

## Style guide

This style guide provides basis for writing. It contains rules to be applied during writing punctuation marks, numbers, spellings, names and phrases. It also provides grammar and general tips.

Refer to this style guide to ensure consistency and quality in content produced and edited by the Portal Management section.

## Version

Follow UK English.

You can follow US English in names of entities, departments, organisations etc. if that is how the entities spell it.

## Collective nouns

Use singular verb form for collective nouns. For e. g. The IT team at Ministry of Health *has* decided to implement the eHealth Card service in several phases.

## Punctuation marks

### Quotation marks

Use “double quotation marks” for writing direct speech. For unusual terms, use ‘single’ quotation marks. <sup>1</sup>

### Parentheses

Use this type (). Do not use [], <> and {}.

### Ampersand (&)

Do not use ampersand (&) in sentences unless it is part of a proper noun and if this is the way the company/entity writes it. For e.g. General Authority of Islamic Affairs & Endowments.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/style-guide/a-to-z-of-gov-uk-style>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/style-guide/a-to-z-of-gov-uk-style>

## Numbers

Spell out numbers 0 to 9. For writing numbers from 10 onwards, use figures.

## Percent

Spell per cent as two words and percentage as one word.

Use the sign (%) in table, illustration, graph, chart etc.

## Money

Express money and currency like this: AED57.4 billion.

Use singular form million and billion for money. Use plural in phrases; for e.g. 'millions of people'.<sup>3</sup>

Write AED 55,000 not AED 55,000.00 (if there is no fils value).

If there is a value in fils, write AED 55,000.55 not AED 55000,00.

## Dates

Write dates like this: Date Month Year (9 December 2015).

Use short (Jan, Dec) in tables, graphs etc.<sup>4</sup>

When writing 'In the 1950s, the archaeologists discovered....', write without an apostrophe.<sup>5</sup>

Refer to the Gregorian calendar. For explaining Islamic festivals, events, observations etc. refer to the Islamic calendar.

For e.g. Eid Al Fitr is celebrated on the first day of the Islamic month of Shawwal.

## Measurement

Follow International System of Units. (Express in kilometres, not miles).

---

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/style-guide/a-to-z-of-gov-uk-style>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/style-guide/a-to-z-of-gov-uk-style>

<sup>5</sup> Source: The Guardian, the UK

Do not use a space between the numeral and abbreviated measurement - 3,500kg not 3,500 kg. Abbreviating kilograms to kg is fine - you do not need to spell it out.

If the measurement is more than one word, e.g. 'kilometres per hour', then spell it out the first time it is used with the abbreviation. From then on, abbreviate. If it is only mentioned once, do not abbreviate.<sup>6</sup>

## **Ranges**

When talking about ranges in the text, do not use hyphen. Say from x to x or between x and x.

## **Ages**

Use numerals to write ages.

## **Temperature**

When writing temperature, write 55 degrees Celsius. You can write 55°C in tables, graphs etc.

## **Time**

Use 12-hour clock system. Write HH:MM; 10:10. Use am and pm (Without space after the digits).

## **Telephone numbers**

Write with full code like this:

Telephone: 0097141234567

Mobile: 00971501234567<sup>7</sup>

Writing like this offers convenience to people using portable devices.

## **Directions/places**

When writing north, northeast, etc. do not capitalise the first alphabet.

---

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/style-guide/a-to-z-of-gov-uk-style>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/style-guide/a-to-z-of-gov-uk-style>

When using abbreviated form such as NE, use capital letters.

Similarly, use capital letters when writing South East Asia, Far East, Middle East Asia and West Asia.<sup>8</sup>

## **Spellings**

### **Electronic**

Write eGovernment, eServices, eTransformation, mGovernment, mServices etc. even if the word comes first in sentence.

World Wide Web is spelt with capital Ws. However, spell all other words like website, webpage with small case.

### **Contractions**

Do not use don't, won't, shouldn't. Write do not, will not, would not, should not etc.

### **Abbreviations and acronyms**

Use only established abbreviations and acronyms.

Write the complete word the first time you use it and then write the acronym/abbreviation in brackets.

Do this:

- on every page
- even if it is an established and widely known acronym

Do not write the acronym/abbreviation in brackets if you are not going to use them again in the article.

When writing the plural form, use 's' in small: Members of Parliament or MPs.

### **Confusing spellings**

- Sheikh – maintain this spelling for Sheikh
- Username is one word

---

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/style-guide/a-to-z-of-gov-uk-style>

- Log on – to log on; it is a verb. So say: log on to the portal.
- Log in – to log in; it is a verb. So say: log in with your username and password.
- Login – noun; use this word to say: enter your login details.
- Write homepage, webpage, website as one word
- Wi-Fi
- Write Undersecretary as one word

### **Referring to government entities**

While referring to government entities the first time, write their full name. Later, you can say the entity, the body, the authority or the ministry (lower case) or ‘it’; not they (use third person, singular).

You can write the entity’s name in short forms. Stick to the short forms that the entity uses (do not create one).

Similarly for the emirates. You can say RAK and UAQ, but explain it the first time you use it on every page.

### **Phrases**

- Use Mobile Government or mGovernment **BUT NOT** Smart Government
- Similarly, Mobile Government Initiative
- Federal Network to be contracted as FedNet
- Information and eGovernment sector (later, you can write the sector)
- Portal Management section (later, you can write the section)
- Development department (later, you can write the department)
- Federal Law No. xx of xxxx concerning the xxxx (later, you can write the law/the act)
- Ministry of Economy (later, the ministry)
- Write H. E. Sheikh Xyz bin Xyz Al Xyz, Minister of Economy. When used without the name, write shortened titles in lower case. For e.g. ‘The health minister welcomed the research team’.<sup>9</sup>

---

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/style-guide/a-to-z-of-gov-uk-style>

## **Names**

### **General**

Capitalise the first alphabet of the names of roads, wadis, beaches, mangroves, oases, deserts, cities, emirates etc.

Do not capitalise the first alphabets of the words roads, wadis, beaches, mangroves, oases, deserts, cities, emirates etc. For e.g. write the Liwa oasis; not Liwa Oasis.

When talking about them later in the text, you can write: the road/s, wadi/s, beach/es, mangrove/s, oasis/es, desert/s, city/ies, emirate/s etc.

### **Names of emirates and their order<sup>10</sup>**

1. Abu Dhabi
2. Dubai
3. Sharjah
4. Ajman
5. Umm Al Quwain
6. Ras Al Khaimah
7. Fujairah

### **Rulers' names**

Maintain this format: H. H. Sheikh Xyz bin Xyz Al Xyz<sup>11</sup>

### **In addition, for the rulers of Abu Dhabi and Dubai:**

1. H. H. Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai
2. H. H. Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the UAE and Ruler of Abu Dhabi

### **Names of books, documents, magazines and TV programmes**

Write them within single quotation marks.

---

<sup>10</sup> <http://uaecabinet.ae/en/uae>

<sup>11</sup> <http://uaecabinet.ae/en/cabinet-members>

## **Use of the article 'the'**

Use the definite article with:

- Countries whose names include words like kingdom or states
- Countries that have plural nouns in their names (The Netherlands and The Philippines)

## **And**

Avoid starting a sentence with 'and'.

## **Colon**

Use it when something follows it (list).

## **Lists**

Write either sentences or phrases in the list; not both.

If you are writing sentences use full stop.

Begin sentences with capital letter and phrases with small.

## **Cases**

While writing Federal Law No. xx of xxxx concerning the xxxx, use title case.

## **General tips**

- Address the reader as you.
- Use you/your. Avoid using third person. If you have to, write he/his/him (where needed) considering that the word man in general includes man and woman (for e.g. Man is a social animal. He likes to live in colonies.)
- Use active voice; place subject first.
- Use keywords in the beginning of a sentence.
- You can use racy, friendly, inviting (but not promotional which sounds too direct) text while writing for visitors.
- Use plain language everywhere else.
- Write special needs; not handicapped, disabled, differently abled, challenged etc.
- Write positive sentences.

- Write residents or expatriate residents; not expatriates.
- Write UAE nationals or Emiratis; not locals.

### **References:**

- [The official website of the UAE Cabinet](#)
- [The official portal of the UK Government](#)
- [The Guardian](#)