



Terrace Guidelines for Communications and Style Guide

An everyday reference for staff and Supporter Groups for use in preparing, editing or approving documents for publication.

St Joseph's College Gregory Terrace

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Introduction

The St Joseph's College Gregory Terrace Guidelines for Communications and Style Guide is an everyday reference for staff and Supporter Groups in preparing, editing or approving documents to be published. This includes materials published in printed or electronic form.

While the traditional rules of grammar are adhered to, there are some College-specific exceptions. For any spelling issues, the correct usage should be taken from the *Macquarie Dictionary* or *Australian Oxford Dictionary*. The (American) computer spell check should not automatically be accepted as correct.

There are almost always exceptions to the rule, even in grammar – the key is consistency. It adds markedly to the professional image being conveyed by the College.

This reference also provides a brief introduction to the very different style of writing web-copy.

This guide should be used in conjunction with the previously-published *Terrace Identity Manual*.

Any questions relating to the Terrace Guidelines for Communications and Style Guide should be directed to Mrs Bianca Anderson, Acting Director of Communications and Public Relations on 07 3214 5259 or at biancaanderson@terrace.qld.edu.au

Guidelines for Communications

Communication by representatives of the Terrace Community is an integral part of the successful operation of the College.

Any communication, written or verbal, that is associated with the College, should reflect the vision, mission and practice of a Catholic school in the Edmund Rice tradition.

Spokespersons should be cognisant that there are correct forums in which to express views and people designated to comment publicly on specific issues.

In regard to College policy or directions, only the Principal, or his nominee (Eg. the College Dean or Board Chair), should comment publicly. Only the Principal, or his nominee, should comment to the media, on behalf of the College.

While it is impractical to expect that all communication at all times be subjected to scrutiny, the College has appointed a Communications and Public Relations Director, to ensure a clarity and consistency in publications and, including but not restricted to, communiqués, advertisements, flyers, speeches and responses provided by members of the Terrace Community.

All communication (including that listed above) to appear on the College website, or to be sent via the College email or Parent Lounge, should be referred to the Director of Communications and Public Relations. This includes public documents or addresses from chairs and presidents or other representatives on behalf of Support Groups (*refer additional notes below*).

The exception to this would be emails, which are sent by teachers, to specific parents/guardians or students, in regard to school work or activities. More general communiqués such as those to parents/guardians of entire classes, year levels or House groups, should be viewed by the Communications and Public Relations Director.

All written communications from College representatives, including letters to parents, should be on approved College letterhead.

All media enquiries should be referred to the Communications and Public Relations Director.

Additional notes

Communiqués and publications

All written material should have a contact name and/or phone number or email address. All communiqués, unless in extraordinary circumstances, should be restricted to less than one A4 page.

Advertising

All advertising of events, functions, including those in the *Terrace News* and *The Terracian*, should have a contact name and/or phone number or email address.

Speeches

The Director of Communications and Public Relations should be advised of all speeches pertaining to the College. He/she also is available to review or advise on speeches regarding appropriate length, language, content, etc. All speeches should contain the appropriate acknowledgements, including the Principal, chairs of support groups and special guests and acknowledgement of the traditional owners.

All communiqués, publications and advertising on behalf of the College or any organisation or body associated with the College, should be referred to [Bianca Anderson](#), Acting Director of Communications and Public Relations 07 3214 5259.

This includes contributions to the Terrace website, links from the College website, emails to the Terrace Community and information to be distributed via Parent Lounge.

Style Guide

Capitalisation

Capitalisation should be kept to a minimum. As a rule the style is to capitalise the full official name but use lower case when the abbreviation is reduced to the generic element.

When terms are used generically and don't relate to a specific name or title they should be kept in lower case. There are some exceptions to this rule. Eg:

College terms

St Joseph's College Gregory Terrace

Gregory Terrace

Terrace

Terrace Rugby / GPS rugby teams

Mahoney House

College Captain, College Vice Captain

Terrace Family

Terrace Community/ the community

Dean of Studies

Head of Faculty

Christian Brothers

Music Department/ the department

Terrace News/the newsletter

Catholic

Christian

Mass

College Assembly / assembly

Senior

Senior School/ Middle School/ Lower Middle School

House (as in Terrace's nine Houses)

the College (when referring to Terrace)/ Brisbane colleges the Principal (as above)Brisbane principals

Subjects and sports when used in the context of the curriculum also are capped in order to differentiate from general use i.e. History, Music, Mathematics, Rugby, Cricket, Chemistry, Debating, but not when used generally i.e. the rugby match against Churchie resulted in a crushing win for Terrace.

Titles

The current Principal, Dean, those who hold positions in the College, the Prime Minister, Premier and heads of state are always capitalised. Exceptions are people who no longer hold these positions. Eg:

The Principal will open...

Former principal Br Barry Buckley

The Prime Minister of Australia

The Premier will attend

The College Dean's address to staff teachers, tutors, students

Seniors

Position titles

Position titles are capitalised when used along with someone's name but not capitalised when referring to the position as a general term. Eg:

Director of Culture Mr Matt Cocking said
the director said
Gregory Terrace Old Boys' Association/Old Boys

Geographic locations

Names that designate a group of nations geographically or politically always are capitalised. Unofficial geographical entities are not capitalised nor are geographical entities that develop semi-official status. Eg:

Oceania
North America
Central America
south-east Queensland
far north Queensland
south-west Queensland
central Australia
central Queensland
north Queensland
northern Australia

Honorifics

The Terrace style is to use Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Dr/Br etc. in all instances. It also is acceptable to use the abbreviated form of the word in the first instance. Eg:

College Principal Dr Michael Carroll/Dr Carroll said Dean of Studies Mrs Julie Quinn/ Mrs Quinn said former headmaster Br Barry Buckley/ Br Buckley said Mass celebrant Fr Gerry Hall

College specific terms

Swimming Supporters' Group/supporters' groups
Gregory Terrace Old Boys' Association
College Board
Foundation
Terrow/ Terrace rowers
Terrace Football/footballers

Headings

The Terrace policy is to use minimal capitalisation. A good guide is to use capitals only for the first letter of the first word of the heading and for the names of particular people, places or things (proper nouns). Do not capitalise the first letter of each word in a heading however if referring to a published document write the name exactly as published even if full capitalisation is used. Eg:

The making of the Terrace Gentleman
Too late for some

Other examples:

Personal – Sir Don Bradman, Mrs Bianca Anderson
Names of nationalities – Australians
Races – Aboriginal people

Particular religions – Catholic, Muslim

Full names of organisations, institutions – the University of Queensland (UQ),
Department of Education, Edmund Rice Education Australia (EREA)

Names of brands, models and classes of vehicle – Hyundai, Mazda, Orient
Express, Sunlander

Official titles – College Principal Dr Michael Carroll, Prime Minister Mr Malcolm
Turnbull

Academic degrees, awards – Master of Arts (MA), Buchanan Medal Geographical
place names and names of recognised geographical areas but not the names of
general areas – Northern Territory (NT), Brisbane, south-east
Queensland

Names of public buildings and structures – Treacy Centre, Rush Room, Campbell
Centre

Historical, religious and cultural events and periods – the Renaissance, the
Stone Age, Lent, Good Friday, Easter, Christmas

Regular ceremonies and gatherings – State of Origin, Super 15, Olympic Games

Spelling and commonly used words

For any spelling issues, the correct usage should be taken from the Macquarie Dictionary or Australia Oxford Dictionary. Do not depend on the spellcheck, which in most cases is Americanised. While over the years the spelling of some words appears to have changed, such as z instead of s in words such as organise and deleting the u from words such as colour, Terrace adheres to the traditional spelling styles, although the shortened version of programme i.e. program, is now considered the acceptable norm. Below is a list of commonly used words indicating correct usage:

adviser	benefited	committed	cooperate
coordinate	day-to-day	e-commerce	email
focused	fundraising	internet	intranet
longstanding	no-one	online	per cent
percentage	program	second-hand	statewide
targeted	up-to-date	website	

Dot (bullet) points

The key to dot points is consistency – not to chop and change between lower case and capitals at the start of bullet points or in the use of commas and full stops. Capitalisation and punctuation for dot points follow normal sentence rules. If all the dot points are full sentences, each should start with a capital letter and end with a full stop. For example:

Our commitment to holistic education, encompassing academic, co-curricular and spiritual pursuits was manifested in many ways, such as:

- Twenty-five students from the Senior class of 2010 received an OP1. Our Year 12s as a group received a median score of OP7.
- The Kairos Retreats for our Year 12 students continued to be a highlight of the Terrace experience. Our Senior students continued to regard the intensive, live-in, three-day program, as one of the most beneficial events in which they participate.

- The College offers scholarships to up to 10 students from a variety of backgrounds through the Edmund Rice Scholarship Fund. This Fund continues to be generously supported by the Gregory Terrace Foundation and Gregory Terrace Old Boys" Association.

If each dot point consists of or begins with a part of a sentence, no initial capital is used and a full stop is placed only at the end of the final dot point. It is no longer considered necessary to include commas after each dot point or and (at the second to last dot point). For example:

The Review will examine a number of areas with the College's sporting program, including:

- win-loss ratio
- number of teams
- coaching credentials
- the need for specialist coaching.

Plain bullet points should be used rather than decorative or distracting points.

When numbering questions or points and their subdivisions, begin with numerals followed by lower case letters. Eg:

1. A fruit salad may consist of:
 - (a) a type of melon
 - (b) a type of berry
 - (c) an apple
 - (d) a banana
2. A Greek salad may consist of:
 - (a) olives
 - (b) cucumber
 - (c) capsicum
 - (d) feta
 - (e) onion

If necessary change the text to ensure the list does not have a mix of sentences, short phrases etc. and therefore a mix of dot point style. Consistency is the key.

Numbers, date, time and units of measurement

Numbers

Avoid opening a sentence with a number. If it is unavoidable, the number must be spelled out, such as: Fourteen deaths were recorded between January 2009 and January 2011.

Use words for numbers from one to nine inclusive, except in reference to pages (p4), percentages (4 per cent) and year levels (Year 5).

In sport, refer to Round 1 (not Round One or 1st round) and Division 1, which can be shortened to Div 1 (not Division One, or 1st Division).

Always use numbers with units of measurement, even if less than 10. Eg. Four footballers ran 4m.

Large numbers should be a combination of words and numerals. Eg.

5500

62,000

\$54,000

2.5million /thereafter 2.5m

No space is required between numerals and a symbol of measurement. For example:

2.5kg

200mm

3km

4m

A\$250

25% (it is preferable, although not always possible if quoting large numbers of figures, to spell out per cent)

Dates

Dates should not include “the” before the date and do not need st, nd or th. The style is Monday 22 February 2016 (with no commas).

Year spans should be represented, using a hyphen (not a small (en) dash, ie 201011 if the years fall in the same century and 1996-2011 if the years cross centuries.

Time

Times should be written as:

1am

2.30pm

4.23am

noon (pm is superfluous)

midnight (am is superfluous)

The style on time periods is 4-5pm, 3.30-6am etc but when it crosses am/pm becomes 3am to 4pm.

When the time reference is singular, the apostrophe is used. For example:

one week's time

six weeks time

three months

wages a day's

walk

the year's accounts

Other examples of the correct use of numbers:

11 years old

the two-hundredth case

15th

century

one-third

21 July
2016
1990s
Twenty-three (if starting a sentence otherwise 23)
35-year-old or 35 years old (not 35 years of age)
Year 12s
Years 5-7 (inclusive)
Years 8 and 11 (separate years)

Publications

Terrace style recommends minimal capitalisation when detailing books, periodicals, chapters, articles and documents. Maximum capitalisation should be given to journals, magazines and newspapers.

Titles of published works should be italicised. For example:

The Courier-Mail
Terrace News
Over the top with Jim
Terracian

Punctuation

With singular words and names that end in s, use the normal possessive ending 's:

James's
Jones's

After plurals that do not end in s also use „s:

children's
media's

Use s' on plurals that end in s:

Bosses'
Joneses'
Gregory Terrace Old Boys' Association

Use s' on plural names that take a singular verb:

Reuters'
Brown Brothers'
Barclays'

Some plural nouns, although singular in other respects, such as the United States and the Netherlands, have a plural possessive apostrophe: The Netherlands' next Prime Minister...

Decades, year levels or age groups do not require an apostrophe:

1990s
Year 12s
Under 15s

In regard to people, an apostrophe is used as:

People's (of the people)

Peoples' (of peoples)

Apostrophes are no longer used to indicate missing letters in a contracted word that does not contain an adjacent repeated letter: Cwlth

The names of places, streets and roads in Australia do not take apostrophes, even when they embody possessive construction:

Kings Cross the Devils Marbles

Cades County

A possessive phrase takes the apostrophe on the last word of the phrase:

someone else's book

the Director of Sport's

role

An apostrophe is not necessary when the phrase includes a plural noun that is descriptive rather than possessive:

drivers licence

travellers cheques

visitors book

Brackets

There are three main types of brackets, although parentheses are by far the most prominently used:

parentheses (round brackets)

square brackets [square brackets]

angle brackets <angle brackets>

Use parentheses to enclose information that gives further clarity but could be left out: The cost was 12 per cent (\$16) less than the competitor.

A sentence set entirely within parentheses has its concluding punctuation mark within the parentheses:

(The full stop should be within the brackets.)

Use square brackets when showing additions to quoted material, usually by someone other than the author:

He said: "I often went to Brisbane [Queensland] when I visited Australia."

Angle brackets are usually used to enclose email or web addresses but are not necessary.

Colons

Use a colon to introduce a list of items in a sentence:

They brought gifts: gold, frankincense and oil.

Semi-colons

Semi-colons can be used to link two clauses that could be treated as separate sentences but that have a closer link than separate sentences. They can also be

used to differentiate phrases or clauses that also contain commas, such as in sporting results:

Terrace is doing things correctly; CLT is doing the right thing.

U15: freestyle Billy Sue 1, Bobby Jane 2, Billy Bob 3; butterfly Bobby Jane 1, Billy Bob 2, Billy Sue 3.

Commas

As a general rule, commas are over-used. Given the modern trend for the written word to reflect the spoken word, the use of commas has decreased markedly.

However, commas should still be used after expressions such as however, furthermore, for instance and on the other hand, when they introduce a sentence.

Commas can be used around phrases or clauses that are inserted into a sentence but remain grammatically independent of it.

A pair of commas is often needed if expressions share an element of statement.

A comma also can be used in conjunction with a full stop. There does not need to be two commas.

Commas should not (on most occasions) be used before a conjunction. Eg:

Hayden Mitchell, on the other hand, knew nothing of the kerfuffle.

The students were concerned, but not alarmed, by the changes.

The students were concerned but were not going anywhere.

For example, all single-income families would be affected by the change.

Full stops

Always use one not two spaces after a colon, semicolon and after a full stop or other sentence or question closing punctuation mark.

There are no full stops at the end of shortened words. An exception is the abbreviation for number no. so as to not be confused with no. Further examples:

eg

etc

ie

PS

UK

US

no.

ACT, Qld, NSW, WA, NT, Vic, Tas

AJ Treacy

BA, BEd

cont.

Hyphens

There are few strict rules regarding hyphens. As is the case throughout any written copy, consistency is the key. Hyphens should not be overused.

Hyphens are useful with prefixes, especially to avoid misreading where the vowel ending the prefix is the same as the one at the start of the word attached to it. For example: pre-empt re-examine re-evaluate re-enter

Compound adjectives or adjectival phrases that precede the noun are hyphenated, unless there is no risk of ambiguity or hesitation in understanding on the part of the reader:

- anti-
- auto-
- bi- co-
- counte
- r- de-
- dis-
- ex-
- extra-
- hyper-
- hypo-
- inter-
- intra-
- mis-
- neo-
- non-
- post-
- pro-
- re-
- semi-
- sub-
- super-
- un-

Exceptions include (now commonly accepted):

- coordinate
- cooperate

However, the combination of two different vowels does not usually require a hyphen:

- prearrange
- biennial
- reallocate

Two-syllable prefixes ending in a vowel other than o or followed by another vowel are often hyphenated, whereas if the base word begins with a consonant the term is most commonly one word:

- anti-aircraft but antisocial semi-
- official but semilunar

Two-syllable prefixes ending in o are often attached without a hyphen, regardless of whether the letter starting the base word is a vowel or consonant:

- macrobiotic
- radioactive
- retrograde

Two-syllable prefixes ending in a consonant are rarely followed by a hyphen even when the base word begins with the same letter as the last one of the prefix:

hyperlink
interactive
interrelated

A hyphen is used in new words with the same prefix to distinguish them from established words that would otherwise look the same: re-cover (cover again)/ recover (recuperate)
re-signed (signed again)/resigned (retired, acquiesced)

For words prefixed with e for electronic, hyphenation is recommended:

e-book e-commerce e-shopping
but not for email

Hyphens are needed if a prefix is followed by a capital letter:

pre-Christmas sale
anti-Australian conduct

Two types of noun-plus-noun compounds are regularly hyphenated; expressions in which each element has equal status and expressions in which the elements rhyme:

owner-driver
culture-vulture

Adjectival phrases are always hyphenated:

an up-to-date account
state-of-the-art building whole-of-government scheme six-monthly
performance

Points of ellipsis

The three points of ellipsis (three dots only ...) are used to mark the omission of words from quotes. No punctuation mark before or after is necessary.

In his speech at the blessing and opening of the Treacy Centre, College Principal Dr Michael Carroll said: "Terrace Gentlemen strive to make a difference...they are our finest achievement.""

Quotation marks

Quotation marks are primarily used to show direct speech.

Direct speech should be enclosed in double (") quotation marks.

"Terrace Gentlemen are our finest achievement.""

For a quote within a quote use a single quotation mark within double quotation marks:

"He said 'I want only what is best', when I criticised him for what he had done.""

sic

sic means 'said in context'. To draw attention to an error in quoted material, use the italicised *sic*, meaning thus, placed in square brackets. Preferably paraphrase the quote or comment unless it is needed to add impetus to the article or story.

Shortened forms, abbreviations, contractions, acronyms

Shortened forms

Some shortened forms are not appropriate in formal writing but can create a friendly or less formal tone to the story or article. For example:

do not (in a formal document or letter)

don't (in a newsletter or story)

Plurals of most shortened forms can be formed simply by adding s without an apostrophe:

CEOs

CFOs

DGs

CDs

DVDs

Abbreviations that consist of capital letters are written without full stops:

ACT

GPO

EREA

In general do not abbreviate days and months. If necessary for space reasons (full stops are not needed):

Sun

Mon

Tues

Wed

Thurs

Fri

Sat

Jan

Feb

Mar

April

May

June

July

Aug

Sept

Oct

Nov

Dec

There also are sports-specific terms, which can be shortened for results. For example: Division 1 (Div 1), Round 1 (Rd 1), versus (v, not vs), defeated (d). No full stops are required after the abbreviated forms.

Contractions

Contractions that include the first and last letters of a word do not have a full stop. For example: Dept

Pty Ltd
Cwlth
Dr
Mr
Mrs
Br
Fr

Ampersand

The ampersand & is an abbreviation of and. Do not use an ampersand in general writing. Its use should be limited to:

- in some academic references eg (Grant & Smith, 1998)
- in certain company names eg Smith & Jones
- if space is limited eg in tables with a lot of text

Emphasis

Bold can be used for emphasis but sparingly. It is used eg in *Terrace News* for the names of staff and students. Do not use bold for entire paragraphs.

Italics

Italics should be used to indicate the title of publications such as books, songs, poems, or a short quotation.

Text justification

Do not justify or centre body text except if using an italic excerpt (see rules above) for part of a story). All text should be flush left and ragged right.

Fonts

Arial and Palatino are the primary typefaces used in the Terrace corporate identity. There is some room for creative variation within publications such as the *Terracian* and *Terrace News*.

Palatino is the corporate typeface. It is used for departmental namestyles, titles, stationery, publications, text headings and sub-headings, livery, apparel and signage.

If Palatino is unavailable, Arial should be used.

Arial should be used for all materials that are desktop generated, including forms and letters. Use Arial for the body text of documents and letters.

Font sizes

Body text should be Palatino/Arial12. This can be squeezed by using Arial Narrow 12, for instance to ensure a letter can fit on one page.

Miscellaneous writing tips

Plain English is always preferable.

Write in short sentences – 15 to 20 words.

Write in the active voice eg: The student hit the wall, not: The wall was hit by the student.

Especially in letters, use plenty of first and second person pronouns.

Use familiar words rather than trying to impress with an extensive vocabulary.

Use verbs rather than clauses or phrases based on nouns derived from verbs – for example – explain rather than provide an explanation.

In formal communication avoid jargon, clichés, euphemisms or discriminatory language.

Avoid overusing words such as:

- and
- ongoing
- important
- good
- that
- appropriate
- that is, which is.

Look for alternative words (via the Thesaurus) rather than repeating words. Care should be taken to ensure the synonym is appropriate to the context.

Writing for the web

Writing for the web is very different from writing in other media, including newsletters. Web copy should look good, be easy to scan and should be written for the targeted audience not for the author. Key factors to remember are:

Keep it short

Most web users scan pages, they don't read word for word. Top level pages should be succinct, giving readers the option to read further at lower level pages.

Use brief chunks of information

Most readers can only retain four to seven small chunks of information in the short term. Do not include large blocks of text. Separate concepts into different documents.

Keep it simple

Reading from a computer screen is some 25 per cent slower than reading from paper so cut the amount of copy for the web by half that you would have used in hard copy. Documents, pages must be easy to read, follow and find.

Headings

Headings should reflect the information not be cute or clever. Don't use the same word or words in headlines, it makes it too difficult for the reader to differentiate.

Provide links

Use links as pointers to other sources, additional information and navigational aids. Include names and contacts.

Emphasis

Bold is used to draw the reader's eye. Italics are difficult to read on screen.

Consistency

Consistency is just as important on a website as it is in other forms of communication.

Some preferred spellings

A

Aborigine (although Indigenous person is preferred)

Aboriginal person

advice (noun)

advise (verb)

affect (influence)

ageing

all right

annexe

appendices

audiovisual

B

benefited, benefiting bracketed budgeted

C

catalogue, cataloguing Catholic

CD ROM

centre Christian committed, commitment complement (make complete)

compliment (praise) cooperate coordinate council counsel (verb - advise)

counsel (noun – advice, barrister)

counsellor (adviser)

D

database day-to-day decision-maker dependent (adjective)

dependant (noun) disc disinterested (impart, dispassionate) disk

(floppy) dispel

E

e-business email effect (bring about, noun – result)

eg enquire etc excel extent

F

facsimile focus, focused, focusing fulfil, fulfilled, fulfilment full-time

G

government

geography

H

handwritten hard copy home page HTML

I ie Indigenous inquiry, inquiries internet interstate it's (it is) its (possessive)

J
ja
il

K
Kairos
Keyword

L
labelled, labelling labour Australian Labor Party licence (noun) license
(verb) lifetime long-term lose loose

M
Mass
multimedia
Muslim

N
necessary

O
occur, occurred, occurrence omitted ongoing online off-screen organisation
outsource

P
paper-based part-time
PDF
per cent/ percentage personal (individual) personnel (staff) practice
(noun) practise (verb) principal (chief) principle (general law) printout
program

Q
questionnaire

R
S
short-term (adjective) spreadsheet statewide stationary (not moving)
stationery (paper)

T
targeted their (possessive) there (place) they're (they are) transfer,
transferred, transferable

U
underway uninterested (not interested) usage useable

V
Virgin Mary

W website who's (who is) whose (possessive) worldwide