

UEL style guide for written documents/web

“Rules do not limit; they liberate”. John Humphrys.

And if you're not convinced by that, consider the difference between 'eats shoots and leaves' and 'eats, shoots and leaves'!

Publications and written documents from a professional organisation need to give a professional image. To achieve this, the content of those publications must be:

- clear
- concise
- consistent in style
- easy to read
- suited to the target audience.

They should also be written in good English (or other languages as appropriate), free from grammatical or spelling errors.

This guide is intended to help achieve these goals for UEL's publications. It is not a training course in copywriting, nor does it attempt to tell you how to write. It does, however, contain guidance for content creators and editors together with helpful tips and advice, and rules on grammar, spelling and terminology that will help us achieve a consistent, professional approach to our publications. Although intended primarily for print publications, it can also apply to website documents as we need to ensure consistency of grammar, spelling and terminology in all media formats.

The style guide is a living document and will be updated regularly as language changes and its use evolves. The most up-to-date version will be published on the website at www.uel.ac.uk/marketing/publications. If you have any queries about this document, or would like to suggest amendments/additions, please contact the Publications Team within Corporate Marketing (x2060 or publications@uel.ac.uk).

This guide is based on standard house styles used within publishing houses, newspapers and other universities. A range of sources have been used in compiling it.

This guide is split into the following sections:

Section:	Title	Page
Section 1	UEL's approach to style in publications	2
Section 2	Using headings in documents	3
Section 3	Guidance notes on grammar, spelling and terminology	4

Section 1

UEL's approach to style in publications

Audience

The audience for most student recruitment marketing publications is prospective students. However, these can range from school or college-level students aged 14+, to mature, professional workers. Other potential audiences can include parents, teachers, careers advisers, employers, etc.

When planning, writing and editing it is often helpful to keep a mental image of the 'typical' reader in mind. Constantly ask yourself:

- What does the reader need and want to know?
- Are we meeting those needs in the most appropriate way?
- What is the document for – eg, student recruitment, general information, or some other purpose?

At all times, make sure your document is suitable for its intended purpose.

Clarity

Clarity is perhaps the most important element in good writing. If what is written cannot be understood, then it will have no positive impact (but may well have a negative one!).

Brevity aids clarity – use short, easily understandable sentences and short paragraphs. This is especially important when writing for web pages, where short, punchy sentences and paragraphs that immediately grab the reader's attention are essential.

Avoid using unnecessary jargon and technical terms wherever possible. Sometimes, of course, these are necessary to convey the content of degrees, particularly in, say, science and engineering subjects. If you do need to use technical terms, ensure they enhance the meaning of what you are writing, not obscure it, and choose words that will be familiar to the audience.

Professional and error free

It is essential that UEL projects itself both internally and externally as a professional organisation that works to high standards. Our publications, including our website, are one of the key ways in which we can achieve this. In addition, as a higher education institution we have a responsibility to ensure that our publications avoid spelling and grammatical errors.

We therefore need to ensure that our publications are produced to the highest standards – this means consistency of style, accuracy of spelling and grammar, and good use of English.

Section 2

Using headings in documents

When preparing documents for publication, care should be taken to ensure consistency of headings and sub-headings.

Headings and sub-headings should always follow a hierarchy, with the main heading being prefixed [HEADING 1], and subsequent sub-headings being prefixed [HEADING 2/3/4, etc). However, the numbers refer to their importance, **not** to their order!

As an example, here is a much-shortened version of how text might look on a page describing a postgraduate course:

[HEADING 1] MSc Applied Positive Psychology

Positive psychology is the scientific study of optimal human functioning and flourishing. It focuses on factors that enable individuals and communities to thrive. The programme particularly emphasises skills development including facilitation, intervention and research skills.

[HEADING 2] Course structure

The programme comprises six core modules.

[HEADING 2] Career opportunities

Graduates of this programme can enhance their existing careers, or enter new careers, in a wide range of fields.

[HEADING 2] Key facts

[HEADING 3] Final award

MSc

[HEADING 3] Duration

One year full-time, two years part-time.

[HEADING 3] Teaching location

Docklands

[HEADING 2] How to apply

Visit www.uel.ac.uk/apply or call +44 (0)20 8223 3333.

In this example the sub-headings **Course structure**, **Key facts** and **How to apply** are of equal standing to one another and are both, therefore, labelled [HEADING 2] and emboldened. The sub-headings **Final award** and **Duration** are of equal standing to one another but are further sub-headings of 'Key facts'. They are therefore labelled [HEADING 3] and are not emboldened.

This can appear confusing at first but it is actually a very helpful device to enable whoever is designing or proofreading the document to understand how the text should be laid out on the page and to understand the relative importance of different pieces of text.

Remember, this is to be used when submitting documents for publication and is purely to assist the designers and editor/proofreader – the actual words [HEADING 1] et al will **not** appear in the final printed document.

Section 4

Guidance notes on grammar, spelling and terminology

It is important for a consistent approach to be used throughout our print and web publications, as this:

- promotes understanding and avoids confusion
- helps develop a professional image
- helps us, as a university, to present a high standard of written English – failing to do so will not reflect well on us.

Professional presentation includes not just design and layout but also consistency of spelling, grammar and terminology. The following section lists some common issues and provides the preferred UEL style that should be adopted in all print and web publications, documents, etc, and is based on existing publishing standards.

Section 4 contents

Abbreviations
Acronyms
Addresses (see also website addresses)
American English
Ampersands
Apostrophes
Bullet points
Capitals
Colons/semi-colons
Commas
Dates and times
Formatting
However
Hyphens
Inclusive language
Italics
Lists
Numbers
Oblique strokes (forward slashes)
Percentages
Proofreading
Qualifications and courses
Quotations
Singulars and plurals
Spacing
Spelling and common errors to avoid
Spell checker
Split infinitives
Telephone numbers
Text speak
United Kingdom
Website addresses

Abbreviations

In general abbreviations – such as dept for department – should be avoided in documents and the words used in full.

Titles can be abbreviated – for example, Dr instead of Doctor (do not put a full stop after the title). The one exception to this is Professor, which should always be written in full rather than Prof.

Acronyms

Do not use full points (full stops) or spaces in acronyms. For example:

- use HEFCE, not H.E.F.C.E.
- use ie, not i.e.

Acronyms (such as UEL instead of the University of East London) can be very helpful, but use only when appropriate. In general, if an organisation has a long title or is well known by its acronym, then write the title in full on the first usage, followed by the acronym in parentheses, then use the acronym only on future usage. For example:

- The Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) was formed in 2007. The DIUS draws together the nation's strengths in colleges, research, science and universities.

Some exceptions can be made to this: in short documents, such as adverts, where the name University of East London appears underneath the logo, the term UEL can be used in the text (indeed, UEL is the preferred usage). Also, very common terms such as UK and BBC can generally be used without clarification.

If you are working on a long document and there is a large gap between uses of a name, then it may be better to repeat the title in full on the next occasion – use your judgement as to the length of the gap and how well known the organisation being referred to is.

Remember, many acronyms – such as UEL, UCAS and the UK – are very well known, **but...** we are usually writing for an international, as well as a local, audience and some acronyms may not be quite so well known outside this country, so don't assume readers will know what a particular acronym stands for. Similarly, we may be familiar with AVA and HSS, but people outside UEL may not!

Often, documents refer to an organisation followed by its acronym, and then never use the name again. In general the use of the acronym in this context is to be avoided, unless the readers would need to know the acronym for some follow-up purpose.

Some dos and don'ts...

- Do use 'the University of East London' or 'UEL' - don't use 'the UEL' – write it as you would say it.
- Beware of ambiguous acronyms. For example, the London Stock Exchange has taken to calling itself the LSE in recent years, but this can be confusing as LSE is better known as the acronym of the London School of Economics. If in doubt, use the full title.
- USA and US are both acceptable as long as the meaning is clear in the context of the sentence. Use whichever version fits better in the sentence. For example, use 'Texas, USA' rather than Texas, US, but 'the US Government' rather than 'the USA Government'.

Acronyms should generally be written in all upper-case letters, eg HEFCE, unless the acronym has itself become an accepted word, such as scuba.

Remember, this is for guidance rather than being hard-and-fast rules – if in doubt, simply use a common-sense approach.

Addresses

When inserting an address into text, the presentation should be as follows:

(Name/department), UEL, University Way, Docklands Campus, London E16 2RD
(note no comma before the postcode).

Or, with extra contact details:

(Name/department), UEL, University Way, Docklands Campus, London E16 2RD,
Tel: +44 (0)20 8223 3333, Web: uel.ac.uk
(Note, www is no longer used when giving UEL's web address, but it is retained for other sites, such as www.ucas.com).

Where the address is outside a sentence, the following format applies:

(Name/department)
UEL
University Way
Docklands
London E16 2RD
Tel: +44(0) 20 8223 3333
Web: uel.ac.uk

There is no need to use 4–6 before University Way as these numbers are effectively superfluous.

American English

As a UK university with a predominantly UK audience, we use British, rather than American, English. Some words, such as program, have become widely used in the UK but the British English counterparts should be retained. Examples of this are given below

Use	Avoid
autumn	fall
centre	center
colour	color
favourite	favorite
focused	focussed
honours degree	honors degree
programme	program (unless referring to computer software)
protest against the cuts	protest the cuts
speciality	specialty
12 noon/midnight	12pm/am (although 12am/pm are widely used nowadays, there are, in fact, no such times. PM/AM can also cause confusion, a problem avoided by using 12 noon/midnight).

The use of 'z' in certain words is also to be avoided – for example, realised, organisation, rather than realized, organization.

The exception to this is in the actual titles of books, films, etc if they are from countries that use US English. So, for example, *The Color Purple* or the World Trade Center are correct.

Ampersand

The ampersand – & – is generally to be avoided. However, it can be used on occasions to aid clarity. For example:

The Schools of Health & Bioscience and Law – this helps to show that Health and Bioscience is one school and Law is a different school, which otherwise would not be clear.

Ampersands can also be used when they are part of the validated title of a degree or module.

Apostrophes

Apostrophes are frequently misused nowadays, but they remain important in defining meaning and should be defended, not abandoned (as demonstrated by a sign outside a Cambridge pub advertising a football match involving Leeds United). They should therefore be used properly. Some simple rules can be used to help their correct usage.

Apostrophes generally mean 'belonging to'. For example:

- UEL's campus
- Wednesday's meeting

However, the word 'its' does not have an apostrophe in this context – eg, the dog lies on its back, **NEVER** it's back!

If the subject of the sentence is singular then the apostrophe comes before the final s; if the subject is plural, it usually comes after the s. For example:

- the student's course (where one student is referred to)
- the Students' Union (as it belongs to all students).

If the plural noun does not end in s – for example, children – then the apostrophe comes before the s – for example, The Children's Garden nursery.

Where a name ends in s, such as James, it is permissible to use either James' or James's. For the sake of consistency, James's is recommended as that matches how most people would pronounce the word.

Apostrophes can also be used to denote missing letters. For example:

- It's hot (instead of it is hot).

Apostrophes are **not** used simply to show plurals! For example:

Correct	Incorrect
CDs	CD's
Apples	Apple's
Universities	University's

They are not used in dates either – use 1990s, **not** 1990's.

Bullet points

See *Lists*.

Capital (upper case) letters (see also qualifications)

Upper case letters should be used sparingly. There is a tendency for upper case initials to be used far more frequently than is necessary, such as when referring to subjects or career areas in text for prospectuses. This needs to be avoided as it can be grating and also risks looking a little self-important.

Upper-case letters should be used when using proper nouns and when making specific reference to an institution, organisation, job title, etc; where a word is used in a general sense, lower-case letters should be used. For example:

Specific usage	general usage
The University of East London	going to university
Docklands Campus	the campus is great
Jo Smith, Senior Lecturer	lecturer Jo Smith
Our BA (Hons) History degree	a degree in history

Avoid usages such as 'You can go on to work in a variety of Civil Engineering fields' – upper case is simply incorrect and unnecessary in this example. Similarly, course subjects should be lower case unless referring to a language. For example:

- You will need an A-level in biology, chemistry, physics or another science subject, as well as in mathematics and English (English, being a proper noun, requires a capital E).

Upper case letters are also used for abbreviations, so GCSE not gcse, A-level not a-level.

If referring to euros, despite its derivation from European, the currency always uses a lower case initial (as do the pound, the dollar, etc).

Words like internet, web, website and so on also use lower-case initials.

Colons and semi-colons (see also However)

There is often confusion about when to use colons and semi-colons.

- **Colons** should be used to introduce quotations. For example:

Commenting on the result, the Vice-Chancellor said: "This is great news for UEL and confirms the excellence of our work here".

- **Colons** are also used to introduce lists (see Lists) but never with a hyphen after them, as in :- These can be bullet point lists or simply lists in text. For example:

There were four schools involved: AVA, Business, Law and Psychology.

- **Semi-colons** are used as a way of linking clauses or adding additional information to a sentence. For example:

The team looked tired; they had given their all.

- **Semi-colons** can also be used to separate items in a list, especially if it is long. For example:

There are several ways in which this can be achieved: by getting the highest marks in an exam; by submitting a dissertation; by producing a portfolio of previous work; or by otherwise demonstrating ability and experience.

Commas

Commas, like apostrophes, are useful tools that make a real difference (as the example at the top of this document illustrates). Commas should be used sparingly and to separate out clauses and sub-clauses. When a comma is used to introduce a sub-clause, a second comma is used to close it. For example:

- Professor McGonagall, Head of Transfiguration, was waiting for Harry.

Commas can also significantly change the meaning of a sentence. For example:

- Eats, shoots and leaves – ie, someone ate something, shot (a gun) and then left
- Eats shoots and leaves – ie, someone ate some shoots before leaving.

In British English, unlike American English, when using commas to separate items in a list no comma is usually required before the final item. For example:

'Westminster, South Bank, Greenwich and UEL' (eg, no comma after Greenwich).

The general rule is not use a comma before the word 'and'. However, occasionally it can be helpful to include a final comma if it helps the clarity of the sentence.

Dates and times

- 15 May 2011 or 15th May 2011 are both permissible, but do not mix the styles
- The 1990s (no apostrophe)
- 10.00am–4.00pm (but use 1.00–4.00pm rather than using pm twice)
- Note that 12.00am/pm, though increasingly used nowadays, are not correct – it is always 12.00 noon or 12.00 midnight. This avoids ambiguity and confusion.

Formatting

A draft document should be as little formatted as possible. Different fonts, widths, colours, and settings just make extra work for the editors/designers. Text should be left-aligned and in one style and font as far as possible.

However

It has become commonplace to use the word 'however' in the middle of a sentence with a comma in front of it. However, this is not good English and should be avoided; instead, it should either start a new sentence or be preceded by a semi-colon.

For example:

Incorrect: 'The teaching day is long, however there is a break at lunchtime.'

Correct: 'The teaching day is long; however, there is a break at lunchtime.'

Correct: 'The teaching day is long. However, there is a break at lunchtime.'

Hyphens

Hyphens have several uses:

- joining connecting words, eg well-known actor
- aiding clarity, eg 30-odd people (30 odd people could mean something very different)
- connecting prefixes that are not actually words themselves, eg anti-establishment.

Examples of correct usage:

The two-stage process / the process involved two stages

The 18-year-old student / the student was 18 years old

Problem-solving skills / skills in problem solving

However, by convention hyphens are not used when the adverb ends in 'ly' – so we would say well-known system, but fully operational system.

In some cases, phrases always work better when hyphenated, so as a general rule we always hyphenate full-time and part-time.

Words beginning with e for electronic – such as e-mail, e-commerce, e-zine, e-marketing – are hyphenated. However, words such as online and website do not require hyphens (the same could be said of e-mail, but it is probably best for consistency with other e- words to retain the hyphen, at least for now).

Please note that **non** (as in non-negotiable, non-accredited), **semi** (as in semi-detached, semi-quaver) and **anti** (as in anti-establishment) – are always hyphenated as they are prefixes and not actual words in themselves.

Vice-Chancellor is also hyphenated.

Hyphens and dashes

Hyphens and dashes are not the same thing!

hyphen	-
en dash	–

A hyphen is used to join connected words, eg well-known.

An en dash is used, with spaces before and after, to join parts of a sentence, eg:

- UEL – one of London's modern universities – is located in Docklands and Stratford.

A common error nowadays is to split a sentence using an en dash, then close it again with a comma, eg:

- UEL – one of London's modern universities, is located in Docklands and Stratford.

This is just wrong – please do not do this, we'll only have to change it later.

An en dash is also used – without spaces before and after – to denote ranges, eg:

- ages 20–24
- 2007–08
- 4.00–6.00pm.

Inclusive language

UEL's preferred style is to speak directly to the reader. For example:

Use phrases like “You will gain an understanding of...” rather than “The student will gain an understanding of...”

Language should also be non-discriminatory. Exclusive language, such as ‘he’ when referring to both sexes, must be avoided. He or she is correct, though clumsy – avoid using it too often. S/he is correct but ugly. You can often rewrite into the plural (eg, instead of ‘the student’ or ‘he/she’, use ‘the students’ or ‘they’).

Italics

Italics should be used for titles of publications such as *The Times*, the *Guardian*, etc (note *The Times* is one of the few papers to include *The* in its title).

Lists

Use bullets, not numbers. Avoid the common mistake of ending each bullet point with a semi-colon – there is no need for this as the bullet point already separates each item.

In general, each item should start with a lower case initial. However, upper-case initials should be used if the bullet point contains more than one sentence or if the word requires an upper-case initial (eg UEL). Within any bullet point list, it is better to use one style.

Only the last item of a bullet point list should be followed by a full point.

Bullet point lists should generally be preceded by an introductory sentence which should end in a colon (**not** followed by a hyphen or dash). For example:

Docklands Campus is home to the following Schools:

- Architecture and the Visual Arts
- Combined Honours
- Royal Docks Business School
- Computing and Technology
- Social Sciences, Media and Cultural Studies.

Numbers

For numbers up to ten, use words. For other numbers, use numerals. For example:

- One not 1
- 11, not eleven
- 150, not one hundred and fifty
- 2,000, not two thousand and never, ever 2 thousand!
- 150 million, not 150m.

However, it is best to avoid mixing styles within the same sentence, so use your judgement as to what looks best.

Numbers with four or more digits have a comma after the first digit, eg 1,500 (unless, of course, it is a year). It has become increasingly common to omit the comma in four-digit numbers (eg, 2000) but to apply the comma in five-digit numbers after the thousand (eg, 20,000). There is no logic to this and it should be avoided.

It is also good practice to avoid starting sentences with numbers.

Oblique strokes (aka forward slashes)

Do not use a space on either side, eg 2007/08

Percentages

The preferred style is to use the symbol, eg 25%, rather than 25 per cent, and the two styles should never be mixed.

Proofreading

Any document for publication should be proofread by at least one other person than the author or main editor before it is passed for publication. If you are proofreading, it helps to go through the document several times, each time looking for one particular type of error, eg:

- spelling mistakes/typos
- headings
- layout
- fonts (inc. italics and bold)
- references (especially page numbers)
- addresses and contact details.

The Publications Team will be issuing a set of protocols for the proofreading of documents published within or by Corporate Marketing.

Qualifications and courses

Specific degree titles have upper-case initials, eg BA (Hons) Applied Positive Psychology. We also use upper-case initials when referring to Bachelor's degree, Master's degree and Doctorate (please note that the plural of Master's degree is Master's degrees, **not** Masters').

However, in a general sense, lower-case initials are used, eg "our degrees in psychology".

Always include (Hons) in formal undergraduate degree titles (except in the rare cases where degrees are Ordinary).

Be careful to avoid inconsistencies around the word 'in'. For example, in prospectus and course literature, use MSc Biology, not MSc in Biology, and be careful to ensure the two styles are not mixed.

Our programmes of study can be referred to as degrees, programmes or courses. However, please ensure you use the same term throughout a document, as using different terms can look confusing:

- use degree as in: "you can take a sports science degree", or: "we offer undergraduate and postgraduate degrees"
- use programme when referring to the contents of a particular degree, for example "the programme covers the key areas of bioscience".

The individual elements of a degree are always modules – not units or any other term. The only exceptions to this are degrees validated by UEL but delivered externally (for example, at the Tavistock Clinic) as those degrees may not be structured in the same way as normal UEL degrees and the word module may not be appropriate.

In general, the terms to use are:

- degree/course – the overall course of study/qualification on completion
- programme – the contents of the degree
- module – an individual element within a degree
- subject – an individual study topic, such as history, politics
- subject area – this can also be used when describing an area that encompasses several related degrees, such as humanities

- field of study – this essentially means the same as subject, but is much less familiar to readers so please use subject in marketing materials.

When referring to degree classifications, use first-class honours, not 1st-class, and second-class honours, not 2nd-class. However, it is fine to say 2.1 or 2.2.

Quotations

Use double quotation marks – “text” – when quoting what someone has said.

Sometimes single quotation marks can be used to emphasise a certain word, for example:

- UEL is a ‘modern’ university
- this is a ‘sandwich’ degree.

These words rarely actually require quotation marks, single or otherwise, and using them swiftly becomes irritating to the reader (it is the written equivalent of someone making speech marks with their fingers when talking to someone).

Singulars and plurals

Note that data, criteria and media are plural, eg:

- the media have gone overboard about this issue
- the media are looking for stories.

Spacing

Always use single spaces between sentences.

Spelling (see also American English) and common errors to avoid

It is essential that correct spellings of words are used. Nothing undermines text more than finding spelling mistakes in it, so please do check carefully.

Some common mistakes to avoid:

Correct

Definitely

Complementary medicine

Comprising

Lose (as in ‘to lose money’)

Incorrect

Definately (or any other variation!)

Complimentary medicine (which would be free medicine!)

Comprising of (but ‘comprised of’ or ‘composed of’ are correct)

Loose (recently this has become frequently used instead of lose, but has an entirely different meaning, ie something that is not tight!)

Also watch out for the following:

- **affect** (to influence) versus **effect** (the outcome or result, or to carry out)
- **licence** (noun, as in TV licence) versus **license** (verb, as in they licensed their TV)
- **fewer** (which relates to number, eg there are fewer students than before) versus **less** (which relates to quantity, eg there is less water than before)
- **practice** (noun, as in a GP’s practice) versus **practise** (verb, as in to practise medicine)
- **principal** (first or the head) versus **principle** (a standard or rule)
- **stationary** (not moving) versus **stationery** (writing paper)
- **almost unique** (or practically unique, virtually unique or any other adjective) – no! Unique means ‘the only one’ and does not have graduations, so nothing can be ‘almost unique’ – something either is unique or it isn’t. Also, be careful when using the word unique generally – things are often described as unique when they’re nothing of the sort. Used sparingly it can have a positive effect – over-used it can undermine whatever’s being said
- avoid using old-fashioned words such as whilst, amongst, etc
- **latter/better** – when comparing two things; **last/best** – when comparing three or more things
- **different from** – opinions differ, but different from is the preferred usage, different to is acceptable; different than is not, please avoid it

- **discrete** (separate from) versus **discreet** (circumspect or confidential).

Sometimes words have more than one correct spelling, such as adviser and advisor. In these cases, please ensure you use the same version throughout your document. In general, we now use advisor as that is the version used in email addresses.

Spell checker

Use it, by all means, but do not rely on it.

Firstly, make sure it is set to the right language. Documents are usually set to American English, but can easily be set to British English. To do this in Word, go to the menu bar and click on Tools/Language/Set Language, then click on English (U.K.).

Also, beware – spell checkers will miss words that are correctly spelt but are the wrong word in the context of the sentence. For example, ‘we didn’t think it would affect out publications’ passes the spell checker test, even though the word ‘out’ should actually read ‘our’ and renders the sentence meaningless.

Split infinitive

A split infinitive is when the word ‘to’ and a verb are separated by an adverb, eg, to madly love or to badly miss. *Star Trek’s* “To boldly go” is the most famous example and has helped to make split infinitives less of an absolute no-no. On the whole it is usually best to avoid them – to miss badly sounds much better than to badly miss. However, sometimes trying to avoid a split infinitive can make a sentence very clumsy. Let common sense apply and use what reads best.

Telephone numbers

Unless it is really not appropriate, telephone numbers should be given with the UK’s international dialling code prefix, eg:
+44 (0)20 8223 3333.

For consistency, please use 20 8223 not 208 223.

Txt spk.

AKA text speak. Avoid it unless using it to demonstrate text speak. For one thing it may hide the real meaning, especially to a reader unfamiliar with text speak; for another, it may look cool when used by a 16-year-old to another 16-year-old, but it does not look cool when used by a professional organisation – it just looks like we’re trying too hard to be cool and appearing naff instead (think William Hague wearing a baseball cap and you’ll get the picture).

United Kingdom

If writing for an international audience, it can be helpful to remember that there are different terms for our country/ies, which are not necessarily interchangeable.

We generally refer to being in the UK, rather than Great Britain, as it is more correct – Northern Ireland is **not** part of Great Britain. In some countries, particularly the USA, England is often used when the speaker is actually referring to the UK – this is to be avoided as a) it is wrong and b) could give offence, especially to people from Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland (and, indeed, Cornwall!).

Website addresses (URLs)

When writing out website addresses, there is no need to include http://.

For our own address we use uel.ac.uk, eg no www.

www. is used, however, for other websites, eg www.ucas.com

No full point is used at the end of URLs or email addresses.

Avoid using very long urls, as these look, frankly, horrible in text and readers will not bother to copy them out. If you need to refer to a web page that has a very long URL, check with Chris Folorunso in the Web and Digital Media team to see if a shorter URL can be provided. If it can't, then it is better to direct people to a general page and advise them where to click on that page. For example, go to uel.ac.uk/programmes and then click on the course of your choice (listed alphabetically).

Prepared by Publications and Design Team
Version 1.3 February 2011