsers
use a full stop after an address only if it appears in a full sentence in running text.

The exams are organised externally by the British Council (www.britishcouncil.org).
More information is available on our website (www.unimaas.nl; go to Employees > Complaints Committee).
Contact the Careers Services counsellor (jeanne bruin@careers.nl) for an appointment.
Send your suggestions to translations@unimaas.nl.
Contact Marianne de Beurs on 87398 or at mdebeurs@contact.nl.
Dick Kraft: 043 887 398/dkraft@contact.nl
IV Editorial style

1 Abbreviations

Abbreviations are for the convenience of both the writer and reader. Use them well and you will convey more information faster; use them poorly and you will confuse and annoy readers.

To avoid cluttering your documents only introduce an abbreviation if you need to refer to it at least three times. Upon first reference write the name out in full and give the abbreviation in parentheses (not the other way round), e.g. The Language Centre (LC) was founded in 1989. You can then use the abbreviation in all subsequent references. If it appears many times, you may want to alternate with a descriptive term, e.g. the centre, or, if appropriate, replace it with ‘we’. If a less common abbreviation does not recur for some pages you may decide to write it out again on subsequent use.

Whether an abbreviation is common enough for you not to have to spell it out first time will depend on the text and the readership: you generally do not have to write out USA, UK and EU. The client’s department or faculty may not need further explanation in internal documents. Some abbreviations are actually better known in their short form: IQ, HIV, DNA, etc. For all others simply use your best judgement, but err on the side of caution.

If you need to introduce numerous abbreviations, try to stagger them in different sentences or even paragraphs rather than bombarding the reader with them all at once.

1.1 Types of abbreviations

Abbreviations are formed when:

- a word is truncated (use a full stop) \(^{14}\)
  Prof. etc. ed. fig.
- a word is contracted (do not use a full stop)
  Dr Mr Attn bldg
- the ends of multiple words are cut off:
  acronyms can be pronounced as a word. If they have five or more letters, they often come to be lowercased.
  NATO AIDS CARE Unicef
  initialisms cannot be pronounced as a word. They take full stops only when lowercased.
  EU UN APA e.g. i.e. \(^{15}\)

1.2 Articles

Use indefinite articles before abbreviations as you word for any other word.

---

\(^{14}\) But to minimise punctuation in common abbreviations, do not use a full stop after the truncated forms for days and months, e.g. Jan., Wed.

\(^{15}\) As in note 14, do not use full stops in am and pm.
A before consonant sound
  a UN resolution  a BA degree
An before vowel sound
  an HIV test     an MA programme

For definite articles, use the for abbreviations which cannot be pronounced as a word, e.g. the EU (but note the exception of UM, not the UM). Do not use the for pronounceable acronyms, e.g. FIFA, Unesco.

1.3 Plurals and possessives
Possessives of abbreviations are formed with an apostrophe, like all other possessives: the CEO’s report (see IV.8.2. APOSTROPHE). Likewise, plurals are formed just as others are, without an apostrophe: UFOs, IQs, FAQs. The only exception is if they are single lowercase letters which could otherwise lead to misreading: dot your i’s. For abbreviations which end in a full stop (vol., no.), replace the stop with an s (vols, nos).

Except occasionally hrs and yrs, abbreviations of units of measurement (bps, cm, g, ha, km, kg, min, sec, etc.) have no plural form in scientific writing.

1.4 Positioning
In general texts, only use abbreviations like e.g., i.e., etc. and vs or for days (Wed) and months (Feb) in parentheses, footnotes, lists and tables. Note, though, that they are acceptable in technical and academic writing, or in documents they appear many times in for convenience, like this one.

1.5 Punctuation
Given the trend towards minimal punctuation, we do not use full stops for some common truncated forms and lowercase initialisms which would otherwise take them: days and months (Tues, Mar), as well as am and pm. Nor do we use full stops for abbreviated units of measurement (bps, cm, g, ha, km, kg, hr, min, sec, yr, etc.) and academic degrees (BA, BSc, LLB, MA, MSc, MBA, MPhil, LLM, PhD, DLitt, DPhil, MD).

Do not use commas
- before Jr, Sr, Inc., and Ltd
- after e.g. and i.e.
- before etc. if only one item is named:
  We use a second marker for all academic papers (master’s theses etc.)

But do use commas
- around degree abbreviations
  Sandrijn H. Pauker, MD, attended ...
- before etc. if more than one item is listed:
  We use a second marker for all academic papers (bachelor’s essays, master’s theses, PhD dissertations, etc.)

NB. If your list begins with such as, including, for example/e.g. or for instance, avoid the redundancy of concluding it with etc.

1.6 Dutch abbreviations
Remove Dutch abbreviations from English texts: often non-Dutch readers will not know what they mean.

a.u.b. please
ad. 1 Note to 1.
b.b.v. by means of
bijv. e.g.
m.b.t. with regard to
m.u.v. except
n.a.v. further to
nr. no.
o.a. among others
pag. p.
t.a.v. attn

1.7 Days and months

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sun</th>
<th>Mon</th>
<th>Tues</th>
<th>Wed</th>
<th>Thurs</th>
<th>Fri</th>
<th>Sat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan</td>
<td>Feb</td>
<td>Mar</td>
<td>Apr</td>
<td>May</td>
<td>June</td>
<td>July</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug</td>
<td>Sept</td>
<td>Oct</td>
<td>Nov</td>
<td>Dec</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.8 List of common abbreviations

am ante meridian (before noon)
assn association
BMI body mass index
bps bits per second
c. circa
c/o care of (in addresses)
CD-ROM compact disk – read only memory
cm centimetre(s)
dpt department
doc. document
e.g. exempli gratia (for example)
ed., eds editor, editors
edn edition¹⁶
et al. et alii (and others)
etc. et cetera
excl. excluding
fig., figs figure, figures
fte full-time equivalents
g gram(s)
hr hour(s)
ibid. ibidem (in the same place)
i.e. id est (in other words, that is)
incl. including, inclusive
kph kilometres per hour
kW kilowatt(s)
L litre(s)
min minute(s)

¹⁶ Often the abbreviation ed. (editor) is also used to mean edition. We prefer to differentiate the two, like Ritter, R.M. (ed). (2003). *The Oxford guide to style* (p. 513). Oxford: OUP.
mL  millilitre(s)
N/A not applicable
NB  nota bene (note well)
no. , nos number, numbers
pc, pcs piece, pieces
p., pp. page, pages
pp  per person
PC  personal computer
pm  post meridian (afternoon)
PO Box Post Office Box
Pty Ltd Proprietary Limited
R&D research and development
rpm revolutions per minute
t  ton(s)
V  volt(s)
vs versus (but v. between party names in court cases)
W  watt(s)
Too much capitalisation disrupts flow and dates faster, so aim for minimal capitalisation. In short, use capitals for proper nouns and for the adjectives that are derived from them where the link is still felt to be alive (e.g. *Shakespearian* but *wellington boots*).

- Homeric epic
- Hong Kong flu
- Christian churches
- Halley’s comet

This can be hard to tell, however, and is sometimes arbitrary; another option is to use capitals when the meaning is literal, but lowercase when it is not.

- Chinese craftspeople → chinese whispers
- Brussels institutions → brussels sprouts
- French wine → french fries
- Moroccan climate → morocco leather
- Arabic numbers (those used by Arabic-speaking people) → arabic numbers (English meaning)
- Roman alphabet (that of the actual Romans) → roman alphabet (English meaning)
- Platonic (of Plato) → platonic love
- Herculean (of Hercules) → herculean (big)

### 2.1 Art, architecture and music

For *baroque, classical, romantic*, etc., capitalise the first letter when talking about an era, age or period, but not when using it simply as an adjective.

- the Classical era → classical music
- the Baroque period → a baroque building
- Impressionism, the Impressionists (actual art movement) → an impressionistic painting

**NB. Never capitalise the prefix *neo*:**

- neoclassical
- neocolonialism
- neo-Cartesian

Capitalise the first letter of each word for operas, concertos, symphonies and other musical compositions, but not in the words *flat, sharp, major* and *minor*.

- B-flat Nocturne
- Concerto no. 2 for Piano and Orchestra
Bach’s Mass in B minor
Hungarian Rhapsody no. 12
Symphony no. 6 in F major
Mozart’s Piano Concerto in E flat

2.2 **Awards and prizes**
Capitalise the names of awards and prizes as follows.
- the Nobel Prize for Literature
- a Nobel Prize winner
- the UM Education Prize
- an Education Prize winner
- the Ius Commune Prize
- an Academy Award

2.3 **Books, periodicals and document parts**
In running text, capitalise the first letter of book titles and subtitles, and the first letter of each word for periodicals (magazines, newspapers, journals etc.). If the periodical title consists of more than one word, do not capitalise or italicise the. For reference lists, refer to an authoritative source for the specific referencing style.

- *The Economist*
- the *Financial Times*
- the *Algemeen Dagblad*
- *Der Spiegel*
- the *International Journal of Bilingualism*
- *A short history of the Netherlands*
- *Research methods in politics: An introduction*

Capitalise the first letter for specific parts of books or documents.

- Chapter 9
- Section 4.2
- Appendix A
- Part V
- Figure 8
- Table 2.1
- as mentioned in the Methods section
- see Results
- *but* chapters 11–14

But lowercase generic titles when not followed by serial number.

- The results are shown in the appendix (cf. see Appendix B)
- In the third part... (cf. in Part 3 ... )

2.4 **Companies, institutions and organisations**
Like faculties, departments, institutes and so on, use initial capitals for the official names of companies, organisations and institutions outside the university, and lowercase letters when you refer to them by just a descriptor.

- the Dutch East India Company
- → the company
- the Brouwer Group bv
If a company spells its name with an initial lowercase letter, do the same. Only use an initial capital if it appears at the start of a sentence and there is no sensible way of rephrasing.

- eBay
- Facebook
- the azM University Hospital

### 2.5 History and military

Capitalize the names of geological and historical periods.

- the Age of Reason
- the Bronze Age
- the Common Era
- the Enlightenment
- the Great Depression

- the Iron Age
- the Middle Ages
- the Paleozoic (era)
- the Reformation
- the Renaissance

But note that modern periods often take lowercase letters.

- the atomic age
- the information age

- the nuclear age
- the space age

Capitalize the names of wars, revolutions and specific battles.

- the Battle of Britain
- the Boer War
- the Cultural Revolution
- the Industrial Revolution

- the Korean War
- the Second World War
- the Thirty Years War
- World War I

Also capitalise the proper names of armies, navies, air forces, fleets, regiments, battalions, companies, corps etc. (e.g. *the Royal Netherlands Army, the Royal Navy*), but lowercase references not using the official name (*the Dutch army, the British navy*).

- the Allies
- the Axis powers
- First Battalion

- the Green Berets
- the Luftwaffe
- 178th Infantry

Capitalize the names of natural phenomena or disasters as well.

- the Black Death
- the Great Fire of London

- El Niño
- Hurricane Katrina

### 2.6 Peoples and places

Capitalize the names of ethnic/national groups, languages and their related adjectives and verbs.

- Dutch
- Europeanise

- Arabs
- Xhosa

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17 Only when accepted as an official name; c.f. *the third battle of Ypres, the battle for Split*
Always capitalise place names. The only source of confusion here is when points of a compass are involved. With east and west, capitalise them if you are referring to a political or cultural notion (non-Western educational traditions) but not in a purely geographic sense (the university is located in northwest Europe).\(^{18}\)

Likewise, use initial capitals for North, South, East and West when part of a proper name or a formal geographical area, but not when they refer to a direction or a general area.\(^{19}\)

- West Africa (a region with a political identity)
- southern Africa (a geographical region)
- South Limburg (the official designation for this part of the Dutch province)
- the southern Netherlands (a geographical area)
- Northern Ireland (the country)
- northern England (the area)

This extends to the use of common nouns, which are capitalised in a governmental or local council sense.

- the City of Maastricht
- Greater London
- the Province of Limburg
- the State of New York

Just as you would for companies and institutions, capitalise references to specific place names but not general references.

- the Royal Palace
- the Magna Plaza
- London Bridge
- Tiananmen Square
- the Spanish Steps
- the Babri Mosque
- the Panama Canal
- the Ottoman Empire
- the Russian Federation

- → the palace
- → the plaza
- → the bridge
- → the square
- → the steps
- → the mosque
- → the canal
- → the empire
- → the federation

Also capitalise place names which are legendary or popular.

- the Big Apple
- the City of Light
- the Eternal City
- the Promised Land

When proper names appear alongside each other, the shared element which thus becomes plural is no longer capitalised.

- the Rhine River
- the Atlantic Ocean
- Kent Street

- → the Rhine and Maas rivers
- → the Atlantic and Pacific oceans
- → George and Kent streets

For non-English street names, do not use a definite article even if one appears in the original language.

- You can find our office at Leliestraat 14b
- The Language Centre is in Sint Servaasklooster
- Grote Gracht is the main shopping street

\(^{18}\) Avoid terms such as ‘the western world’, which imply that everything is viewed from the standpoint of the West, and the use of ‘westernised’ to mean developed or industrialised. World Health Organization (2004). WHO style guide (p. 11). Malta: Author. Available online at http://whqlibdoc.who.int/hq/2004/WHO_IMD_PUB_04.1.pdf

\(^{19}\) Ibid
The building at Grote Looiersstraat 17 is closed
The economics faculty is in Tongerseweg

2.7 Politics
2.7.1 Governments and government entities
Capitalise the official names of governments and government entities, but lowercase general references.

the Department of the Environment → the department
the Ministry of Industry and Technology → the ministry
the Government of the Netherlands → the Dutch government
the States-General (parliament) of the Netherlands → the parliament

2.7.1 Political parties
Capitalise the names of specific parties, their voters and factions, but not general movements or descriptors.

the Socialist Party → socialism in France
the Communists’ leader → the communist movement
the ChristenUnie (Christian Union) party → ChristenUnie supporters
the Conservative Party → Conservative voters (i.e. they vote for the Conservative Party), but conservative voters (i.e. voters who play it safe)
the Right, the Left, the Centre (as political factions) → a right-wing nationalist

2.8 Religion
Capitalise the names of religions (except atheism, agnosticism), monotheistic deities and their followers, but not individual roles unless used in front of the name as a title.

Islam, Muslim, Allah
Christianity, Christian, God (also the Holy Spirit, Providence, the Trinity, etc.)
Pope John Paul II → the pope
Brother Daan → one of the brothers

Note that pronouns for these deities are now written in lowercase, and many bibles are being specifically rewritten to avoid the use of the exclusive male pronouns he, him, his, etc.

Use capitals for the proper names of denominations or places of worship, but not for church buildings in a general sense.

Nichiren Buddhist Temple → the temple
the Roman Catholic Church → a Roman Catholic church
the Baptist Church → a Baptist church
the Babri Mosque → the mosque
2.9 Theories, hypotheses and models
Do not capitalise the names of theories, models, hypotheses and laws (in a scientific sense), even if they have an abbreviation.

- the critical period hypothesis (CPH)
- Einstein’s theory of relativity
- Newton’s first law
- the labour market model
- Bracht’s model of community change

2.10 Times of year
Use an initial capital for days and months, festivals, holidays and other special days, but not for seasons (e.g. summer).

- Ascension Day
- Christmas Eve
- Father’s Day
- Independence Day
- International Year of the Child
- National Poetry Month
- New Year’s Day
- Passover
- Ramadan
- Remembrance Day
- St Patrick’s Day
If your readers might not know what the foreign words in a text mean, follow them with an English translation in parentheses.

Make sure you hit Opslaan (save) before you close the program.

There are three categories of waste: blik (tins), plastic flessen (plastic bottles) and papier en karton (paper and cardboard).

Set foreign words that are not seen as anglicised in italics, and retain their diacritics (pièce de résistance, über). Once they come into common English (or UM) usage, set them in normal roman type (résumé, gulag).

A general rule of thumb is to retain the accent in words ending in é, as well as any other accents in these words.

The decision, however, can be arbitrary.

To minimise typographical intrusion and to take account of the multilingual UM readership, when in doubt do not use italics or diacritics. Likewise, if a foreign word appears multiple times in one document, only use italics on the first reference. Do, however, always retain the original accents in personal names (see also IV.7. PEOPLE & PLACE NAMES).

### 3.1 Foreign words in common English use

These words of foreign origin are now seen as in common English use. Use their diacritics as shown, but do not italicise them (or the Latin abbreviations cf., e.g., et al., etc., ibid. and i.e.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>French</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>German</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>à la carte</td>
<td>detente</td>
<td>par excellence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a priori</td>
<td>facade</td>
<td>pâte</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ad hoc</td>
<td>faux pas</td>
<td>per capita</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>autobahn</td>
<td>fete</td>
<td>per se</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>beamer</td>
<td>fiancé</td>
<td>perestroika</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>avant-garde</td>
<td>фührer</td>
<td>putsch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cafe</td>
<td>genre</td>
<td>raison d’être</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chateau</td>
<td>glasnost</td>
<td>regime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>coup</td>
<td>gulag</td>
<td>résumé</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>crèche</td>
<td>haute couture</td>
<td>señor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>crepe</td>
<td>inter alia</td>
<td>soiree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>de facto</td>
<td>jihad</td>
<td>status quo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>debacle</td>
<td>laissez-faire</td>
<td>vice versa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>decor</td>
<td>naive</td>
<td>vis-à-vis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>déjà vu</td>
<td>papier mâché</td>
<td>zeitgeist</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.2 Governments

You can retain the non-English names of governments and related entities likely to be familiar to UM readers, as long as you explain them on first use:

---

[20] Once they are in common English use you do not need an initial capital for German nouns.
the Bundestag (the lower house of the German Parliament)
the Knesset (the legislative branch of the Israeli government)
the Duma (the Russian parliament’s lower house).

3.3 Organisations and other entities
Use the official English names of organisations, institutes and other bodies if they exist. If the English version is an ad hoc rendering rather than an official name, put the name in the original language in parentheses after the translation.

- the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW)
- the North Brabant Centre for Amateur Art (Centrum voor amateurkunst Noord-Brabant, CVA)

Note that names of organisations, governments etc. in foreign languages are not set in italics.

3.4 Periodicals and books
Write the names of well-known newspapers and magazines in italics in the original language.

- NRC Handelsblad
- Le Monde
- Der Spiegel

If you are unsure the reader will be familiar with them, provide a short descriptor.

- The Dutch weekly Elsevier reported ...

Translate into English any names in languages not likely to be understood locally.

- Beijing’s People’s Daily

For books and other printed matter available in English, use the English title (you can also follow it with the original title in parentheses if the context requires it). Remember to always italicise book titles. If the book has not been published in English, put the English translation in single quotation marks in parentheses after the original title (not italicised, and with a colon between the title and any subtitle).

- Van Bruggen’s new book, A history of the Netherlands, will be released tomorrow.
  In its original Dutch version, The business brain book (Gebruik uw hersens) was a runaway bestseller.
  His book Herr Lehmann (‘Mr Lehmann’) has not yet been published in English.

3.5 Quotes
Translate quotes directly into English: only retain the wording in the original language for famous or historical quotes or if the wording itself is at issue. Follow these examples for the use of quotation marks and italics.

- ‘We are extremely pleased with the results’, De Beer told Dutch broadcaster 101 TV
- Her personal motto is ‘divide and conquer’ (divide et impera)
- As Lord Bacon wrote, ‘Non est interpretatio, sed divinatio, quae recedit a litera’ (Interpretation that departs from the letter of the text is not interpretation but divination).

See also III.6.4.2. ACADEMIC TITLES for foreign titles; IV.7.2. PLACES for foreign place names
Use italics for foreign, emphasised, newly coined or rare words – but sparingly, as they lose their force if overused. Be careful not to put any punctuation after a single italicised word in italics too – do not italicise things that do not genuinely belong in italics. For italics within italics, use roman font.

4.1 Emphasis
Avoid using italics for emphasis as it can appear precious\textsuperscript{21} and often indicates that the writer has taken the easy road to emphasis: it is better to use sentence structure and word choice to create emphasis instead.

It is very important that you register early
→ Register early to ensure your place in the course

Sometimes authors add italics within a quoted passage to draw attention to certain parts; in such cases, write [italics added] in square brackets after the quote.

4.2 Technical or rare terms
On first reference to a technical or rare term or keyword you can use italics to set it off. Do not italicise it on subsequent references.

* Skin self-examination* refers to the act of inspecting one’s skin with the aim of detecting possible skin-cancer related symptoms.
* Procurement* involves inviting project offers and selecting the most suitable one.
* Informal learning* is unintentional, unstructured and does not lead to certification.

4.3 Words as lexical items
You can also use italics to set off a word or phrase discussed individually or as a linguistic example.

* Centre* and colour are spelled thus in UK English.
  
  At UM we do not use digraphs in words such as *fetus*.

4.4 Foreign words
Foreign words are usually set in italics. However, do not italicise

- the names of foreign organisations, institutions or other official names such as legal acts; treat these as you would English names (with initial capitals for each main word)
  
  The programme is offered at the Provinciale Vroedvrouwschool
  In line with the Work and Care Act (Wet Arbeid en Zorg), ...
- direct quotes in a foreign language: treat these like English quotes, in single quotation marks
  
  She closed in the words of Horace: ‘Dimidium facti qui coepit habet’ (He who has begun has the work half done)

See also IV.3. FOREIGN WORDS

4.5 **Other uses for italics**

Aircraft (proper names, e.g. Avenger IV, but not generic models, e.g. Boeing 747)

Artworks

Ballets

Books

CD albums

Cross references (e.g. see also, opposite, overleaf, continued)

Dissertations

Films

Genera of plants/animals

Long poems

Newspapers

Operas

Oratorios

Pamphlets/catalogues

Parties in legal cases

Periodicals

Plays

Radio series

Regular cartoons or comic strips

Sculptures

Ships

Spacecraft

Species of plants/animals

Symphonies

Television series

Theses

Trains (proper names, e.g. the Orient Express, but not generic models, e.g. an ICE train)

See also IV.9.7. OTHER USES FOR QUOTATION MARKS

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5 Lists and series

The main thing to remember with lists and series is parallelism. To promote easy reading and a sense of balance, ensure that each item follows the same syntactic structure, i.e. is formed consistently with either a noun or verb.

Our goals are, first, to expand our area of operation, and second, increasing external funding

→ Our goals are to expand our area of operation and to increase external funding

The students were told to sit down, read the instructions and that they should take as long as they needed to finish the exam

→ The students were told to sit down, read the instructions and take as long as they needed to finish the exam

Topics dealt with in these modules include:
- the common commercial policy
- providing and regulating welfare
- how we approach guaranteeing competition
- human rights and developmental aid policy
- provision of asylum.

→ Topics dealt with in these modules include:
- common commercial policy
- the provision and regulation of welfare
- approaches to guaranteeing competition
- human rights and developmental aid policy
- the provision of asylum.

5.1 Series in running text

Series in running text are any coordinate items of a similar nature, such as a list of nouns or verbs, which may or be separated by numbers or letter.

5.1.1 Elision

In most cases you do not need to repeat the definite article in a series of nouns.

the students, staff and external clients who take language courses
the tutors and students who attended the meeting

This holds especially for single ideas or expressions:

the salt and pepper
the bow and arrow
the paper and pen.

It is also often true when a single plural noun stands for two modifiers:

the first and second years at university
the third- and fourth-ranked universities
the best and worst teachers.

However, be wary that in some cases not repeating the article could cause confusion, e.g. *the red and black folders vs the red and the black folders.*

5.1.2 Connectors
Dutch and German writers often overuse connectors (*however, nevertheless, moreover, etc.*) in English. Though these words help logically link one idea to the next, try to avoid their startling and overly formal use:

- Students must register via the website. Furthermore, they must pay the course fee at least three weeks in advance.
- **Better**: Students must register via the website. They must also pay the course fee at least three weeks in advance.
- **Preferred**: You must register via the website and pay the course fee at least three weeks in advance.

A good rule of thumb is to use connectors progressively: do not hit your reader over the head with *furthermore* if you have not already exhausted the shorter options (*and, also/too, in addition, etc.*).

A faculty combines education and research within related disciplines and, *furthermore*, it ensures knowledge valorisation. In *addition*, in the context of the university’s strategy it develops a vision for its future. *Moreover*, recruits students, talent and funding, *and* it values the professional development of its academic and support staff *and, finally*, it seeks to establish connections with other faculties and works on expanding its networks.

- A faculty combines education and research within related disciplines, *and* ensures knowledge valorisation. In the context of the university’s strategy it develops a vision for its future. *Also*, recruits students, talent and funding, and values the professional development of its academic and support staff. *Finally*, it seeks to establish connections with other faculties *and* expand its networks.

Try not to refer vaguely to *several reasons, a number of issues* etc.; rather, use signposts like ‘there are three reasons ...’\(^{25}\) When you do, prefer the shorter *first, second and third* to *firstly, secondly and thirdly*.\(^{26}\) Also, avoid using *fourth, fifth* and so on – consider using a set-off list (see IV.5.2.2. below) if you find yourself doing this.

### 5.2 Lists

You can either run lists into the text or set them vertically in outline style. There are various options for numbering/lettering.

- Numbers 1, 2, 3 etc., especially if you are presenting items in an order of importance or setting out sequential steps (with 1.1, 1.2 etc. for the second tier)
- Letters *a, b, c* and so on, with the lowercase roman numerals *i, ii, iii* for the second tier
- Bullet points (only for set off lists, but not in academic texts)
- Nothing (for short run on lists)

If you choose to use numbers or letters, there must be at least two items in each tier: i.e. do not add a subsection *1.1 or (i)* if there is no *1.2 or (ii).*

### 5.2.1 Run on lists

---


If the introduction to the run on list is an independent clause, use a colon.

Separate conditions apply to the different client groups: students, staff and external customers.

But if each item in the list completes the introductory sentence, do not use a colon.

Separate conditions apply to students, staff and external customers.

If the items are short and have no internal punctuation, separate them with commas.

You can write your essay about multinational institutions within (1) the EU, (2) the UN, or (3) NATO.

If one or more items have internal punctuation, use semicolons to separate them.

We distinguish between (1) graduates with jobs within their own field, i.e. categories (i) and (ii); and (2) graduates with jobs outside their field, i.e. categories (iii) and (iv).

A run on list with a second tier will need both commas and semicolons. But use this style sparingly; it is probably better to set off such lists.

These are the types of property quoted in the report: (a) administrative; (b) commercial; (c) residential, (i) houses, (ii) flats, (iii) mobile homes; and (d) institutional.27

5.2.2 Set off lists

Pay attention to punctuation in set off lists. If each item is not a complete sentence, there are two options.

- Introduce the list with a full sentence then use capital letters to start and no punctuation to end each item.
  
  The applicant’s professional skill set must include the following.
  
  Knowledge of the field
  Excellent Dutch and English skills
  Ability to work independently

- Treat the list itself as a sentence, and punctuate it accordingly (i.e. lowercase letters to start each item and a full stop after the last one). The comma here is optional.

  You can pay the course fee:
  
  in person at the Language Centre
  via bank transfer to account number 4367 8999
  using the internal order number NL065.

  In the lists above, the fact that each item begins on a new line is more than adequate to separate them from each other. This means there is no need for punctuation at the end of each item, nor to add and after the second-last item.

If each item in the list comprises one or more complete sentences, introduce the list with a complete sentence, start each item with a capital letter and end each item with a full stop.

The admission requirements to the research master’s programme are strictly adhered to.

- You must have a bachelor’s degree in one of the biomedical sciences.

---

• If you are already working in the medical industry you may be admitted without a relevant bachelor’s degree. This is subject to the extent and nature of your professional experience.
• International applicants must also submit a recent IELTS or TOEFL score.
6 Numbers

Spell out whole numbers from one to nine, and use numerals for 10 and above. Do the same for ordinal numbers: first, second, 10th, 21st, millionth. The following pattern holds for larger numbers:

- 400
- 7,000 (or 7000, if no number above 9999 appears nearby in the text)
- 27,000
- 282,000
- three million
- 4.5 million
- seven billion
- 8.7 billion
- 3,574,900

Note that billion in UK English used to mean a million million, but, like most international organisations and now many UK publishers, we use the American definition of a thousand million. (Thus in both UK and US English, a trillion is now a million million.)

Also use numerals for the following:

- decimals
  - The average family has 2.3 children
- percentages in scientific texts
  - Only 5% of the sample showed improvement
- times
  - The class starts at 2pm
- temperatures
  - Upstairs it is 3°C hotter than outside
- money
  - The participants were paid $5 each
- scores
  - She scored 4 on a 7-point scale
  - He got a 7 on the exam
  - She scored 8 points in two minutes
- numbers in sequence (serial numbers) or that are part of a name
  - Trial 3  Chapter 5  Article 9
  - Grade 8  Table 3  Item 4
- numbers under 10 mixed with higher numbers in same context (sentence, paragraph or group of paragraphs)
  - the 9th and 10th centuries  6 of the 12
  - (unless the numbers are not of the same category, e.g. Of the total participants, 6 filled in all three questionnaires, while 17 only filled out two.).

---

28 E.g. Unesco, WHO, European Commission
29 E.g. Oxford, BBC
Write the following sorts of numbers in words:

- expressions
  
  he was a hundred percent wrong
  the Ten Commandments
  I wish I had a million dollars

- isolated or approximate references in non-scientific texts
  in the past hundred years

- figures at start a sentence
  Twenty respondents were excluded (recast the sentence if it starts with a date or a large or awkward number)

- modifiers next to each other
  ten 45-page brochures
  nine 6-room apartments.

6.1 Currencies

For money of any amount (except cents) use currency symbols closed up to the numeral. If you need to use a dollar ($) or pound (£) sign for an original sum, give the euro conversion in parentheses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Euro Conversion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>four cents</td>
<td>12 cents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>€5</td>
<td>€17.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>€4,000 (£5,100)</td>
<td>€1,496.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$430,000 (£286,000)</td>
<td>€79,370,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>€3 to €6 million; €3 million to €6 million (write out the denomination if there could be confusion)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>€2.00 and €5.50 respectively (use .00 only if others in the sentence involve cents)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Use the following abbreviations for lists, tables, figures and financial contexts (e.g. budgets).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Euro Conversion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>thousand</td>
<td>€350K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>million</td>
<td>£270m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>billion</td>
<td>$200bn</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Write out the names of currencies other than UK pounds and US dollars (though if there could be confusion about the type of dollar, use US before the symbol: US$2.47).

- 44 Australian dollars
- 500 pesetas
- 200 Canadian dollars
- 20 roubles
- 3000 Danish kroner
- six million Swiss francs

In informal texts you can write out general references or expressions involving money: a million-euro budget.

6.2 Dates

Write dates like so: 23 July 1997. Never use ordinal numbers (5th, 17th, etc.) in dates, even in running text. Other examples:

Sunday 8 October 2008 23–29 April 2001

---

2 May–4 June  Mon 27 Nov 08–Tues 24 Jan 09
24/10/03 (informal)  2.11.93 (formal)
academic year 2008/09  financial year 2003/04
7 and 8 October (2-day period)  from 8 to 12 October (longer period)

See also IV.1.7. ABBREVIATIONS: DAYS & MONTHS

6.3 Decades and centuries
Do not use an apostrophe for decades.

1990s (not nineties)
1980s and 1990s (informal: 1980s and 90s)
mid-1950s

Use the neutral Common Era abbreviations for centuries (but note that BCE and CE need only appear if there could be confusion).

55 BCE  1066 CE
second century BCE  third century CE
eighth and ninth centuries  3rd and 13th centuries
19th century  21st century
mid-ninth century  mid-16th century
eighth-ninth century battle  16th-century epic

6.4 Decimal points and commas
As in most international and European style guides for English, use a point to mark decimals, and a comma to mark thousands.

€9.95  $7,000,042.20
11,000 students  5.4 million
€10,499.49  p < 0.01

6.5 Footnotes
Use footnotes sparingly, for information that is of secondary interest. There are two types: content and copyright. We deal only with the content variety here; most UM faculties use APA referencing style, which means that copyright footnotes are seldom used.

Put the superscript number at the end of the sentence if it refers to the whole sentence, or after the specific term to which it applies. Note that it should follow all punctuation except a dash (unless referring to matter within parentheses).

Style guides agree that jargon should be avoided at all costs.

Set the footnote itself in font two sizes smaller than the rest of the text. Insert a space between the number and the first word, and begin it with a capital letter. End it with a full stop only if it is a complete sentence.

² Indeed, Krol (2008) wrote: ‘By avoiding the long-winded business jargon which English-speaking managers have inflicted on the rest of the world, you will come across as eloquent and sharp by comparison’ (p. 72).

Depending on the data in them, for tables in scientific texts superscript numbers or letters might cause confusion. In such cases use symbols in this order: *†‡§¶#32 (though check that the asterisk could not be mistaken as denoting probability, e.g. *p < .01).

³¹ Except the International Organization for Standardization (ISO; www.iso.org)
6.6  Fractions
In non-scientific texts, write fractions out in words.

three quarters  two thirds
one fifth  seven eighths

Use digits if:
• one or more elements is greater than nine
  one 20th  seven 10ths
• the fraction is combined with a whole number
  we walked for 3 ¾ kilometres  it lasted 9 ½ months
  the office is 4 ½ metres long  he reigned for 31 ½ years.

6.7  Percentages
Spell percent as one word. In general texts, write the word out.

Your pay will increase by three percent from January
Of the law faculty employees, 40 percent come from abroad
The proportion of Belgian students is set to increase from 8 to 12 percent

In scientific texts, use the percentage symbol.

Only 7% of the patients recovered fully
Up to 80% of smokers quit within the month
Of the women, 75% to 78% make more money than their husbands
Of the sample, 25%, 40%, and 35% were poorly, reasonably and highly educated respectively

6.8  Phone numbers
For UM readers (internal extensions) 86765
For readers within the Netherlands 043 388 2212
For international readers +31 43 388 2212

6.9  Ranges
Indicate ranges of years, pages, times, days etc. using an en-dash with the figures closed up.

8–14 participants
8.30–10.00 am
Mon–Fri

In ranges of years, always include the decade, but do not repeat the century if it is the same.

1939–45  2001–08

Note that a forward slash is used for periods that include the end of one year and the beginning of the next, e.g. financial and academic years (2008/09). This means a span of such years would be 1998/09–2008/09.

For page and other ranges, use as few digits as possible.

pp. 1–9 pp. 101–5
pp. 16–8 pp. 457–68
pp. 44–7 pp. 1225–345

Do not mix words with the en-dash symbol:

from 2000 to 2007, not from 2000–07

See also IV.4.8.6. PUNCTUATION: DASH

6.10 Times

For use at UM, both the 12-hour clock and 24-hour clock are acceptable.

9am 11pm
5.22 am 2.45 pm
7.30 pm 14.50
23.00 11.30–13.30
2–6pm 9am–5pm

Classes start promptly at 9 and 11 am
The meeting began at 11.00 and adjourned at 13.30
The team was up at 5.30 and ran until 10.00

Note that in

7.30 am in the morning, in the morning is redundant – delete it
8pm last night, night is redundant – replace with simply yesterday.

If you are using the 12-hour clock, avoid using 12pm (i.e. noon) and 12am (i.e. midnight) as this can be confusing. Rather, write:

midnight (or just midnight)
12 noon (or just noon)

If you are using the 24-hour clock, use 24.00 for periods ending then, and 00.00 for periods starting then.

Finally, note that Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) is now called Coordinated Universal Time (CUT).

6.11 Units of measurement

In non-academic texts, spell out units of measurement (kilometres, hectares, minutes, grams etc.).

The cyclists covered four kilometres of hilly terrain
The Language Centre is just 15 minutes’ walk from the station

In scientific texts, use the following abbreviations, separated from the number with a space (only hrs and yrs take a plural s).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Symbol</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 ha</td>
<td>9 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 km</td>
<td>50 km/h</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200 g</td>
<td>5 kg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 L</td>
<td>12 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 hrs</td>
<td>5 yrs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7 People and place names

In Dutch first names like Christian and Philip are often abbreviated to Chr. and Ph., especially in reference lists. Avoid this in English: not only does this looks ‘quaint’, non-Dutch readers often do not interpret them correctly (e.g. take Chr. to mean Christopher).34

Do not use a space between initials unless you are editing for an article to be submitted to a journal which does so.

Use English forms for classical names, popes, saints, royalty etc. if they exist.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>English Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Charles V</td>
<td>Alexander of Corinth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ptolemy</td>
<td>Catherine the Great</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Francis of Assisi</td>
<td>Virgil</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.1 Names with prefixes

7.1.1 Alphabetical order

As in Dutch, ignore prefixes like de, van, van den, ten, etc. when alphabetising surnames (as in a reference list). This means you should list

- Jan de Groot under G
- Sanne van den Brandhof under B etc.

In Belgium, however, the prefixes are often capitalised: Hanneke De Bruin, Willem Van Diemen. In these cases, list the surnames under the first letter of the prefix.

7.1.2 Capitalisation

As in Dutch, capitalise Dutch surname prefixes when the first name, initial or title is not given.

- Aletta de Groot → De Groot
- Vincent van Gogh → Van Gogh
- Pieter van den Keere → Van den Keere
- Prof. ten Cate → Ten Cate
- Dr van den Bosch → Van den Bosch

7.2 Places

For small towns in the Netherlands or places elsewhere that may be unfamiliar to readers, provide some point of reference.

- Abdissenbosch, Limburg
- Tienhoven, near Utrecht
- Olsberg (in North-Rhine Westphalia, Germany)
- Ballarat, west of Melbourne, Australia
- Chongqing (in China’s Sichuan province)

7.2.1 The Netherlands

Use the Netherlands for the country, and North/South Holland if referring specifically to the provinces. Do not capitalise the in the Netherlands in running text, and omit it in tables; i.e. only use The at the start of a sentence, in addresses and in a few other cases.

---

There are more than 20 universities in the Netherlands
Koen Leeuwen, third-year International Business student, the Netherlands
Olga Hendricks, PhD, RSI Knowledge Centre, Maastricht University, the Netherlands

Capitalise the in The Hague, however, because it is a translation of Den Haag (unless you use it attributively).

Though not the country’s official capital, The Hague is home to the government of the Netherlands.

She applied to a number of Hague institutions before coming to Maastricht

Use the English names for the 12 provinces of the Netherlands (some are the same as in Dutch).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>English Name</th>
<th>Dutch Name</th>
<th>English Name</th>
<th>Dutch Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drenthe</td>
<td>Groningen</td>
<td>Overijssel</td>
<td>Limburg</td>
<td>South Holland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flevoland</td>
<td>North Brabant</td>
<td>Utrecht</td>
<td>North Holland</td>
<td>Zeeland</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.2.2 Belgium
Belgium comprises three different language areas:

- Flanders: the people are Flemings, their institutions are Flemish and they speak Dutch
- Wallonia: the people are Walloons, their institutions are Walloon and they speak French
- the German-speaking community in the East Cantons of Wallonia.

Note that not all French speakers in Belgium are Walloons: Brussels is a bilingual city (Dutch/French) located in Flanders. So describe anything referring to all Belgian French speakers not as Walloon but as French-speaking.35

Use the following spellings for the 13 provinces of Belgium:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>English Name</th>
<th>Dutch Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Antwerp</td>
<td>Hainaut</td>
<td>Namur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brabant</td>
<td>Liège</td>
<td>Wallonia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Flanders</td>
<td>Limburg</td>
<td>Walloon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flanders</td>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
<td>West Flanders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flemish Brabant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some other Belgian place names also have established English forms.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place</th>
<th>English Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Antwerp</td>
<td>Ghent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brussels</td>
<td>Ostend</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For the rest, use the official Dutch names for Dutch-speaking parts (except Brugge, which takes the French name Bruges in English) and French names for French-speaking parts (e.g. Liège).

7.2.3 United Kingdom

- Great Britain  = England, Wales, Scotland
- United Kingdom = England, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland

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- **British Isles** = England, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland, Ireland, the Isle of Man, the Channel Islands

Do not use British when you mean English, and vice versa. And prefer *English–French trade*, for example, rather than using *anglo-* to mean English. Reserve *anglo-* only to refer to anglophone (i.e. English-speaking) countries.

### 7.2.4 United States

Call the country *the United States or the US; America* includes all of North and South America.

### 7.2.5 Local vs anglicised forms

Use well-established English forms where they exist. These you can find in the list below; it is not exhaustive but deals with those that do come up now and then, or that have multiple spelling variants. For other place names, the European Commission promotes the use of localised place names rather than the imposition of an English form.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place Name</th>
<th>Localised Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aalborg</td>
<td>Marseilles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aarhus</td>
<td>Mecca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basel</td>
<td>Milan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beijing (not Peking)</td>
<td>Mumbai (not Bombay)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bern</td>
<td>Munich</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cologne</td>
<td>Myanmar (not Burma)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copenhagen</td>
<td>Naples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dhaka</td>
<td>Nuremberg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florence</td>
<td>Phnom Penh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gdansk (not Danzig)</td>
<td>Prague</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geneva</td>
<td>Qatar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genoa</td>
<td>Reykjavik</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gothenburg</td>
<td>Riyadh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guangzhou (not Canton)</td>
<td>Romania</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanover</td>
<td>Rome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kathmandu</td>
<td>Seville</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kazakhstan</td>
<td>Shanghai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Krakow</td>
<td>Strasbourg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lisbon</td>
<td>Suriname</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ljubljana</td>
<td>Tallinn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louvain</td>
<td>Turin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lucerne</td>
<td>Venice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
<td>Vienna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lyon</td>
<td>Vietnam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marrakesh</td>
<td>Zurich</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

At all times remember that punctuation is there to make reading easier. Too much of it is irritating; too little can be confusing.

8.1 Ampersand

**Use an ampersand (&) in**

- company names made of two or more personal names
  
  Proctor & Gamble
  
  Ernst & Young

- journal titles if it is part of their official name
  
  *Journal of Adolescent & Family Health*

- to clarify meaning
  
  the faculties of Health, Medicine & Life Sciences, and Economics & Business Administration

- between two or more authors’ names in parenthetical citations
  
  (Siegal & Connell, 1999).

8.2 Apostrophe

**Do not use an apostrophe**

- to indicate plurals
  
  dos and don’ts
  
  CEOs
  
  taxis

- exceptions: single lowercase letters
  
  p’s and q’s
  
  dot your i’s

- for common contractions
  
  bus
  
  phone
  
  pram

- in the names of wars
  
  Hundred Years War
  
  Thirty Years War

- in the names of medical conditions
  
  Down syndrome
  
  Munchausen syndrome
  
  Kawasaki disease.

(The possessive which still exists in, e.g., *Alzheimer’s disease*, is used less frequently now, to avoid the ‘proprietary effect’.)

**Do use an apostrophe**

- to indicate contractions
  
  won’t
  
  they’re
  
  rock ‘n’ roll
  
  ’tis

---

37 Unlike in Dutch: taxi’s, baby’s, etc.


• to form plurals of single lowercase letters
  dot your i’s
  mind your p’s and q’s

• to show place of residence or business
  at Vera’s
  at the doctor’s
  at the career adviser’s

• for nouns or pronouns followed by gerunds
  The student’s cheating on the exam resulted in her expulsion
  Employees’ assuming control of their own career paths is in the institutions best interests.

• to show joint possession
  Strunk & White’s book (shared possession, i.e. co-authors)
  Van Dale’s and Webster’s dictionaries (possession is not shared, i.e. two separate dictionaries)

• to indicate possession, as shown below.

Possessive apostrophe
Many Dutch writers do not use possessive apostrophes enough, tending instead to use the of construction more commonly found in their L1. This can make for wordier and less natural-sounding sentences in English, so use the possessive apostrophe where you can.

Employees can participate in the pension plan of Maastricht University
→ Employees can participate in Maastricht University’s pension plan

Approval was granted by the ethics committee of the hospital
→ Approval was granted by the hospital’s ethics committee

In a study of Romaine (2006), ...
→ In Romaine’s (2006) study, ...

Improving the quality of life of elderly people must take place on the basis of both care and cure
→ Improving elderly people’s quality of life of must take place on the basis of both care and cure

8.2.1 Singular nouns: add ’s

the student’s book
2008’s most popular course
UM’s mission
a relative of Geert’s
an idiosyncrasy of Professor ten Hoove’s

8.2.2 Singular nouns ending in s: add ’s

the boss’s wage
Dickens’s characters
James’s thesis
Strauss’s Vienna
Professor Kempers’s students

8.2.3 Plural nouns ending in s: add s

employees’ salaries
three weeks’ time
the Queen of the Netherlands’ appeal
a million dollars’ worth
the United States’ population

8.2.4 Plural nouns not ending in s: add ’s
women’s rights
the children’s books
the men’s room

8.2.5 Exceptions
• biblical and ancient names (because of tradition)
  Claudius’s successor
  Darius’s empire
  Herodotus’ writings
  Jesus’ philosophy
  Moses’ journey

• words that end in an eez sound or two sibilant sounds (ch, h, s, sh, ts or z) separated
  only by a vowel (because of euphony)
  Achilles’ heel
  Demosthenes’ speeches
  Ganges’ source
  Socrates’ life
  Texas’ population

• expressions for righteousness’ sake, for goodness’ sake.

8.3 Brackets
Use square brackets
• for insertions in quoted material that are not from the original author: e.g. a
  comment, correction, translation, explanation or clarification.
  ‘Her [Lieshout’s] behaviour was appalling’
  [The decision has since been reversed. – Ed.]

• within parentheses
  (The means were 4.67 [SD = 0.5] and 3.90 [SD = 0.7] respectively.)

8.4 Colon
Colons are used as emphatic signposts that point forward to the next clause. They can be
used in place of the words namely, that is, for example, for instance, because, as follows and
therefore.

Do use a colon
• to show a relationship between two main clauses more sharply than a semicolon, or
  lead into an explanation, amplification, qualification or interpretation
  ‘I coach trainee lecturers in this field: try to speak in a less monotonous way, use
  your voice’

  Our study population was not representative of the Dutch population: almost half
  had a high educational level, as opposed to one third of 25- to 45-year-olds in the
  Netherlands
• to introduce a list or series
  Our target market comprises five groups: students, graduates, staff, former staff who are now SenUM members, and external clients
• to indicate a ratio in scientific texts
  the CO₂:O ratio is 10:1
• to introduce a more formal or emphatic or longer quote than comma
  According to Economics Institute director Harm Zuid, this merely shifts the problem: ‘It does not resolve the monopoly of the oil-producing countries’
• between the main title and subtitle of a work
  Measuring child poverty and wellbeing: A literature review
• to introduce a list or series
  Our target market comprises five groups: students, graduates, staff, former staff who are now SenUM members, and external clients
• to indicate a ratio in scientific texts
  the CO₂:O ratio is 10:1
• to introduce a more formal or emphatic or longer quote than comma
  According to Economics Institute director Harm Zuid, this merely shifts the problem: ‘It does not resolve the monopoly of the oil-producing countries’

Do not use a colon
• after headings (being on a separate line and in a different font is enough to set off a heading)
• after namely or for example
• if the lead-in to a list is not a complete independent clause (i.e. do not separate a verb from its complement or a preposition from its object
  The university’s top-ranked programmes are in(·) economics, politics and medicine.
  In this list, for example, the lead-in is not an independent clause; therefore, no colon is used.

Use of capitals
Use an initial capital for the first word after a colon if it starts a subtitle or subheading.

Multidisciplinary fall prevention: Effects, feasibility and costs
We also recommend an initial capital if what follows the colon
• is an independent clause and follows the same syntactic pattern as the next sentence:
  A number of complex issues are involved here: How can students be supported in the prior learning recognition process? How do these students differ from those admitted to programmes by traditional processes?
• is a formal question:
  These issues have led to the primary research question: If a genuine Dutch variant of English indeed exists, is it perceived as legitimate by its speakers?
• indicates internal dialogue:
  At this point Kuipers must be wondering: Have I gone too far this time?

8.5 Comma
In some places the use of commas is mandatory but in others it is optional, which means good use is often a question of judgement and taste. At any rate, fewer commas are used now than in the past. Besides simply indicating a pause in the sentence, they have many uses. These are set out below.

Do use a comma
• in proportional expressions
  The later you pay, the less likely you will get a place in the course
but not in very short ones:
  The sooner the better
• to indicate that a word or phrase has been omitted
  the law faculty has 900 students; the psychology faculty 750
• to set off an introductory phrase
  Founded in 1989, the Language Centre provides university professional support for
  learning and using foreign languages
but not in very short ones:
  In 2005 the university expanded to seven faculties
• to enclose parenthetic material
  Non-EU students, however, will have to sit an IELTS test
  Our teachers, all native or near-native speakers, are highly qualified and well versed
  in didactic methods.
Sometimes not using commas will change the meaning:
  Children, who learn easily, should start school as early as possible40
• to divide adjectives in series which could otherwise use and
  challenging, high-quality programmes
  effective, enjoyable methods.
but not when the first modifies both subsequent elements:
  a prominent theology scholar
  a practice-based learning system.
• to separate two main clauses linked by a conjunction such as but, yet, like, while,
  and, nor, or, for, or so
  The research is in its infancy, but almost all patients with acute infarctions in this
  study showed immediate improvement.
but not in very short ones
  The results were encouraging but inconclusive.
• between all items in a series except the final two
  the Dutch flag is red, white and blue.
Some guides41 recommend using a comma between the final items (The Dutch flag is
  red, white, and blue), but at UM, as in Dutch, we do not unless it is needed to
  prevent ambiguity:
  the faculties of Law, Arts and Social Sciences, and Economics and Business
  Administration).
• to introduce a short quotation
  According to the director, ‘it is time we moved in a new direction’
• to separate groups of three digits
  12,000  €27,416

41 E.g. APA, Chicago, MHRA, Oxford, World Bank
Do not use a comma

- to separate the subject from its verb
  
  A promising line of help for smokers intending to quit(,) is the computer-tailored cessation intervention

- in expressions of time, weights or other measures
  
  4 years 9 months 21 days
  6 feet 3 inches tall
  2 hours 15 minutes 10 seconds

- in street numbers, room numbers and phone numbers
  
  Treurenburg 1167  Room 2157  +31 43 388 2090

- too much. Avoid their overuse by
  
  o moving parenthetical phrases to the start of the sentence
  o setting parenthetical phrases off with parentheses or dashes rather than commas (especially if there is more than one such phrase in the sentence)

  A UM PhD candidate, David Levy – whose book Love and Sex with Robots has already been published – is one of the organisers of the conference.

See also IV.1.5. ABBREVIATIONS: PUNCTUATION

8.6  Dash

The en-dash is ‘stronger than a comma, less formal than a colon, and more relaxed than parentheses’. Use it:

- to set off a single clause or parenthetical material more sharply than a comma

  The attached schedule shows which educational activities, exams and resits you must register for – and when to do it – according to your study year.

  Have questions? Email our secretariat – we will get back to you in five working days.

- if an end date is not yet known

  Jaap Zegers (1963–)

- to indicate coordinate pairs of equal weight

  north–south axis
  case–control study
  cost–benefit analysis
  test–retest reliability
  Maastricht–Aachen airport
  Netherlands–China consortium

- to indicate ranges

  pp. 27–9
  1939–45
  12–24 May
  The Executive Board voted 2–1 to adopt the strategy
  8:30–10:30

See also IV.6.9. NUMBERS: RANGES

8.7 **Exclamation mark**
Broadly speaking, avoid exclamation marks: they look unprofessional and irritate readers. Their sparing use is tolerable for two purposes at UM:
- to draw attention to an important instruction
  Do not forget to remove your document from the scanner!
- in promotional texts
  Don’t wait – register now!

8.8 **Forward slash**
The forward slash is also known as the *virgule, solidus, slant, stroke, oblique* and *diagonal*. You can use it to show many forms of relationships (always closed up on both sides):
- alternatives
  s/he full time/part time
- to stand for *per*
  110 km/sec €1500/month
- as part of some abbreviations
  N/A c/o 24/7
- in dates
  7/12/08
- to show a period overlapping two calendar years
  the 2008/09 intake the 2006/07 financial year
  winter 1939/40 the 1999/2000 academic year.

8.9 **Full stop**
Follow full stops by a single space; double spaces look dated and take up too much space. Use full stops at the end of sentences, but not
- if the sentence which already has some form of stop (e.g. a question mark or exclamation mark)
- after headings, column headings, addresses and captions of one sentence or less
- after listed items when the item does not start with a capital and is not the last in the list (like this one)
- after sentence fragments, e.g.
  Number of participants: 8 to 14 per group

*See also* IV.1.1 TYPES OF ABBREVIATIONS and IV.1.5 PUNCTUATION for use of full stops in abbreviations

8.10 **Hyphen**
There are two types of hyphens. Soft hyphens are used for word division at the end of lines; use the latest Oxford dictionary to check these divisions. Hard hyphens join compound

---

modifiers (e.g. full-time job) and prefixes and suffixes to their bases (e.g. anti-intellectual). Use them sparingly (when in doubt, not at all), and keep the basic pattern of word evolution in mind: data base, data-base, database; wild life, wild-life, wildlife and so on.

8.10.1 Compound modifiers

Compound modifiers, also known as phrasal adjectives, are two or more words used to modify a noun. When they are used attributively (i.e. before the noun), they are usually hyphenated. When they are used as predicates (i.e. after the noun), they are not.

long-term plans → plans for the long term
up-to-date information → the information is up to date
well-planned curriculum → the curriculum was well planned
market-oriented course → the course is market oriented
debt-free year → the year was debt free
high-quality programme → the programme is of high quality
student-friendly facility → the facility is student friendly
country-specific rules → rules that are country specific
UM-related issues → these issues are UM related
six-year-old prototype → the prototype is six years old	
two-thirds majority → a majority of two thirds
27th-floor view → the view from the 27th floor
third-largest city → the city is the third largest
450-page book → the book has 450 pages
two-day conference → the conference last two days
third-century battle → the battle took place in the third century

However, not all compound modifiers before nouns are hyphenated. Because there could be little chance of misreading, you do not need a hyphen if the compound involves:

- a regular adverb (i.e. ending in -ly)
  a highly competitive course → a hugely successful year
- a comparative or superlative
  a higher ranked programme → a lesser paid job
- a date
  December 2003 invoice → October 2003 reorganisation
- a proper noun
  Maastricht University staff → Den Bosch market
- money or percentages
  €20 million project → 17 percent increase
- a noun + numeral or enumerator
  phase II trial → type A student
- a number + abbreviation
  100 m distance → 12 kg weight
  → 5:00 p.m. news

Sometimes adding a hyphen or not to a compound modifier changes its meaning.

more-important people → more important people
deep blue lake → deep-blue lake
two-year-old dogs → two year-old dogs
small scale factory → small-scale factory
When the compound modifier itself consists of an open compound, use an en-dash instead of a hyphen.

pre–World War II  Maastricht University–financed project

You do not usually need a hyphen in noun–noun compound modifiers; because the first word relates equally to second and third words, no confusion is possible.

department store manager  airport departure lounge
national health insurance  professional standards watchdog

8.10.2 Prefixes and suffixes
Most words with prefixes are not hyphenated. In the US, fewer hyphens are used than in the UK (e.g. reelect). But this process is converging on the UK, too, where many words have now lost their hyphens (e.g. misspelling). This is likely to continue; for this reason, avoid using hyphens after the following prefixes.

after, anti, bi, co, counter, extra, infra, inter, intra, macro, mega, meta (except meta-analysis), micro, mid, mini, multi, non, on, out, over, post, pre, pro, pseudo, re, semi, socio, sub, super, supra, time, ultra, un, under

Hyphenate prefixes if

- they end in the same letter the base starts with
  - anti-intellectual
  - co-occur
  - de-emphasise
  - meta-analysis
- the base takes an initial capital
  - anti-Darwinian
  - intra-Community
  - de-Stalinisation
  - pan-European
- there could be momentary misreading
  - non-oil exporting
- co- or ex- is used with a human base
  - co-author
  - co-chair
  - co-defendant
- they are formed using self or quasi, whether used as a noun or as a compound adjective before or after the noun
  - self-destructive
  - self-esteem
- they are part of a newly formed word
  - e-article

44 Source: APA 92
45 But cooperate, coordinate, etc.
e-commerce but note the more established email

**Hyphenate suffixes if**

- they are joined to a proper noun
  - Africa-bound
- they are joined to a numeral
  - 200-fold
- they would be too cumbersome closed up
  - university-wide.

8.10.3 *Phrasal nouns and verbs*

Either hyphenate phrasal nouns or set them as one word, but set their corresponding verbs open.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To flare up</th>
<th>the flare-up</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To follow up</td>
<td>the follow-up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To take over</td>
<td>the takeover</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To come back</td>
<td>the comeback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To hold up</td>
<td>the holdup</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8.10.4 *Suspension hyphen*

When the last element in two coordinate modifiers is identical, you can replace it with a suspension hyphen.

- long- and short-term memory
- two-, four- and six-inch pieces
- part- and full-time staff

You can also do this if the modifier itself is closed up.

- two-, three-, or fourfold
- lower- and uppercase letters
- in- and external funding

Less common is the practice of omitting the identical element if it appears first. Chicago[^46] does not allow *left-handed and -brained executives*, for example, but Oxford[^47] does allow *countrymen and -women*. Use your discretion for this one. Note, however, that the Dutch practice of hyphenating open compounds is not done in English, *e.g.* *water- and soil management*.[^48]

8.11 *Parentheses*

Use parentheses sparingly as their overuse can break up sentence structure and make your writing seem choppy. You can use them:

- to enclose parenthetical information (putting it in parentheses gives this information less emphasis than putting it in commas)

Frans Daniels (46) was the first graduate of the programme MARC regularly organises research seminars (generally on Wednesdays) for PhD candidates to discuss their research.

- to expand on or explain the preceding item:
  Myanmar (formerly Burma)

- to give translations
  You will need to register at the municipal council (*gemeente*)
  The painting sold for £600 (€760)

- to enclose a digression
  She hopes (as we all do) that the project will succeed

- to give abbreviations
  the Language Centre (LC)

- to enclose letters or numbers in a list
  (a) students, (b) staff, and (c) external clients

- to give in-text citations
  (Van de Krol, 2008). Make sure you put the final full stop outside the closing parenthesis.

Do not transfer typical Dutch use of parentheses into English: they can be ambiguous and/or tautological.49

Language courses are available to (full-time) employees
(are they available only to full-time employees, or all employees but full-time ones get priority?)
→ Language courses are only available to full-time employees

Further research is needed (to enquire) into the beneficial role of tailored action plans
→ Further research is needed into the benefits of tailored action plans

8.12 **Question mark**

**Use a question mark**

- after a direct question
  What time is it?

- to make a courtesy question (which does not strictly need a question mark) more polite
  Could you let me know ... ?
  Would you kindly register at our secretariat?

- to indicate editorial doubt
  Agathodaimon (c. 300–?)

- after a question embedded within a longer sentence
  The question is, Which of these paths should we take?
  The Executive Board must decide, Is this really evidence of racism?

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8.13 **Semicolon**

Semicolons are stronger than commas but weaker than full stops. Use them

- to join independent clauses: This includes before words like *however, thus, hence, indeed, accordingly, therefore*, e.g.
  
  Your teaching duties will include courses in the Arts and Culture bachelor’s programme; however, your research fte will be limited to 0.2

  Using a comma rather than a semicolon or full stop between two independent clauses results in an error called a *comma splice*.

- to separate items in a list which themselves have internal punctuation:

  She has worked in the Department of Private, Commercial and Civil Law at Monash University, Australia; in the Department of Contract Law at Konstanz University, Germany; and in private practices in Beijing, Tokyo and London.
9 Quotations

As in usual UK style, use single quotation marks with double marks within them as necessary.\textsuperscript{50} Start a new paragraph for each new speaker. If the quote is spread over more than one paragraph, start each paragraph with a quotation mark but only close the last paragraph with one.

9.1 Punctuation

Introduce short quotes with a comma, and longer or more formal ones with colon. In line with both UK and Dutch style, only put within quotation marks actually what belongs to the quote.

‘I believe the new team will work very well together.’
\[→\] She said, ‘I believe the new team will work very well together.’

‘The year has been a great success.’
\[→\] ‘The year’, he said, ‘has been a great success.’

‘Overall, the year has been a great success.’
\[→\] ‘Overall,’ he said, ‘the year has been a great success.’

‘This is evidence of the “Englishisation” of Europe.’
\[→\] This represents what Phillipson (2006) called Europe’s ‘Englishisation’.

9.2 Capitalisation

Start the quotation with a capital only if it is a complete sentence in itself:

The dean, Professor Louis Boon, said, ‘We are delighted about the award.’

If the quote blends syntactically with the sentence structure and is not separated by a comma or colon, use a lowercase letter to start:

The dean has said that his faculty is ‘delighted about the award’.

Also capitalise the first letter of a quasi-quote such as internal dialogue, which does not require quotation marks:

The rector must be thinking at this point, Shall I resign?

9.3 Block quotations

Set off quotations three full lines or longer from the rest of the text with

\begin{itemize}
  \item indents before each line
  \item a line break (or at least 4pt spacing) both before and after the quote
  \item no quotation marks
  \item one size smaller font (optional)
  \item single line spacing (even in documents with 1.5 or double spacing).
\end{itemize}

9.4 Corrections

In quotations maintain the spelling of the original, as well as the wording, capitalisation, internal punctuation, etc. You can

\begin{itemize}
  \item change single to double quotation marks if there is a quote within the quote
  \item change the first letter to lower- or uppercase as necessary
\end{itemize}

\textsuperscript{50} Though this is often reversed in journalism and popular media
remove the final full stop or change it to a comma
• correct errors that are clearly typographical ones rather than a genuine speaker/writer error
• do light rewording if translating a quote to make it sound natural in English
• do light editing of obvious grammar or other errors when quoting a nonnative speaker. If significant errors mean you would have to do a lot of editing of a direct quote, paraphrase it instead.51

9.5 Ellipses
Use ellipses (three points with a space on either side: ... ) to show that you have omitted certain words or phrases from a quote, or replaced them by another word or phrase for clarification. Do not use them at the start or end of a quote – by its nature it is evident that it is an excerpt.

‘Universities are ... concerned with seeking and extending knowledge across national and linguistic boundaries’ (Zegers & Wilkinson, 2005).
Ritzen is pleased with the results: ‘We are constantly trying to attract more international students ... from around the globe.’

To stop the text from looking busy, only use brackets [...] around the ellipses you have added if the quote has its own ellipses, e.g. for suspense.

Use four spaced points if you have omitted words at the start or end of a sentence (the fourth being a full stop).

According to Gnutzman (2005), ‘a model is an idealisation, from which one can diverge. . . . The primary function of a model is to offer orientation for the learners and not to act as a frame of reference to signal errors’ (p. 117).

9.6 Scare quotes
Use single quotation marks to draw attention to words and phrases as lexical items if
• they are ironic, slang or newly coined (only do this on first reference)
  This is indicative of the ‘massification’ of university education
• you want to distance yourself from the term52
  The library ‘reorganisation’ has resulted in dozens of job losses

Also be aware that so-called has a negative connotation in English which is not present in the Dutch zogenoemd.53 Certainly if you do use either a scare quote or so-called, you do not need to use the other.

9.7 Other uses for quotation marks

51 [sic] can be placed after a quoted error, but this can be unfair and unnecessary (Ritter, R.M. [ed]. [2003]. The Oxford guide to style [p. 192]. Oxford: OUP), especially at UM for nonnative-speaker errors. It is often more prudent to simply provide a subtle ‘silent correction’.
52 But do this sparingly; because it is used ‘to hold up a word for inspection, as if by tongs, providing a cordon sanitaire between the word and the writer’s finer sensibilities’ it can look pretentious. Ritter, R.M. (ed). (2003). The Oxford guide to style (p. 149). Oxford: OUP.
Article titles
Chapter titles
Lectures
Short poems
Short stories
Song titles
Speeches
Television programmes (individual episodes)
Titles with popular nicknames, e.g. Beethoven’s ‘Erotica’ Symphony
Unpublished works
Like most universities and organisations in the Netherlands (and indeed Europe), Maastricht University takes UK spelling as its base form. However, we have replaced those spellings which have essentially been or are potentially being phased out in UK spelling with the American versions (i.e. digraphs and some irregular past tense forms). Others may follow suit later.

The most common instances of variation between UK and US spelling are listed here. For others, check the latest Oxford dictionary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UK</th>
<th>US</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>adviser</td>
<td>advisor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ageing</td>
<td>aging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cancelled, cancelling</td>
<td>canceled, canceling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>catalogue</td>
<td>catalog</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>centimetre</td>
<td>centimeter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>centre</td>
<td>center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>colour (but discoloration)</td>
<td>color</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>defence (n), defense (v)</td>
<td>defence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dialogue</td>
<td>dialog</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>disc (but computer disk)</td>
<td>disk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>enquiry (question); inquiry</td>
<td>inquiry (both)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>enrol, enrolled, enrolling, enrolment</td>
<td>enroll, enrolled, enrolling, enrollment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fulfil, fulfilment, fulfilling, fulfilled</td>
<td>fulfill, fulfillment, fulfilling, fulfilled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>honour</td>
<td>honor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>labour</td>
<td>labor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>metre (but parameter, barometer)</td>
<td>meter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>practise (v), practice (n)</td>
<td>practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>programme (but computer program)</td>
<td>program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sceptic, sceptical</td>
<td>skeptic, skeptical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>skilful, skilfully, skilfulness</td>
<td>skillful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>travelled, traveller, travelling</td>
<td>traveled, traveler, traveling</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 10.1 Digraphs

We do not use the ‘old’ British digraphs (sets of two letters used to represent one sound, e.g. *ae* in *aetiology*, *oe* in *oesophagus*). In the medical sciences, the US spellings are prevalent in international and European journals and are becoming more so in the UK. *Medieval* has already lost its original *ae* (as in *mediaeval*) in UK dictionaries, and this pattern is likely to continue. Thus:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ameba</th>
<th>esophagus</th>
<th>gynecology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>anemia</td>
<td>estrogen</td>
<td>hemoglobin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>diarrhea</td>
<td>etiology</td>
<td>homeopathy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>encyclopedia</td>
<td>fetus</td>
<td>leukemia</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
10.2 Irregular past tense forms
In line with other international style guides\textsuperscript{54} which tend to prefer the regularised forms (and now many UK dictionaries), we are phasing out the older UK forms for certain irregular past tenses which once ended in -t rather than -ed. Thus:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>dreamed</th>
<th>kneeled</th>
<th>learned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>earned</td>
<td>leaned</td>
<td>spelled</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NB. In some cases the regularised form is that common in the UK, e.g. dived, fitted, forecasted, lighted. And the past tense of get is got in the UK, gotten in the US.

10.3 -ise versus -ize
The choice between -ise and -ize in words like organise is a difficult one as both forms have strong etymological bases.\textsuperscript{55} There are three options here.

- **-ize only**
  
  This is the usual form in US spelling.

- **combination of -ise and -ize**
  
  This is used by Oxford University Press, Unesco, WHO, etc. It means using the z spelling for words derived from the Greek -izo and any other words that do not require the s spelling because of their own etymology (e.g. the Greek -lusis, such as analyse). Thus apologize, categorize, finalize, internationalize, maximize, organize and realize, but advertise, catalyse, compromise, enterprise, exercise, paralyse, supervise and so on.\textsuperscript{56}

- **-ise only**
  
  This is the preferred form at UM: it is the more recognisably UK form; it eliminates the need to deal with exceptions; and it is more efficient when using the ‘find and replace’ function. It is also used by the European Commission uses it for all EU documents.

10.4 Problematic plurals
Irregular plurals for words with Latin or Greek roots can cause problems in English; the state of flux of the language means that some such plurals are retained (e.g. phenomena) but others are being replaced with the English -s form (e.g. forums). Below are the plural forms we use.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>algae</th>
<th>gymnasiums</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>appendices (in books)</td>
<td>indexes (in books)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>appendixes (in people, animals)</td>
<td>indices (in maths, economics, science)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bacteria</td>
<td>media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bases</td>
<td>memorandums</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bureaus</td>
<td>nuclei</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>crematoriums</td>
<td>phenomena</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>crises</td>
<td>referendums</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{54} E.g. Unesco (2004). Style manual for the presentation of English-language texts intended for publication by Unesco (2\textsuperscript{nd} edn, p. 33)


\textsuperscript{56} Unesco (p. 10) also includes a floating category with words which can be spelled either way, such as authorise, civilise and legalise.
curricula  schemas

data     symposia

forums  theses
To display data, the clearest and most economical method is a graphic like a table or figure. These should be as simple as possible with no unnecessary or duplicated material, and take the same style and format throughout the document. They should also be understandable on their own. Do use the surrounding text to point out the main points, but remember that if you discuss every detail you would not need the table.

11.1 Referring to tables and figures in the text
Use an initial capital in the text when referring to a specific table or figure, but use lowercase general references.

The data in Table 1 show the enrolment rate
The table below presents the data.

NB. Note that using a specific reference is wiser if your document will be typeset later – you may not yet know whether the table will be below, left, right or overleaf.

11.2 Headings
Make table and figure headings brief: use noun forms and supply essential information only: for instance, if the whole document is clearly about UM, there is no need to put UM in the table heading. You also do not need to give background information or describe results in the heading.

High student enrolment in 2008/09
→ Student enrolment in 2008/09
Students who enrol in new law courses
→ Student enrolment in new law courses

Use a colon, full stop or tab space to separate the table number and the heading itself. Use an initial capital only for the first word, and abbreviations as necessary.

Table 4.1: Tuition fees for non-EU/EEA students

Ensure that row and column headings in tables and any headings used in figures have parallel syntax.

Steer towards results → Ability to steer towards results
Conceptual thinking → Ability to think conceptually
Integrity
Negotiating skills
Customer orientation

11.3 Figures
Figures are the best option is you have lots of data – say, 20 or more numbers – or data which cannot be presented in a table. Their types include:

- cartoons
- charts
- diagrams
- drawings
- graphs (bar, line, etc.)
- maps
- photographs
- scatter plots.

Use the abbreviation Fig. in the title but write out Figure in the text. Note that the title should appear below the figure.
Fig. 3: Design of a longitudinal study into cognitive ageing determinants  
See Figure 3 for details of the study design

11.4 Tables
Tables are best used when you have 4 to 20 numbers (if you have three or fewer, put these in running text). To minimise clutter, use abbreviations and close symbols (+, -, > etc.) up to the letters/numbers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 2</th>
<th>UM staff composition by sex 2005/06</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staff group</td>
<td>2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic staff</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total staff</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11.4.1 Format
Font size
- **Heading**: same size as the main text
- **Table text and caption**: one size smaller than the main text
- **Notes**: two sizes smaller the than main text

Alignment
- **Left align** the first column heading
- **Right align or centre** column text with numbers only
- **Centre** all column headings except the first, and all column text with mixed units.

Most important, for aesthetic reasons minimise the use of rules (i.e. lines). Few publishers use vertical rules at all, and often the only horizontal ones are at the head and tail.

11.4.2 Abbreviations
In tables use abbreviations (€, %, km, etc.) as needed. In the heading, place units in parentheses rather than writing them out as words.

Income of Dutch university graduates (€/yr)

If all the numbers in one column are of the same unit, place the symbol in parentheses in the column title instead of repeating it in each row.

You can also use N/A for *not applicable*, and an en-dash (–) to mean *data not available* (as opposed to 0, which means *no amount*).

11.4.3 Notes
Give additional information in footnotes to the table (remember to place them directly under the table, not at the bottom of the page in the general footnotes). These are normally one size smaller than the table font and two sizes smaller than the surrounding text. There are four kinds: they should appear in the following order, each starting on new line and ending in a full stop.
- General notes
These provide information about the whole table, or explain abbreviations/symbols. Introduce them using Note: or Notes:

- Notes on specific parts
  For a note to a particular row, column or entry, use superscript letters from left to right, top to bottom, or, if the table includes mathematical or chemical equations that could be confused with letters, use the following symbols: * † ‡ § ¶ # (see also IV.6.5. FOOTNOTES).

- Notes on probability levels
  Mark these with an asterisk (*).

- Source notes
  Introduce these using Source: or Sources:. How you set them out exactly, especially in academic papers, will depend on the chosen referencing style. An APA example for a book source is given below.

V Usage guide

1 Format and headings

Try to make the format of your document as clear and accessible as possible. It should invite readers, not put them off. This means using:

- clear font
- short paragraphs
- plenty of white space
- bullet lists
- bold headings.

In informal texts (not academic papers) you can highlight certain words or phrases using bold or underlined font – but do not overdo this, or mix highlighting styles in the one document. The more things you highlight, the less there is that stands out.

Unless you are using columns, align your text to the left rather than justifying it. This makes for more white space, less distorted word spacing and easier reading.\(^{57}\)

**Headings**

When possible, split up long text with subheadings. This is helpful to both reader and writer: it makes your document look more readable, and helps you identify repeated information.

If the document’s aim is to supply information specifically to staff or students, consider using first-person questions as headings.

- How do I locate books?
- Where can I get help?

If the readership could be a combination of groups with more varied reasons for reading the text, use informative headings.

- The UM Scholarship Fund: Information for investors and applicants
- National influences on EU processes

Try to limit the number of heading tiers to three (sometimes this is impossible in very long documents), and the words in each heading to a maximum of 10. Use at least two sections per tier, aligning the number of each new tier below the first letter of the previous. Minimise punctuation (use full stops only between numbers, and colons only between titles and subtitles), and underline words only, not numbers.

1 Heading one
2 Heading one
   2.1 Heading two
      2.1.1 Heading three
      2.1.2 Heading three

2.2 Heading two

Capitalisation

There are two styles for capitalising headings.

- **Headline style** usually means capitalising the first and all ‘main’ words. The criteria for judging main words, however, are complicated, sometimes arbitrary and extremely long.

- **Sentence style** is the simpler and more streamlined style and therefore our preferred style.\(^{58}\) This entails capitalising only the first word of the title and subtitle (if separated by a colon, not a dash), and proper names.

\(^{58}\) Along with Chicago, Unesco, and WHO
## Sentences

There is no reason to shy away from the basic structure of subject–verb–object. Also, keep these close together by not inserting too much information (e.g. five or more words) between them.

Texts that seem convoluted and difficult to read can usually be improved by

- casting sentences such that the ‘characters’ in your ‘story’ are also the grammatical subjects\(^59\) (i.e. prioritise action, avoid passives)
- minimising metalanguage
  
  At this point we need to mention that you seem to have taken more stress leave than might be warranted
  
  \(\rightarrow\) You have taken an unacceptable amount of stress leave
  
  Our research seems to suggest that there may be a causal connection between a certain level of exposure to high-power lines and some instances of leukemia.
  
  \(\rightarrow\) Our research suggests that exposure to high-power lines may cause leukemia.\(^60\)

### Length

Contemporary Dutch tends to use shorter sentences and more sentence fragments (i.e. those without a main verb) than English.\(^61\) This can make for choppy style. On average, sentences should be 15 to 20 words; 30 plus will grow hard to read. They can contain up to three ideas, but complex sentences are best split up, especially if they contain instructions or are designed to market a product (e.g. the university).

Having said that, you need to know how to manage longer sentences too; the important thing is ‘not the number of words in a sentence, but how easily we get from beginning to end while understanding everything in between’.\(^62\) This means you need to have tight control of punctuation and wording.

### Emphasis

Place the information you have already talked about or that the reader is likely to be familiar with at the start of the sentence, and new information or that which you most want to emphasise at the end. In this position it is structurally most prominent, and sets up the following sentence in which you will probably expand on it. Williams suggests switching the normal subject–complement order to achieve this, e.g.

> Through these questions (already discussed) run some complex issues (yet to discuss)\(^63\)

Dutch writers often do the opposite, and place de-emphasised information at the end of the sentence. Burrough-Boenisch calls this ‘frontal overload’; you will find that it often happens when the writer has started the sentence with especially (e.g. Especially in the social

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\(^{63}\) Ibid, p. 55
Because the rhythm is so unexpected in English, you will need to reverse it.

Normalisation can imply a limitation to freedom of movement according to relatives and caregivers

→ According to relatives and caregivers, normalisation can imply a limitation to freedom of movement

---

3 Paragraphs

In short, paragraphs should have a brief opener, indicating what the reader can expect from the paragraph (or document, in the case of the first paragraph). Do not shy away from such straightforward openers as

This report discusses ...
This section explains ...

The paragraph itself can then be structured in two ways, depending on the material:

- in inverted pyramid style, with the most important information or newest news at the start
- chronologically, from the most distant to most recent events.

Throughout the paragraphs, ensure that the author has used an ‘identifiable topic string’ – that is, a similar grammatical subject in each sentence. This makes the paragraph seem focused and the reader can easily follow the main actors and action. By the same token, avoid lots of variations in terms for the same thing: this leaves the reader wondering if they are separate things.

3.1 Length

Paragraphs should range from 3 to 10 sentences, depending on genre – in journalism and PR copywriting one- or two-sentence paragraphs are not uncommon, but should not be overdone. Avoid very long paragraphs at all costs: separating paragraphs is as much about aesthetics as logic, so if a paragraph looks dauntingly long, do split it even if you do not need to for logical reasons.

You can also use lists or tables to thin out dense paragraphs (see IV.5.2. LISTS and IV.11. TABLES & FIGURES). In most cases, however, tight editing will help you eliminate needless words and phrases to keep your client’s paragraphs manageable. Often chunks of information are simply recycled from old documents, which makes for disjointed, repetitious writing (and reading). Always question whether the reader needs to know every piece of information.

3.2 Indents and line breaks

The usual Dutch style is to start paragraphs flush left on a new line, with line breaks between sections. But keep in mind that even our internal documents are read by staff, students and others from all over the world (who often read the English version of letters, regulations, etc. because they cannot follow the Dutch version). Thus, change Dutch paragraph format to the regular English style, with each new paragraph

- separated by a line break (this is the most reader-friendly way), or
- indented (this saves more trees).

Whichever of these options you choose, use line breaks (or at least 4 pt spacing) before and after extracts and set off lists.

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4 Grammar

4.1 Active and passive voice

In most cases the active voice is a better choice than passive. It makes your writing more lively and direct, so aim to use it in the vast majority of your writing.

- the matter will be considered
- we will consider the matter
- the library was closed by the Executive Board
- the Executive Board closed the library
- it was mentioned by the students that
- the students mentioned that
- a meeting will be held by management
- management will meet
- when installing updates, other programs should be closed
- when you instal updates, close other programs

Using the passive voice:

- makes your writing longwinded, especially when used with verbs such as attempt, begin, intend, hope, order, propose
  The order was attempted to be carried out
  It can be hoped to be successful

- can obscure the agent at best, and indicate a shirking of responsibility at worst
  Major investments will be made
  A woman was attacked

- is duller and takes longer to comprehend
  The programme is required to be reviewed

The active voice, however, is not necessarily the best choice in every case. Use the passive if you have good reason for it: i.e. if the responsible agent is:

- unknown
  A mistake had been made in the wiring

- irrelevant or understood
  The form must be notarised (better than the active alternative: You must have a notary public notarise the form)

- your client (and therefore not in your interest to point the finger at)
  The teacher has been delayed
  The money has been lost

You can also use the passive to:

- emphasise different elements in the sentence:

---

The dramatists of the Restoration are little esteemed today (focus is on the dramatists). Modern readers have little esteem for the dramatists of the Restoration (focus on modern readers’ tastes).  

- be less aggressive
  
You did not pay the fee on time.

→ We have not received your fee.

4.2 Agreement

In the US, collective nouns usually take singular verbs. In the UK and elsewhere, they can take either singular or plural verbs depending on notional agreement. More common nouns are often take plural verbs, e.g. the police/people/staff are ... 

4.2.1 Singular verbs

Use a singular verb for clichés, expressions or phrases that are grammatically plural but can be taken as a single entity or theme:

- tea and coffee is all they serve
- a profound sadness and regret comes with this news
- confirming applicants’ qualifications and calling their referees is left to the receptionists

The proper names of countries and organisations are taken as singular.

- The United States is at war
- The Netherlands has voted against the EU constitution
- The United Nations has little real power

If the subject of your sentence is singular, use a singular verb even if other nouns are connected using with, as well as, in addition to, except, together with, no less than, or not to mention.

- Her coursework as well as her exam result was outstanding
- The institution, together with all its subsidiaries, is obliged to ...

4.2.2 Plural verbs

Remember to use plural verbs with plural nouns like data (singular: datum). There is a trend in English to treat this as a singular noun, but given that in Dutch it takes a plural verb we will remain using doing so in English at UM.

- These data show ...

Media, too, takes a plural verb unless used to refer to the mass communication media as a singular entity, where it is treated as a collective noun.

- the media is becoming pervasive

4.2.3 Singular or plural verbs

Use a singular verb for words ending in -ics (usually scientific or academic fields) when suggesting a singular body of knowledge.

---


Statistics is central to the curriculum
Economics is seen as a soft science
Ethics is a branch of philosophy

But when referring to practices, the verb is plural.

The politics of the whole process are reprehensible.

Use singular verbs for entities seen as acting as a whole, and plural verbs for those made up of constituent parts acting individually.

The board has agreed on the issue
The board are divided on the issue
The committee was unaware of the matter
A majority of the committee were unaware of the matter
The couple were married in spring
Each couple was asked to pledge €50

4.2.4  **Definite and indefinite articles**

With words like *number, percentage* and *proportion*, use

- a singular verb with a definite article
  - The proportion of direct government funding *is* increasing
  - The number of English-taught programmes *is* growing.

- a plural verb with an indefinite article
  - A large percentage of students are self-funded
  - A great number of books are not being returned.

4.2.5  **Sums of money and other numbers**

Use a singular verb if your focus is on the sum itself.

Twenty euros is equal to about 18 guilders
Six weeks is sufficient to write a bachelor’s essay

See also V.4.5. PRONOUN–VERB AGREEMENT

4.3  **Articles**

Use *a* for words that start with a consonant sound, and *an* for words that start with a vowel sound.

- a eulogy
- a historical event
- a hyphothesis
- a UM student
- a URL
- an @ sign
- an 11-year-old
- an LLB degree
- an MA programme
- an X-Files episode

4.4  **Modifiers**

4.4.1  **Dangling modifiers**

Also known as unattached, hanging or misrelated participles, dangling modifiers occur when the modifier has no clear – or a clearly wrong – referent.
When trying to log on, the system rejects my password.  

After separating the participants into groups, Group A was tested.  

Tutoring first-year students and reporting to the department manager, your responsibilities will gradually expand.  

Yesterday, after conferring with my senior national security advisers and following extensive consultations with our coalition partners, Saddam Hussein was given one last chance...  

4.4.2 Misplaced modifiers  
Misplaced modifiers make sentences ambiguous due to the odd or illogical placement of the modifier. You can avoid them by putting the modifier as close as possible to whatever it modifies.  

The investigator tested the participants using this procedure  
Is the investigator or participants using the procedure?  

→ Using this procedure, the investigator tested the participants.  

4.4.3 Word order  
One of the most common examples of transfer from Dutch is adjective placement in English. Except in some fixed or poetic expressions (e.g. sky blue), adjectives in English always precede nouns.  

Tutor English  
→ English tutor  
Manager sales  
→ Sales manager  
Office Student Affairs  
→ Student Affairs Office (or Office of Student Affairs)  
Vacancy officer communications  
→ Communications officer vacancy  
Coordinator courses section Dutch  
→ Dutch section course coordinator  

4.5 Pronouns  
A major part of editing for nonnative-speaking clients involves replacing repeated nouns with pronouns to improve flow. In doing this, make sure that the antecedent is clear.  

Participants were seated in individual booths. We provided participants with a persuasive communication about skin self-examination. The persuasive communication was either gain- or loss-framed. After reading the persuasive
communication, participants completed the dependent measures. Finally, participants were debriefed and received their fee.

→ Participants were seated in individual booths and provided with either a gain- or loss-framed persuasive communication about skin self-examination. They were instructed to read it and complete the dependent measures. They were then debriefed and paid.

Pronoun–verb agreement
Some pronouns always take a singular verb:

Everyone is entitled to a free language course
Anyone who has paid is guaranteed a place

Others include:
anybody everyone
anyone nobody
every no one
everybody someone
each (Unless it is not the subject, as in Each essay is marked twice, but rather is in apposition, e.g. We each have our own priorities.)

either/or, neither/nor
If the subjects are singular, use a singular verb, but if one (or both) of the subjects is plural, especially the second one, use a plural verb.

Neither Geert nor Hetty is attending
Neither Geert nor his teachers are attending.
Neither students nor staff are eligible.

If a pronoun follows the verb, it agrees with the last antecedent:

Neither Geert nor his teachers knew their way around
Neither Geert nor Matthias knew his way around
Neither Geert nor Hetty knew their way around (plural pronoun for singular but mixed-sex antecedents).

Either takes a singular verb unless followed by of, it which case it becomes plural:

either candidate is acceptable
either of them are acceptable.

See also V.4.2. AGREEMENT

4.6 Folklore rules
‘Classroom’ or ‘folklore’ rules are those many of use learned as schoolchildren and that continue to be taught to both native and nonnative English speakers, but which either have no grammatical basis or are buried by mass usage to the contrary. There is greater recognition now that ‘We must reject as folklore any rule that is regularly ignored by otherwise careful, educated, and intelligent writers of first-rate prose.’

Most style guides now agree that you can do any of the following things, though sometimes your choice will be guided by how formal the text is.

• Begin a sentence with and or but

And who would pay for this refurbishment?
But if this behaviour in patients is not acknowledged, it cannot be treated.

- **End a sentence with a preposition**
  If you decide to write your thesis in second year, be aware of the commitment you are taking on.
  The attached schedule shows which educational activities, exams and resits you must register for

- **Split infinitives**
  We expect to more than double our student intake next year
  You learn to effectively use practical techniques to analyse other people’s work

- **Use *that* for people**
  Any résumés and applicants that are yet to be dealt with ...
  It is not just students that can reap the rewards; the whole university benefits.

- **Use *whose* for things**
  The Library Committee, whose chair Milan Essers ...

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78 The few that recommend against this do so solely to avoid antagonising their readership, e.g. Allen, J. (2003). The BBC news style guide. London: BBC Training & Development: ‘grammatical martinets everywhere ... get almost apoplectic if they hear one’ (p. 45).
79 You can use *who for people, which for animals and things, and that for people, animals and things.*
5.1  **UK and US differences**

The differences between US and UK vocabulary are for the most part mutually intelligible. But for reasons of consistency and to avoid any potential confusion (e.g. *ground floor vs first floor*), use British vocabulary (except in the obvious cases of proper names, e.g. *Alumni Office*).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UK</th>
<th>US</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>autumn</td>
<td>fall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>carpark</td>
<td>parking lots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>driving licence</td>
<td>driver’s licence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fill in a form</td>
<td>fill out a form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>flat</td>
<td>apartment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for ages</td>
<td>in ages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ground floor</td>
<td>first floor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lawyer</td>
<td>attorney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lift</td>
<td>elevator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oblige</td>
<td>obligate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>petrol</td>
<td>gasoline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>take a decision</td>
<td>make a decision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>transport</td>
<td>transportation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.3  **Jargon**

Jargon (also known as *bafflegab, gobbledygook* and *officialese*) is useful shorthand for people in the same professional field, who all know what it means. When used in promotional texts, however, it is pretentious; used in documents people need to understand to get essential information, it is downright unethical. Keep in mind that:

- words in fashion now may not be in a few years, so documents full of jargon will date fast
- jargon confuses even native speakers, so its effect on nonnative speakers will be multiplied
- your aim should always be for the clearest communication possible, so remove any words or phrases that are deliberately vague or obscure clarity in any way.

The university continues to be a net supplier of laureates to other universities as the consequence of our inability to dovetail external recruitment with in-house talent retention and failure to maximise our cognisance of the global talent pool, test it systematically to determine whether transference of talent to Maastricht is viable for said talent, and eliminate the insufficient recruitment competences and perceived restrictions to offering truly competitive proposals.

→ We are losing staff to other universities because we are not attracting enough recruits or retaining current staff. We need to know more about the labour market to find out whether potential staff view coming to Maastricht as a viable option. We also need to improve our recruiters’ skills and our offers to potential staff.

**Other jargon**

| actionable | scenario |

---

dovetail    synergy
empowerment    visibility
interface    visioning process

Keep in mind that removing jargon and aiming for clarity does not mean ‘dumbing down’ your (or other people’s) work. It means controlling the information so the subject and action are clear and move from A to B logically. Aside from generally promoting a poor image of the university, there can be direct repercussions if you do not do this (or if you cannot convince the client to).

- With internal texts, readers will misinterpret information, and the university will lose time and money through having to deal with their questions or their not following instructions properly.
- Academic texts may be rejected from journals on linguistic grounds.

5.3 Wordiness

Too often, information is unnecessarily complicated by inexperienced writers or simply obscured behind unnecessary words. If you can cut a word out with no loss of meaning, do it. You will often find that removing wordiness exposes some writing for what it is: a lot of hot air. This means that focusing on the information you need to convey – and encouraging your clients to do the same – will result in clearer, more streamlined text.

5.3.1 Remove false subjects

One way to reduce wordiness is to remove the false subjects there is, there are, it is, etc.

- There were seven patients who took part
  → Seven patients took part
- It is clear that more research is needed
  → Clearly, more research is needed
- There are four applicants who have the right qualifications
  → Four applicants have the right qualifications
- It is their intention substantially to strengthen the existing relations between science and practice.
  → They intend to strengthen the existing relations between science and practice.

5.3.2 Replace wordy phrases with single words

In most cases you can replace the following words with about.

- concerning the matter of with reference to
- in connection with with regard to

Likewise, these phrases all simply mean because.

- based on the fact that in consideration of the fact that
- by virtue of in light of the fact that
- due to of the fact that in view of the fact that
- for the reason that on account of
- given the fact that on the grounds that

---

Replace the following with *if or if so.*

if it should transpire that
if this is the case
in the event that

Use *though* for these phrases.

despite the fact that
in spite of the fact that
regardless of the fact that

You can replace many wordy phrases with a modal verb.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phrase</th>
<th>Equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>it is possible that</td>
<td>may, might, could</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>it could happen that</td>
<td>may, might, could</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the possibility exists for</td>
<td>may, might, could</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>it is crucial necessary/important that</td>
<td>must/should</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>there is a need/necessity for</td>
<td>must, need</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>is in a position to</td>
<td>can</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>is able to</td>
<td>can</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>has the opportunity to</td>
<td>can</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>has the capacity for</td>
<td>can</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>has the ability to</td>
<td>can</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

And keep an eye out for adverbial phrases, which usually have a one-word equivalent.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phrase</th>
<th>Equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>on a daily basis</td>
<td>daily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on an informal basis</td>
<td>informally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on a routine basis</td>
<td>routinely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in a speedy manner</td>
<td>fast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on an personal level</td>
<td>personally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in an unusual fashion</td>
<td>unusually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in an unpredictable way</td>
<td>unpredictably</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of a challenging nature</td>
<td>challenging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of a hostile character</td>
<td>hostile</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other examples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phrase</th>
<th>Equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a great number of</td>
<td>many</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a large proportion of</td>
<td>many</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>all of</td>
<td>all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a university environment</td>
<td>university</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>as far as x is concerned</td>
<td>as for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>as to whether</td>
<td>whether</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>at the present time</td>
<td>now</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>at this point in time</td>
<td>now</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>call your attention to the fact that</td>
<td>remind/inform you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for the purpose of</td>
<td>to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in addition to</td>
<td>and, also</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in excess of</td>
<td>more than, over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in order for</td>
<td>for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in order to</td>
<td>to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in the absence of</td>
<td>without</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in the area of</td>
<td>in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in the field of</td>
<td>in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in the vicinity of</td>
<td>near</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>is of the opinion that</td>
<td>thinks/believes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
meet up with → meet
miss out on → miss
the majority of → most
visit with → visit
with the exception of → except

5.3.3 Replace long or pompous words with simple words

amongst → among
approximately → about, around
assist, facilitate → help
commence, initiate → start
concerning, regarding → about
consequently → so, then
constitute → form
demonstrate → show
deploy → use
elucidate → explain
employ → use
endeavour → try
eventuality → result, possibility
necessity → need
numerous → many
objective → aim, goal
participate → take part
possess → have, own
purchase → buy
remuneration → pay
request → ask
residence → home
state, opinion → say
subsequently → later
sufficient → enough
terminate → end
utilise → use
whilst → while

5.3.4 Remove redundancy
Some adjectives are known as absolute or incomparable, which means they should not be modified: i.e. a project can be either complete or not; saying it is utterly complete does not make it more final. Likewise, a programme is either unique – i.e. the only one of its kind – or it is not: calling it totally unique does not make it more so.

Avoid modifying the following adjectives and others like them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Absolute</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Perfect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adequate</td>
<td>Exhausted</td>
<td>Possible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete</td>
<td>Finished</td>
<td>Supreme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedicated</td>
<td>Impossible</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entire</td>
<td>Infinite</td>
<td>Unique</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal</td>
<td>Necessary</td>
<td>Useless</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Another type of redundancy is adding an unnecessary category after an adjective.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Redundancy Description</th>
<th>Corrected Word</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>red in colour</td>
<td>red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>heavy in weight</td>
<td>heavy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>round in shape</td>
<td>round</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>large in size</td>
<td>large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shorter in length</td>
<td>shorter</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other examples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Redundancy Description</th>
<th>Corrected Word</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>added bonus</td>
<td>bonus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>advance planning</td>
<td>planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aged four years old</td>
<td>four</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>alongside of</td>
<td>alongside</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>an early time</td>
<td>early</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>as from</td>
<td>from</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>both ... as well as</td>
<td>both ... and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>brief summary</td>
<td>summary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>close proximity</td>
<td>close</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>combine together</td>
<td>combine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>consensus of opinion</td>
<td>consensus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>each and every</td>
<td>each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>economics field</td>
<td>economics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.g. ... etc.</td>
<td>e.g./etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>equally as</td>
<td>equally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>exactly the same</td>
<td>the same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eyewitness</td>
<td>witness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>final result</td>
<td>result</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>first and foremost</td>
<td>first</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>free gift</td>
<td>gift</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>future outlook</td>
<td>outlook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>future plans</td>
<td>plans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>general consensus</td>
<td>consensus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in the area of private law</td>
<td>in private law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in the field of physics</td>
<td>in physics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in this day and age</td>
<td>today, nowadays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>midway between</td>
<td>between</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>new innovation</td>
<td>innovation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>new recruit</td>
<td>recruit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>one single</td>
<td>one, a single</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>past history</td>
<td>history</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>past memories</td>
<td>memories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>period of time</td>
<td>period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>personal beliefs</td>
<td>beliefs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>personal opinion</td>
<td>opinion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pre-existing</td>
<td>existing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prior experience</td>
<td>experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reason why</td>
<td>reason</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>return back</td>
<td>return</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>safe haven</td>
<td>haven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>split apart</td>
<td>split</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>terrible tragedy</td>
<td>tragedy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the month of May</td>
<td>May</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
the year 2000 → 2000
two weeks’ duration → two weeks
three hours long → three hours
ultimate outcome → outcome
upcoming → coming
various different → different
visible to the eye → visible
whether or not → whether
within → in
20-minute period → 20 minutes

5.3.5 Remove empty words
Edit ‘filler’ words out; many are so overused as to have become meaningless, and often they simply detract rather than intensify what follows. Without them the text will be stronger and more direct.

absolutely  good  rather
interesting  bad  really
definitely  pretty  totally
fun  quite  very
funny

5.3.6 Replace nominalisations with verbs
Nominalisations are verbs disguised as nouns: *make a decision* instead of *decide*; *perform an analysis* instead of *analyse*. Avoid them, because they disguise action and take longer for readers to process. Whenever you find yourself using empty verbs like *make, do, give, have, provide, perform,* and *conduct* followed by a long or abstract noun ending in -ion, -ment, -ance, -ive, etc., stop and rewrite your sentence with focus on the main verb.

conduct an interview → interviewed
conduct an investigation → investigate
give an answer to → answer
give immediate consideration → consider immediately
have a discussion → discuss
have an exchange of views → exchange views
have reservations about → doubt
hold the opinion → believe
make a decision → decide
make a distinction → distinguish
make a recommendation → recommend
make a selection → choose/select
make an alteration → change, alter
make an attempt → try
our intention is to → we intend to
perform an analysis → analysed
provide a solution → solve
raise an objection → object
reach a conclusion → conclude
reach an agreement → agree
result in a strengthening of → strengthened
stand in opposition to → oppose
### VI Appendix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UM word list</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**A**
- ABP pension fund
- Absence and Reintegration Policy
- Academic Paper Dossier
- Accounting & Information Management (FEBA department)
- Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders (NVAO)
- Administrative Services
- Age-Related Hours Regulation
- Alumni Circle Brussels, Alumni Circle The Hague etc.
- AlumniNet
- Analysing Europe (MA)
- Artificial Intelligence (MSc)
- Arts and Culture (BA)
- Arts and Heritage: Policy, Management and Education (MA)
- Arts and Sciences (MA)
- Association of Dutch Universities (VSNU; no def. art. for abbrev.)
- AthenaDesktop
- Authorisation for Temporary Stay (MVV)

**B**
- Bachelor (prop. noun) e.g. Bachelor of Arts in International Journalism etc.
- bachelor–master structure
- Bicycle Scheme
- Binding Study Advice (BSA)
- bio-based economy
- Board of Admissions
- Board of Appeal for Examinations (CBE)
- Board of Appeal for Higher Education
- Board of Deans
- Board of Examiners
- Bulletin of Acts and Decrees
- Business and Enterprise Liaison Office
- Business Research (MPhil)

**C**
- Cardiovascular Biology and Medicine (MPhil)
- Cardiovascular Center (HVC)
- CArdiovascular Research Institute Maastricht (CARIM)
- Care and Public Health Research Institute (CAPHRI)
- Center for Organizational Leadership
Central Admissions Office
Central Electoral Committee
Central Register of Higher Education Study Programmes (CROHO)
Centre for Contract Research
Centre for Gender and Diversity (CGD)
Centre for Higher Education Development (CHE)
Centre for Work and Income (CWI)
Centre of Entrepreneurship
Certificate of Admission
Certificate of Enrolment
chair – the Social Medicine chair, the Marketing–Finance Interface chair
Childcare Act
Citizen Service Number
Civil Code (BW)
Cognitive Neuroscience, Neuropsychology and Psychopathology (MSc)
Collaborating Centre for Development of Human Resources for Health
Collective Employment Agreement of the Special (Dutch) Universities (VKK-CAO)
Collective Labour Agreement of Dutch Universities (CAO-NU)
colloquium doctum
Conference and Events Office
Confidential Advisers’ Office
Confidential Committee
Conflicts at Work Procedure
Coordinating Directors’ Board
Criminal Law and Criminology (FL department)
Cultures of Arts, Science and Technology (MPhil)

D
Delft University of Technology
department (com. noun), Department of Quantitative Economics (proper name), the quantitative economics department
departments of Quantitative Economics and Forensic Law
Director of Studies
Directorate-General for International Cooperation (DGIS)
Disability Act (WAO)
Documentation and Mail Services
doctoral dissertation
DSM–Maastricht University India Graduate Scholarship Programme
Dutch Association for Bioethics (NVBe)
Dutch Law (LLB)
Dutch Law (LLM)
Dutch National Union of Students (LSVb)
Dutch Validation Council (DVC)

E
Econometrics and Operations Research (BSc)
Econometrics and Operations Research (MSc)
Economic and Financial Research (MPhil)
Economics (BSc)
Economics (FEBA department)
Education and Examination Regulations (EEF)
Education and Exams Office, FEBA
Education Committee
Education Desk
Education Quality Assurance Steering Group (SKO)
Education, Research and Internationalisation Committee (OOI)
Educational Development & Research (FEBA department)
Educational Technological Expertise Centre
Erasmus University Rotterdam
Eindhoven University of Technology
Eligibility for Permanent Invalidity Benefit (Restrictions) Act (WVP)
Employees’ Council
Employment Conditions Selection Model
EU Law in the World Economy (LLM)
Euregion
European Association of Distance Teaching Universities (EADTU)
European Association of International Education (EAIE)
European Association of Labour Economists (EALE)
European Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students (ERASMUS)
European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL)
European Credit Transfer System (ECTS)
European Development Fund (ED)
European Documentation Centre (EDC)
European Framework Programme
European Graduate School of Neuroscience (Euron)
European Institute for Public Administration (EIPA)
European Law Moot Court Competition (ELMC)
European Law School (LLB)
European Law School (LLM)
European National Information Centre on Academic Recognition and Mobility (ENIC)
European Public Affairs (MA)
European Public Health (BSc)
European Quality Improvement System (EQUIS)
European Studies (BA)
European Studies (MA)
European Studies on Society, Science and Technology (MA)
Europe—China School of Law
Examination Committee
Exceptional Medical Expenses Act (AWBZ)
Executive Board
Experimental Psychology (FPN department)

**F**
F.C. Donders Centre for Cognitive Neuroimaging (FCDC)
faculty (com. noun), Faculty of Psychology (proper name), psychology faculty
Faculty Board
Faculty Council
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASoS)
Faculty of Economics and Business Administration (FEBA)
Faculty of Health, Medicine and Life Sciences (FHML)
Faculty of Humanities and Sciences
Faculty of Law (FL)
Faculty of Psychology and Neuroscience (FPN)
Faculty Office
Federation of Institutes for International Education in the Netherlands (FION)
Finance (FEBA department)
Financial Economics (MSc)
Fiscal Economics (BSc)
Fiscal Economics (MSc)
Flexible Retirement Pension (FPU)
Forum Maastricht
fte

G
General Administrative Law Act (AWB)
General Child Benefit Act (AKW)
General Old-Age Pensions Act (AOW)
General and Technical Services
Globalisation and Law (LLM)
Graduate School for Literary Studies (OSL)
Graduate School of Science, Technology and Modern Culture (WTMC)
Guesthouse

H
HAN University, Nijmegen
Hasselt University
Health Insurance Act
Health Professions Education (MSc)
Health Sciences (BSc)
Health Sciences (MPhil)
Healthy Nutrition Innovation Centre
Higher Education and Research Act (WHW)
higher vocational education (HBO)
History (FASoS department)
House Style Office
Huizinga Institute of Cultural History
Human Development Index (HDI)
Human Psychopharmacy Centre

I
ICT Service Centre
ICT service desk
Immigration and Naturalization Service (IND)
Infonomics (MSc)
Institute for Education
Institute for Employee Benefit Schemes (UWV)
Institute for Knowledge and Agent Technology (IKAT)
Institute for Transnational Legal Research (METRO)
Institution and Student Policy Committee
Intellectual Property Law and Knowledge Management (LLM/MSc)
Interlibrary Loan (ILL)
International Advisory Group (IAD)
International and Comparative law Network (ICON)
International and European Law (FL department)
International Baccalaureate (IB)
International Business (BSc)
International Business (MSc)
International Business Marketing and Finance (MSc)
International Business/Accounting and Control (MSc)
International Centre for Integrated assessment and Sustainable development (ICIS)
International Economic Studies (MSc)
International Relations Office
International Student Exchange Program (ISEP)
Internship Office
InterUM Studentjobs
Ius Commune and Human Rights Research (LLM)
Ius Commune Europaeeum Book Series
Ius Commune Research School

K
Knowledge Centre for International Staff (KCIS)
Knowledge Engineering | Computer Science (BSc)
Kumulus Theatre

L
Language Centre (LC)
Law and Language Studies (LLM)
Law, Labour and Health (LLM)
Learning and Resource Centre
Learning and Resource Centre
Leiden University
Liberal Arts and Sciences (BA)
Library Committee
Limburg Centre for Social History
Limburg Institute for Business and Economic Research (LIBER)
Limburg Institute of Financial Economics (LIFE)
Limburg University Fund/swol
Literature & Art (FASoS department)
Local Consultative Body

M
Maastricht Academic Center for Research in Services (MAXX)
Maastricht Accounting and Audit Research Center (MARC)
Maastricht Brain Imaging Center (M-BIC)
Maastricht Centre for Human Rights
Maastricht Economic and social Research and training centre on Innovation and Technology (UNU-MERIT)
Maastricht Economic Research Institute on Innovation and Technology (MERIT)
Maastricht ICT Competence Centre (MICC)
Maastricht Journal of Comparative and European Law
Maastricht Graduate School of Governance (MGSoG)
Maastricht ICT Competence Centre (MICC)
Maastricht Research School of Economics of Technology and Organizations (METEOR)
Maastricht University Career Services (UMCS)
Maastricht University centre for international cooperation in academic development (MUNDO)
Maastricht University Medical Centre + (MUMC+)
Maastricht University Office (MUO)
Management of Learning (MSc)
Marketing (FEBA department)
Master of Arts in International Journalism
master’s degree (com. noun) e.g. When you graduate from a master’s programme, you will have a master’s degree.
master’s programme (com. noun) in International Journalism
master’s thesis
MECC
Metro Graduate School
Media Culture (MA)
Medical Doctor–Clinical Researcher (MSc, MD)
Medicine
Medicine (MSc, MD)
Mental Health (MSc)
Ministry of Economic Affairs (EZ)
Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW)
Ministry of Foreign Affairs (BuZa)
Ministry of the Interior
Molecular Life Sciences (BSc)
Molecular Life Sciences (MSc)
Municipal Personal Records Database (GBA)

N
National Institute for Public Health and the Environment (RIVM)
Netherlands Association of Universities of Applied Sciences (HBO-raad)
Netherlands Bureau for Economic Policy Analysis (CPB)
Netherlands Central Catalogue (NCC)
Netherlands Foreign Trade Agency (EVD)
Netherlands Graduate School of Science, Technology and Modern Culture
Netherlands Heart Foundation
Netherlands Institute for Health Sciences (Nihes)
Netherlands Institute for Health Services Research (NIVEL)
Netherlands Institute of Business Organization and Strategy Research (NIBOR)
Netherlands Institute of Government (NIG)
Netherlands School of Primary Care Research (CaRe)
Netherlands Organisation for Health Research and Development (ZonMw)
Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO)
Netherlands Organization for International Cooperation in Higher Education (Nuffic)
Netherlands School of Public Health (NSPH)
Netherlands Toxicogenomics Center (NTC)
Neurocognition (FPN department)
Nutrition and Metabolism: Fundamental and Clinical Aspects (MPhil)
Nutrition and Toxicology Research Institute Maastricht (Nutrim)

O
Office of Student Affairs, FASoS
Open University of the Netherlands (the OUNL)
Operations Research (MSc)
Operations Research Group
Organization of Chartered Controllers
Organization & Strategy (FEBA department)

P
Pandia
Pass in Maastricht (PiM)
payoff (Leading in Learning!)
Payroll Service Department (PSA)
Personal Data Protection Act
personal development plan (POP)
Philosophy (FASoS department)
Philosophy of Law and Legal Theory (FL department)
Physical Activity and Health (MSc)
Political Science (FASoS department)
pre-university education (VWO)
Private Law (FL department)
Problem-Based Learning
professional field
professor (HGL)
Programme Guide
Promotion Fund
postpropadeutic
propadeutic
Psychology (BSc)
Psychology (MSc)
Public Health (MSc)
Public Health for Professionals (MSc)
Public Law (FL department)
Public Policy and Human Development (MSc)
Public Policy and Human Development (MSc)

Q
Quality Assurance Netherlands Universities (QANU)
Quantitative Economics (FEBA department)

R
Radboud University Nijmegen
Ragweek
Research Centre for Education and the Labour Market (ROA)
Maastricht Institute of Brain & Behavior
Research Institute for Arts and Culture (CWS)
Research Institute Growth & Development (GROW)
research master’s
residence permit (VTW)
Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW)
RSI Knowledge Centre

S
Scholarship Fund
School of Health Professions Education (SHE)
Sectoral Board for the Education Labour Market (SBO)
senior lecturer (UHD)
Service and Information Desk
Service Desk
SG Science Café
Sickness and Disability Regulation of the Dutch Universities (ZANU)
SME Portal
South Limburg
Staff Careers Advisory Services (LCM) (sg.)
Staff Representation and Advice Office
Statement of Admission (Toelatingsbewijs)
Statistics Netherlands (CBS)
Strategic Programme 2007–10 (Inspired by Talent)
Streamlining Programme
Student Careers Advisory Services (LCS) (sg.)
Student Council
Student Finance Act
Student Introduction Committee
Student Recruitment & Communications Office
Student Recruitment and Communication Office, FEBA
Student Services (sg.) (no def. art.) SSC
Student Services Visa Office
Studium Generale
Study and Careers Information Office
Supervisory Council
SURFnet spam filter
SWOL/UM grant

T
Tax Law (FL department)
Tax Law (LLB)
Tax Law (LLM)
Teacher Training College (NLO)
Technology & Society Studies (FASoS department)
temporary residence permit (VTV)
The European Fine Art Fair (TEFAF)
The Hague
think tank
Tilburg University
Times Higher World University Rankings
trainee research assistant (AIO)
transnationale Universiteit Limburg (tUL)

U
UM Catering Services
UM High Potential Scholarships
UM Scholarship Committee (sg.)
UM Scholarship Fund
UM Sports
UM Study Associations (no def. art.)
Undesirable Behaviour Committee
Unemployment Act (WW)
Universiteit Maastricht Business School
university (com. noun)
University of Utrecht
University Chaplaincy
University College Maastricht (UCM)
University Council (UR)
University Hospital azM
University Job Classification (UFO) system
University Library (UL)
University of Amsterdam (UvA)
University of Groningen
University of Twente

V
Vici grant
Visitors' Centre
Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

Wageningen University
Work and Care Act
workday
work method
work permit (TWV)
workstation
Working Conditions Act