

T*Net and TEQSA website content creation guidelines

Topics

- [Writing style](#)
- [New content](#)
- [Quality control](#)
- [Information structure](#)
- [Formatting](#)
- [Attachments](#)
- [Links](#)
- [Images and other media](#)
- [Resources](#)

Writing style

Content writing standards	Why the standard is important
Apply a 'reader-first' approach to all content.	What does the reader need to know? Why is it important? How will this help the reader to do their job? Information focuses on the reader, not the department that owns the information.
Short sentences – ideally 7 to 14 words.	Readers often skip long sentences when reading. Sentences may need to be read aloud by screen readers but long sentences can become confusing.
Use plain English.	Assume readers do not work in your area or discipline and may not be familiar with jargon.
Use personal pronouns and active voice.	Use the personal pronoun 'you' instead of 'the staff member' and active voice with verbs: 'Access induction training' rather than 'the site includes induction training'. This makes information much easier to read and is more personal.

Acronyms other than TEQSA.	Must spell and explain fully for first use on each page followed by the initials. Assume the reader is new to the sector and has not read it before.
Dates	Dates must be written as day followed by month then year: 16 February 2021. Refer to TEQSA Editorial Style Guide for details.
Bullet lists can be constructed with full sentences or with sentence fragments that follow an introduction.	<p>Bulleted lists using sentence fragments must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • always contain at least three points • be parallel in construction – all present tense, etc • begin each point with lower case letter, unless proper noun • not use penultimate 'and' • only use full stops for last point. <p>The TEQSA style guide has more information.</p>



[Back to top](#)

New content

Content writing standards	Why the standard is important
Use the search bar to check that the information you are creating is not duplicated elsewhere on site.	Duplicate content can confuse readers, especially if its contradictory or an old version. There should only be a single source of information on the site at a time.
When building a page, the author has checked links and that connections to the master navigation search work correctly.	Content on websites is organised using an information architecture that gives staff the information they need to do their jobs more easily.



[Back to top](#)

Quality control

Content writing standards	Why the standard is important
---------------------------	-------------------------------

All web content is reviewed every 12 months or less and is accurate and relevant and aligns with the TEQSA Editorial Style Guide . Content review can be set for a shorter time.	All content is regularly reviewed to check for broken links, to confirm accuracy and update structure or style.
The content owner is named on the page (on T*Net only).	A content owner is responsible for ensuring information is accurate, complies with the editorial style, is accessible and up to date. If they move or leave, their content pages must be reassigned.
Contact details and names embedded in a page content are current and correct.	Contact details within pages allow people to ask questions or get more information. Incorrect details waste time and cause frustration.



[Back to top](#)

Information structure

Content writing standards	Why the standard is important
Concise page headings, fewer than seven words.	Short page headings allow for easier discovery in search.
Headings must use sentence or title case rather than all caps: 'Pay and benefits'.	TEQSA editorial style specifies minimal capitalisation only for first word in sentence and proper nouns.
Page headings should not be framed as questions nor contain symbols.	To improve accessibility, headings should not contain symbols such as slashes, ampersands (&) and other symbols as they don't translate well for screen readers for visually impaired.
Key tasks and information are grouped in short sections with descriptive subheadings.	Meaningful headings help people to quickly find and understand information on a web page. Headings also help the page to appear in a site search.
Use formatted heading styles. More information in Formatting section below.	Correctly formatted heading styles contain metadata that ensure screen readers work well. Bold and italicised text are not picked up by screen readers and create a poor accessibility experience.

Review need for the FAQ format.	<p>Creating pages in FAQ format can hinder search results and result in content duplication.</p> <p>Well designed and written pages should answer all questions without needing FAQs.</p>
Long pages – more than two screen-lengths – should include table of contents (TOC) with links to major headings.	A TOC helps readers to see all topics on a page and links give quick access to information. Short pages don't need a TOC if most information is available at single glance.
Call to action or next steps should stand out clearly on page.	Any instruction should be highlighted on a page in bold or coloured text or on a button.
<p>Use accessible language in calls to action such as 'learn more' or 'find out more'.</p> <p>'Click here' should never be used.</p>	<p>Accessibility guidelines discourage use of terms related to ability such as 'watch', 'hear', 'see'.</p> <p>'Click here' is also discouraged as it is meaningless and repetitive for screen readers.</p>



[Back to top](#)

Formatting

Content writing standards	Why the standard is important
Only use approved templates and their pre-set styles for T*Net pages.	Pre-set styles provide a consistent look and feel across T*Net.
Headings are used in order. They should not skip from Heading 1 to Heading 4.	Skipping the heading order can confuse screen readers.
Complete all page property information.	Page properties ensure the page owner and keywords are searchable.
Maintain template styles.	Changes to font size, colour and style can detract from the reading experience and make content less accessible.

Tables have row and column headers. These should be repeated regularly if tables are long.	Column and row headers give context to data and are particularly important for screen readers, which read the headers aloud to help make sense of table contents.
Use plain or normal text, sometimes called Roman text.	Bold and italic text is not distinguishable by screen readers and does not comply with accessibility standards.
Linked text	Hyperlinks should appear as descriptive text rather than URLs i.e. 'Visit Learning and development'.
No need to underline linked text.	Underlining is only used to denote linked text and is automatically applied. Content writers don't need to do this.
Highlighting key information	To highlight key information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • order critical information from the top of the page • use single quotation marks around the names of publications (don't use italics) or direct quotes • use bulleted lists. See TEQSA Editorial Style Guide for correct use • use subheadings • use call to action buttons.
Capitalisation	Use minimal capitalisation style. See TEQSA Editorial Style Guide. This means using caps for proper nouns and beginning of sentences, not to convey emphasis.
Symbols	Do not space percentages, distance, money and time symbols and abbreviations after the number.



[Back to top](#)

Attachments

Content writing standards	Why the standard is important
Write information directly onto a web page instead of adding attachments.	Only link to documents such as Excel spreadsheets when a specific format requirement can't be added inside the structure of a web page.

	Attachments raise the risk of readers not opening the information and they are often not accessible to screen readers. The information might also miss searches.
PDFs are only used where the document information must be highly controlled. Alt text needed for each attachment must include all content. This will be read to people with visual disabilities.	Screen readers and search functions can't effectively read PDFs. Where possible, critical information should be presented on a webpage.



[Back to top](#)

Links

Content writing standards	Why the standard is important
Text links accurately describe where a selected link will take the reader and open on the expected page. Never use 'click here' as it is meaningless for screen readers.	Links can be read out of context and must make sense when read separately. Links must also clearly state where the selected link will take the reader such as 'check your pay', 'access the induction process'.
Embed links in descriptive text.	Links should be embedded in text descriptions rather than displaying a URL containing symbols and slashes.
Links to external sites are set to open in a new tab.	Select the option to open linked pages in a new tab as this helps readers to easily navigate back to your information.
Add 'back to top' hyperlink on the bottom of each page.	Navigate to specific sections via links embedded in the contents page and add 'back to top' hyperlink on the bottom of each page.



[Back to top](#)

Images and other media

Content writing standards	Why the standard is important
Alternative text is added to all images including PDFs.	Comprehensive alternative text descriptions must be added to all images – photos and graphics – to ensure they can be read by screen readers.
Images are inoffensive and copyright free.	Copyright-free stock images are available via Pixabay .
Image files are all under 250 KB.	Images should also be saved as jpg or png.
Do not use images of text i.e. pictures of presentation slides or banners.	Screen readers are unable to read images of text. Text images can also scale strangely on different devices, causing them to pixelate or distort.
Graphics have a detailed description explaining purpose and essential findings.	All diagrams need to be read aloud by screen readers for the visually impaired. This is also helpful when viewing on a small screen.
Images must optimise correctly.	Check that images do not appear cropped when viewed on screen or mobile devices. The most important part of the image must always be visible on different devices.
Permissions	Other than for copyright-free stock images, all people in pictures must sign a permission form allowing use of their image by TEQSA. Their name must also appear in a caption above, below or beside the image.
All videos must be captioned.	Any video uploaded to the web must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • show full captions covering all spoken content • link to a transcript covering spoken content • have alternative text descriptions if there is no speech.

Resources

For more information about creating content, visit the [TEQSA Editorial Style Guide](#) to check your grammar and spelling, and the [TEQSA Brand Identity Guidelines](#) to understand the use of logos, images and tone of voice.



[Back to top](#)