

Contents

I	Introduction
II	Editing procedure
III	Document types
1	Journal articles
1.1	Terminology
1.2	Tenses
1.3	Italics
1.4	Symbols
1.5	Tables and figures
2	Legal documents
2.1	Capitalisation
2.2	Treaty names
2.3	Italics
2.4	Words and phrases
3	Letters and emails
3.1	Salutations
3.2	Openers
3.3	Closers
4	Meeting minutes
5	Promotional material
6	UM-related copy
6.1	Programmes
6.2	Lectures and conferences
6.3	Positions
6.4	Titles
6.4.1	Social titles
6.4.2	Academic titles
6.5	Faculties, departments and other bodies
6.6	Rooms, lecture halls and buildings
7	Web-related copy
7.1	Commands/instructions
7.2	Web and email addresses
IV	Editorial style
1	Abbreviations
1.1	Types of abbreviations
1.2	Articles
1.3	Plurals and possessives
1.4	Positioning
1.5	Punctuation
1.6	Dutch abbreviations
1.7	Days and months
1.8	List of common abbreviations
2	Capitalisation

- 2.1 Art, architecture and music
- 2.2 Awards and prizes
- 2.3 Books, periodicals and document parts
- 2.4 Companies, institutions and organisations
- 2.5 History and military
- 2.6 Peoples and places
- 2.7 Politics
 - 2.7.1 Governments and government entities
 - 2.7.2 Political parties
- 2.8 Religion
- 2.9 Theories, hypotheses and models
- 2.10 Times of year
- 3 Foreign words
 - 3.1 Foreign words in common English use
 - 3.2 Governments
 - 3.3 Organisations and other entities
 - 3.4 Periodicals and books
 - 3.5 Quotes
- 4 Italics
 - 4.1 Emphasis
 - 4.2 Technical or rare terms
 - 4.3 Words as lexical items
 - 4.4 Foreign words
 - 4.5 Other uses for italics
- 5 Lists and series
 - 5.1 Series in running texts
 - 5.1.1 Elision
 - 5.1.2 Connectors
 - 5.2 Lists
 - 5.2.1 Run on lists
 - 5.2.2 Set off lists
- 6 Numbers
 - 6.1 Currencies
 - 6.2 Dates
 - 6.3 Decades and centuries
 - 6.4 Decimal points and commas
 - 6.5 Footnotes
 - 6.6 Fractions
 - 6.7 Percentages
 - 6.8 Phone numbers
 - 6.9 Ranges
 - 6.10 Times
 - 6.11 Units of measurement
- 7 People and place names
 - 7.1 Names with prefixes
 - 7.1.1 Alphabetical order
 - 7.1.2 Capitalisation
 - 7.2 Places

- 7.2.1 The Netherlands
 - 7.2.2 Belgium
 - 7.2.3 United Kingdom
 - 7.2.4 United States
 - 7.2.5 Localised vs anglicised forms
- 8 Punctuation
 - 8.1 Ampersand
 - 8.2 Apostrophe
 - 8.2.1 Singular nouns
 - 8.2.2 Singular nouns ending in s
 - 8.2.3 Plural nouns ending in s
 - 8.2.4 Plural nouns not ending in s
 - 8.2.5 Exceptions
 - 8.3 Brackets
 - 8.4 Colon
 - 8.5 Comma
 - 8.6 Dash
 - 8.7 Exclamation mark
 - 8.8 Forward slash
 - 8.9 Full stop
 - 8.10 Hyphen
 - 8.10.1 Compound modifiers
 - 8.10.2 Prefixes and suffixes
 - 8.10.3 Phrasal nouns and verbs
 - 8.10.4 Suspension hyphen
 - 8.11 Parentheses
 - 8.12 Question mark
 - 8.13 Semicolon
- 9 Quotations
 - 9.1 Punctuation
 - 9.2 Capitalisation
 - 9.3 Block quotations
 - 9.4 Corrections
 - 9.5 Ellipses
 - 9.6 Scare quotes
 - 9.7 Other uses for quotation marks
- 10 Spelling
 - 10.1 Digraphs
 - 10.2 Irregular past tense forms
 - 10.3 *-ise* versus *-ize*
 - 10.4 Problematic plurals
- 11 Tables and figures
 - 11.1 Referring to tables and figures in the text
 - 11.2 Headings
 - 11.3 Figures
 - 11.4 Tables
 - 11.4.1 Format
 - 11.4.2 Abbreviations
 - 11.4.3 Notes

V Usage guide

- 1 Format and headings
- 2 Sentences
 - 2.1 Length
 - 2.2 Emphasis
- 3 Paragraphs
 - 3.1 Length
 - 3.2 Indents and line breaks
- 4 Grammar
 - 4.1 Active and passive voice
 - 4.2 Agreement
 - 4.2.1 Singular verbs
 - 4.2.2 Plural verbs
 - 4.2.3 Singular or plural verbs
 - 4.2.4 Definite and indefinite articles
 - 4.2.5 Sums of money and other numbers
 - 4.3 Articles
 - 4.4 Modifiers
 - 4.4.1 Dangling modifiers
 - 4.4.2 Misplaced modifiers
 - 4.4.3 Word order
 - 4.5 Pronouns
 - 4.6 Folklore rules
- 5 Vocabulary
 - 5.1 UK and US differences
 - 5.2 Jargon
 - 5.3 Wordiness
 - 5.3.1 Remove false subjects
 - 5.3.2 Replace wordy phrases with single words
 - 5.3.3 Replace long or pompous words with simple words
 - 5.3.4 Remove redundancy
 - 5.3.5 Remove empty words
 - 5.3.6 Replace nominalisations with verbs

VI Appendix

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 nonnative-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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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 Style*² – 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 appended 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

¹ European Commission Directorate-General for Translation (2007). *English style guide: a handbook for authors and translators in the European Commission* (5th edn). Available online at http://ec.europa.eu/comm/translation/writing/style_guides/english/atyle_guide_en.pdf

² Ritter, R.M. (ed). (2003). *The Oxford guide to style*. Oxford: OUP

³ www.plainenglish.co.uk

referencing 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 (metalinguage 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 test: $t(75) = 3.11$
 F test: $F(1, 53) = 10.03$
 $p = .03$
 $M = 3.45$
 $SD = 7$

1.4 *Symbols*

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

a + b = c
a > b
(a + b)/(c + d)
10 × 20 km
N = 10,430
n = 700

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.

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. Garner⁵ 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*

⁵ Garner, B.A. (2001). *Legal writing in plain English* (p. 91). Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press

‘were perky in Shakespeare’s time, but they are no longer in common-enough use that they instantly convey our intent’.⁶

domicile	→ house, flat, residence
henceforth	→ from now on
herein	→ in this (agreement etc.)
heretofore	→ previously
in the event that	→ if
inasmuch as	→ since, because
is of the opinion	→ believes
provided that	→ as long as
subsequent to	→ after
thereafter	→ later

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).⁷

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.

⁶ Lauchman, R. (2008). *Plain language: A handbook for writers in the U.S. federal government* (p. 46). Rockville, MD: Lauchman Group. Available online at www.lauchmangroup.com/PDFfiles/PLHandbook.pdf

⁷ Garner, B.A. (2001). *Legal writing in plain English* (p. 105). Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press

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.

No.	Topic	Situation, decision, results	Action by	When
2	Classroom availability	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.	Julia	1 Dec

Unlike in Dutch,⁸ 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

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

⁹ U.S. Securities & Exchange Commission (1998). *A plain English handbook: How to create clear SEC disclosure documents* (p. 22). Washington: Author. Available online at www.sec.gov/pdf/handbook.pdf

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.

1.0 (38 hours per week)	0.5 (19 hours per week)
0.8 (32 hours per week)	0.2 (8 hours per week)

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*.¹⁰ 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

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,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.

Drs. K. Molenaar	→ K. Molenaar, MSc/MA
mr. Johann Smeets	→ Johann Smeets, LLB
Ir. Eefke Konijn	→ Eefke Konijn, MSc

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.¹²

Likewise, avoid transferring multiple titles (e.g. *Prof. Dr*) from Dutch¹³; usually English only takes the highest. If it is essential, put the degree abbreviation after the name.

Prof. Dr. A Janssen	→ Prof. A. Janssen, PhD
---------------------	-------------------------

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

¹¹ E.g. European Commission Directorate-General for Translation (2007). *English style guide: a handbook for authors and translators in the European Commission* (5th edn, p. 49)

¹² Burrough-Boenisch, J. (1998). *Righting English that's gone Dutch* (p. 99). The Hague: Kemper Conseil Publishing

¹³ *Ibid*, p. 101; Wegener, P. (2007). *University of Amsterdam style guide* (p. 1). Available online at <http://www.medewerker.uva.nl/huisstijl/object.cfm/objectid=597DF449-BE21-46DD-83F0C75A7416A5E2>.

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](#).
 More information is available via the [Complaints Committee](#).
 For an appointment, contact Careers Services counsellor [Jeanne Bruin](#).
 Send your suggestions to the [translations department](#).
 Contact Marianne de Beurs by [email](#) or phone 87398.
 Dick Kraft: 043 887 398/[email](#)

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 would 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
- 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*

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July
Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec		

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	edition ¹⁶
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 bena (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)

2 Capitalisation

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

→ the group
the Association of Dutch Universities (VSNU)
→ the association
the Dutch Validation Council (DVC)
→ the council
Dutch-Flemish Accreditation Organisation (NVAO)
→ the organisation

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*

Capitalise the names of geological and historical periods.

the Age of Reason	the Iron Age
the Bronze Age	the Middle Ages
the Common Era	the Paleozoic (era)
the Enlightenment	the Reformation
the Great Depression	the Renaissance

But note that modern periods often take lowercase letters.

the atomic age	the nuclear age
the information age	the space age

Capitalise the names of wars, revolutions and specific battles.

the Battle of Britain ¹⁷	the Korean War
the Boer War	the Second World War
the Cultural Revolution	the Thirty Years War
the Industrial Revolution	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 Green Berets
the Axis powers	the Luftwaffe
First Battalion	178th Infantry

Capitalise the names of natural phenomena or disasters as well.

the Black Death	El Niño
the Great Fire of London	Hurricane Katrina

2.6 *Peoples and places*

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

Dutch	Arabs
Europeanise	Xhosa

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 the Province of Limburg
Greater London 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 palace
the Magna Plaza → the plaza
London Bridge → the bridge
Tiananmen Square → the square
the Spanish Steps → the steps
the Babri Mosque → the mosque
the Panama Canal → the canal
the Ottoman Empire → the empire
the Russian Federation → the federation

Also capitalise place names which are legendary or popular.

the Big Apple the Eternal City
the City of Light 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 Rhine and Maas rivers
the Atlantic Ocean → the Atlantic and Pacific oceans
Kent Street → 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

3 Foreign words

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*). These words may or may not retain their diacritics, e.g.

cliché *but laissez-faire*.

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

exposé *protégé*

The decision, however, can be arbitrary.

per se usually unaccented

café/café style guides are divided on retaining the accent; at UM we use *cafe*.

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.*)

<i>à la carte</i>	<i>detente</i>	<i>par excellence</i>
<i>a priori</i>	<i>facade</i>	<i>pâté</i>
<i>ad hoc</i>	<i>faux pas</i>	<i>per capita</i>
<i>autobahn</i> ²⁰	<i>fete</i>	<i>per se</i>
<i>beamer</i>	<i>fiancé</i>	<i>perestroika</i>
<i>avant-garde</i>	<i>führer</i>	<i>putsch</i>
<i>café</i>	<i>genre</i>	<i>raison d'être</i>
<i>chateau</i>	<i>glasnost</i>	<i>regime</i>
<i>coup</i>	<i>gulag</i>	<i>résumé</i>
<i>crèche</i>	<i>haute couture</i>	<i>señor</i>
<i>crepe</i>	<i>inter alia</i>	<i>soiree</i>
<i>de facto</i>	<i>jihad</i>	<i>status quo</i>
<i>debacle</i>	<i>laissez-faire</i>	<i>vice versa</i>
<i>decor</i>	<i>naive</i>	<i>vis-à-vis</i>
<i>déjà vu</i>	<i>papier mâché</i>	<i>zeitgeist</i>

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 precious²¹ 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 Voedvrouwschool
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

²¹ Ritter, R.M. (ed). (2003). *The Oxford guide to style* (p. 155). Oxford: OUP

4.5 **Other uses for italics**

Aircraft (proper names, e.g. *Avenger IV*, but not generic models, e.g. Boeing 747)
Artworks²²
Ballets
Books²³
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
Symphonies²⁴
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

²² Except: works of antiquity, esp. if the creator is unknown, e.g. the Venus de Milo, the Winged Victory. University of Chicago (2003). *The Chicago manual of style* (15th edn, p. 337). Chicago: University of Chicago Press

²³ Except: the Bible, the Koran and the Talmud. Modern Humanities Research Association (2008). *MHRA style guide: a handbook for authors, editors, and writers of theses* (p. 29). London: Author. Available online at <http://www.mhra.org.uk/Publications/Books/StyleGuide/StyleGuideV2.pdf>

²⁴ E.g. *Symphonie fantastique*, but not when a generic name symphony is used, e.g. Beethoven Symphony No. 5. Ritter, R.M. (ed). (2003). *The Oxford guide to style* (p. 156). Oxford: OUP

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. It **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. It **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

²⁵ Garner, B.A. (2001). *Legal writing in plain English* (p. 75). Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press

²⁶ The *-ly* serves no purpose other than to 'prettify' (Strunk Jr, W., & White, E.B. [1999]. *The elements of style* [4th edn]. NY: Longman) and these connectors stem from the older expressions *What is first* etc. Siegal, A.M., & Connolly, W.G. (1999). *The New York Times manual of style and usage* (p. 122). NY: New York Times.

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.

²⁷ Unesco (2004). Style manual for the presentation of English-language texts intended for publication by Unesco (2nd edn, p. 33). Available online at <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001418/141812e.pdf>

- 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 organisations²⁸ and now many UK publishers,²⁹ 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 nonscientific 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.

four cents	12 cents
€5	€17.50
£4,000 (€5,100)	€1,496.93
\$430,000 (€286,000)	€79,370,200

€3 to €6 million; €3 million to €6 million (write out the denomination if there could be confusion)

€2.00 and €5.50 respectively (use .00 only if others in the sentence involve cents)

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

thousand	€350K
million	£270m
billion	\$200bn

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*.³⁰

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

³⁰ Note that *euros* is now the official plural form for euro. European Commission Directorate-General for Translation (2007). English style guide: a handbook for authors and translators in the European Commission (5th edn, p. 49).

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	3 rd and 13 th centuries
19 th century	21 st century
mid-ninth century	mid-16 th century
eighth-century battle	16 th -century epic

6.4 *Decimal points and commas*

As in most international and European style guides for English,³¹ 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.²

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)

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
between 1990 and 1995, *not* between 1990–95.

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*).

4 ha	9 m	60 km	50 km/h	200 g	5 kg	4 L	
40 t	3cm	35 mL	240 V	30 s	12 min	24 hrs	5 yrs

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 look '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.

Charles V	Alexander of Corinth
Ptolemy	Catherine the Great
St Francis of Assisi	Virgil

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.

³⁴ Burrough-Boenisch, J. (1998). *Righting English that's gone Dutch* (p. 107). The Hague: Kemper Conseil Publishing

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).

Drenthe	Groningen	Overijssel
Flevoland	Limburg	South Holland
Friesland	North Brabant	Utrecht
Gelderland	North Holland	Zeeland

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:

Antwerp	Hainaut	Namur
Brabant	Liège	Wallonia
East Flanders	Limburg	Walloon
Flanders	Luxembourg	West Flanders
Flemish Brabant		

Some other Belgian place names also have established English forms.

Antwerp	Ghent
Brussels	Ostend

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

³⁵ European Commission Directorate-General for Translation (2007). English style guide: a handbook for authors and translators in the European Commission (5th edn, p. 107)

- 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.³⁶

Aalborg	Marseilles
Aarhus	Mecca
Basel	Milan
Beijing (not Peking)	Mumbai (not Bombay)
Bern	Munich
Cologne	Myanmar (not Burma)
Copenhagen	Naples
Dhaka	Nuremberg
Florence	Phnom Penh
Gdansk (not Danzig)	Prague
Geneva	Qatar
Genoa	Reykjavik
Göteborg	Riyadh
Guangzhou (not Canton)	Romania
Hanover	Rome
Kathmandu	Seville
Kazakhstan	Shanghai
Krakow	Strasbourg
Lisbon	Suriname
Ljubljana	Tallinn
Louvain	Turin
Lucerne	Venice
Luxembourg	Vienna
Lyon	Vietnam
Marrakesh	Zurich

³⁶ European Commission Directorate-General for Translation (2007). *English style guide: a handbook for authors and translators in the European Commission* (5th edn). See annexes for place names.

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 taxis³⁷
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 War³⁸
- 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'.³⁹)

Do use an apostrophe

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

³⁷ Unlike in Dutch: *taxi's*, *baby's*, etc.

³⁸ E.g. Ritter, R.M. (ed). (2003). *The Oxford guide to style* (p. 115). Oxford: OUP

³⁹ Ritter, R.M. (ed). (2003). *The Oxford guide to style* (p. 373). Oxford: OUP

- 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 separate elements in sports times: 4:10:23.

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 parenthetical 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

⁴⁰ Burchfield, R.W. (1996). *The new Fowler's modern English usage* (3rd edn, p. 672). Oxford: OUP

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
 - moving parenthetical phrases to the start of the sentence
 - 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'.⁴² 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
September 2008–June 2009.

See also IV.6.9. NUMBERS: RANGES

⁴² Strunk Jr, W., & White, E.B. (1999). *The elements of style* (4th edn, p. 9). New York: Longman

8.7 Exclamation mark

Broadly speaking, avoid exclamation marks: they look unprofessional and irritate readers.⁴³ 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

⁴³ They are a 'certain indication of an unpractised writer or of one who wants to add a spurious dash of sensation to something unsensational.' Burchfield, R.W. (1996). *The new Fowler's modern English usage* (3rd edn, p. 273). Oxford: OUP

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
27 th -floor view	→ the view from the 27 th 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

little used car

little-used car

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, under⁴⁴ (set as table)

Hyphenate prefixes if

- they end in the same letter the base starts with

anti-intellectual

multi-institutional

co-occur⁴⁵

pre-eminent

de-emphasise

ultra-atomic

meta-analysis

under-represented

- the base takes an initial capital

anti-Darwinian

post-UCS trial

intra-Community

pre-Roman

de-Stalinisation

sub-Saharan

pan-European

un-American

- there could be momentary misreading

non-oil exporting

pro-life

- co- or ex- is used with a human base

co-author

co-pilot

co-chair

ex-wife

co-defendant

ex-president

- they are formed using *self* or *quasi*, whether used as a noun or as a compound adjective before or after the noun

self-destructive

quasi-scientific

self-esteem

quasi-expert

- they are part of a newly formed word

e-article

e-zine

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.

to flare up	the flare-up
to follow up	the follow-up
to take over	the takeover
to come back	the comeback
to hold up	the holdup

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. Chicago⁴⁶ does not allow *left-handed and -brained executives*, for example, but Oxford⁴⁷ 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)

⁴⁶ University of Chicago (2003). *The Chicago manual of style* (15th edn, p. 171). Chicago: University of Chicago Press

⁴⁷ Ritter, R.M. (ed). (2003). *The Oxford guide to style* (p. 137). Oxford: OUP

⁴⁸ Burrough-Boenisch, J. (1998). *Righting English that's gone Dutch* (p. 75). The Hague: Kemper Conseil Publishing

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?

⁴⁹ E.g. Burrough-Boenisch, J. (1998). *Righting English that's gone Dutch* (p. 21). The Hague: Kemper Conseil Publishing

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.

As in usual UK style, use single quotation marks with double marks within them as necessary.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

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

9.4 Corrections

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

- change single to double quotation marks if there is a quote within the quote
- change the first letter to lower- or uppercase as necessary

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.

⁵³ E.g. Burrough-Boenisch, J. (1998). *Righting English that’s gone Dutch* (p. 46). The Hague: Kemper Conseil Publishing

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.

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

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:

ameba	esophagus	gynecology
anemia	estrogen	hemoglobin
diarrhea	etiology	homeopathy
encyclopedia	fetus	leukemia

10.2 Irregular past tense forms

In line with other international style guides⁵⁴ 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:

dreamed	kneeled	learned
earned	leaned	spelled

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.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 *-luisis*, such as *analyse*). Thus *apologize*, *categorize*, *finalize*, *internationalize*, *maximize*, *organize* and *realize*, but *advertise*, *catalyse*, *compromise*, *enterprise*, *exercise*, *paralyse*, *supervise* and so on.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.

algae	gymnasiums
appendices (in books)	indexes (in books)
appendixes (in people, animals)	indices (in maths, economics, science)
bacteria	media
bases	memorandums
bureaus	nuclei
crematoriums	phenomena
crises	referendums

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

⁵⁵ Burchfield, R.W. (1996). *The new Fowler's modern English usage* (3rd edn, p. 51). Oxford: OUP

⁵⁶ Unesco (p. 10) also includes a floating category with words which can be spelled either way, such as *authorise*, *civilise* and *legalise*.

curricula
data
forums

schemas
symposia
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	Integrity
Negotiating	Negotiating skills
Customer orientation	Customer orientation

11.3 Figures

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

cartoons	graphs (bar, line, etc.)
charts	maps
diagrams	photographs
drawings	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 2 UM staff composition by sex 2005/06

Staff group	2005		2006	
	Men (%)	Women (%)	Men (%)	Women (%)
Academic staff	56	44	55	45
Total staff	48	52	48	52

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 than the 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.

From *Learning from strangers: The art and method of qualitative interview studies* (p. 23), by R. Weiss, 1999, New York: Free Press.

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

⁵⁷ Supported by readability research. Lauchman, R. (2008). *Plain language: A handbook for writers in the U.S. federal government* (p. 28). Rockville, MD: Lauchman Group

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

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 subjects⁵⁹ (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

→ 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.

→ Our research suggests that exposure to high-power lines may cause leukemia.⁶⁰

2.1 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.

2.2 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*

⁵⁹ Williams, J.M. (1995). *Style: toward clarity and grace* (p. 33). Chicago: University of Chicago Press

⁶⁰ McMurrey, D. (n.d.). Wordy hedging and metadiscourse ... writing with a limp noodle. Available online at www.io.com/~hcexres/style/meta_hedge.html

⁶¹ Burrough-Boenisch, J. (1998). *Righting English that’s gone Dutch* (p. 135). The Hague: Kemper Conseil Publishing

⁶² Williams, J.M. (1995). *Style: toward clarity and grace* (p. 25). Chicago: University of Chicago Press

⁶³ *Ibid*, p. 55

*sciences, a clear bias can be observed).*⁶⁴ 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

⁶⁴ Burrough-Boenisch, J. (1998). *Righting English that's gone Dutch* (p. 129). The Hague: Kemper Conseil Publishing

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’⁶⁵ – 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.⁶⁶

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).⁶⁷ 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.

⁶⁵ Williams, J.M. (1995). *Style: toward clarity and grace* (p. 52). Chicago: University of Chicago Press

⁶⁶ E.g. Strunk Jr, W., & White, E.B. (1999). *The elements of style* (4th edn, p. 17). NY: Longman

⁶⁷ U.S. Securities & Exchange Commission (1998). *A plain English handbook: How to create clear SEC disclosure documents* (p. 12). Washington: Author

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 successful⁶⁸
- 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)⁶⁹
- 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:

⁶⁸ Burchfield, R.W. (1996). *The new Fowler's modern English usage* (3rd edn, p. 577). Oxford: OUP

⁶⁹ Lauchman, R. (2008). *Plain language: A handbook for writers in the U.S. federal government* (p. 68). Rockville, MD: Lauchman Group

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).⁷⁰

- 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 ...⁷¹

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.

⁷⁰ Strunk Jr, W., & White, E.B. (1999). *The elements of style* (4th edn, p. 18). New York: Longman

⁷¹ Unesco (2004). *Style manual for the presentation of English-language texts intended for publication by Unesco* (2nd edn, p. 16).

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 hypothesis

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 password⁷²

After separating the participants into groups, Group A was tested⁷³

Tutoring first-year students and reporting to the department manager, your responsibilities will gradually expand⁷⁴

Yesterday, after conferring with my senior national security advisers and following extensive consultations with our coalition partners, Saddam Hussein was given one last chance...⁷⁵

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?*⁷⁶

→ 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**

⁷² Allen, J. (2003). *The BBC news style guide*. London: BBC Training & Development (p. 37). Available online at <http://www.bbctraining.com>

⁷³ American Psychological Association (2001). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th edn, p. 52). Washington, DC: Author

⁷⁴ Weiss, E.H. (2005). *The elements of international English style* (p. 138). Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe Inc.

⁷⁵ President Bush Sr, 1991, in Burchfield, R.W. (1996). *The new Fowler's modern English usage* (3rd edn, p. 805). Oxford: OUP

⁷⁶ American Psychological Association (2001). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th edn, p. 50). Washington, DC: Author.

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*, in 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.’⁷⁷

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*

⁷⁷ Williams, J.M. (1995). *Style: toward clarity and grace* (p. 179). Chicago: University of Chicago Press

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 infinitives⁷⁸

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 people⁷⁹

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 ...

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*).

UK	US
autumn	fall
carpark	parking lots
driving licence	driver's licence
fill in a form	fill out a form
flat	apartment
for ages	in ages
ground floor	first floor
lawyer	attorney
lift	elevator
oblige	obligate
petrol	gasoline
take a decision	make a decision
transport	transportation

5.3 Jargon

Jargon (also known as *bafflegab*, *gobbledygook* and *officialese*⁸⁰) 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

⁸⁰ Burchfield, R.W. (1996). *The new Fowler's modern English usage* (3rd edn, p. 545). Oxford: OUP

dovetail
empowerment
interface

synergy
visibility
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.⁸¹ 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.⁸²

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

⁸¹ E.g. Strunk Jr, W., & White, E.B. (1999). *The elements of style* (4th edn, p. 9). New York: Longman

⁸² American Psychological Association (2001). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th edn, p. 32). Washington, DC: Author; Lauchman, R. (2008). *Plain language: A handbook for writers in the U.S. federal government* (p. 83). Rockville, MD: Lauchman Group

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.

it is possible that	→ may, might, could
it could happen that	→ may, might, could
the possibility exists for	→ may, might, could
it is crucial necessary/important that	→ must/should
there is a need/necessity for	→ must, need
is in a position to	→ can
is able to	→ can
has the opportunity to	→ can
has the capacity for	→ can
has the ability to	→ can

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

on a daily basis	→ daily
on an informal basis	→ informally
on a routine basis	→ routinely
in a speedy manner	→ fast
on an personal level	→ personally
in an unusual fashion	→ unusually
in an unpredictable way	→ unpredictably
of a challenging nature	→ challenging
of a hostile character	→ hostile

Other examples

a great number of	→ many
a large proportion of	→ many
all of	→ all
a university environment	→ university
as far as x is concerned	→ as for
as to whether	→ whether
at the present time	→ now
at this point in time	→ now
call your attention to the fact that	→ remind/inform you
for the purpose of	→ to
in addition to	→ and, also
in excess of	→ more than, over
in order for	→ for
in order to	→ to
in the absence of	→ without
in the area of	→ in
in the field of	→ in
in the vicinity of	→ near
is of the opinion that	→ thinks/believes

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, opine	→ 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.

absolute	excellent	perfect
adequate	exhausted	possible
complete	finished	supreme
dedicated	impossible	total
entire	infinite	unique
equal	necessary	useless

Another type of redundancy is adding an unnecessary category after an adjective.

red in colour	→ red
heavy in weight	→ heavy
round in shape	→ round
large in size	→ large
shorter in length	→ shorter

Other examples

added bonus	→ bonus
advance planning	→ planning
aged four years old	→ four
alongside of	→ alongside
an early time	→ early
as from	→ from
both ... as well as	→ both ... and
brief summary	→ summary
close proximity	→ close
combine together	→ combine
consensus of opinion	→ consensus
each and every	→ each
economics field	→ economics
e.g. ... etc.	→ e.g./etc.
equally as	→ equally
exactly the same	→ the same
eyewitness	→ witness
final result	→ result
first and foremost	→ first
free gift	→ gift
future outlook	→ outlook
future plans	→ plans
general consensus	→ consensus
in the area of private law	→ in private law
in the field of physics	→ in physics
in this day and age	→ today, nowadays
midway between	→ between
new innovation	→ innovation
new recruit	→ recruit
one single	→ one, a single
past history	→ history
past memories	→ memories
period of time	→ period
personal beliefs	→ beliefs
personal opinion	→ opinion
pre-existing	→ existing
prior experience	→ experience
reason why	→ reason
return back	→ return
safe haven	→ haven
split apart	→ split
terrible tragedy	→ tragedy
the month of May	→ May

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

UM word list

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 Invalidation 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 Europaeum 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 (VTV)
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

W

Wageningen University

Work and Care Act

workday

work method

work permit (TWV)

workstation

Working Conditions Act