



# Editorial Style Guide

Use this *Style Guide* when preparing written materials for Screen Australia. It is designed to ensure consistency across all publications. A copy is available on Davo or from the Communications Team.

## A

### ABBREVIATIONS

- Use only if necessary. Do not write 'mins' instead of 'minutes' etc
- Abbreviate these Australian states: NSW, NT, WA, SA and ACT
- Write out in full: Queensland, Victoria, Tasmania, or use lower case e.g. Qld, Vic, Tas (because unlike the other states, these are not acronyms)

### ABORIGINAL

Must be spelled with a capital 'A'

Please see [here](#) for further reading from the Australian Human Rights Commission, who state:

The 'A' in 'Aboriginal' is capitalised similar to other designations like 'Australian', 'Arabic' or 'Nordic'. The word 'aboriginal' with a lowercase 'a' refers to an indigenous person from any part of the world. As such, it does not necessarily refer to the Aboriginal people of Australia.

'Aboriginal people' is a collective name for the original people of Australia and their descendants, and does not emphasise the diversity of languages, cultural practices and spiritual beliefs. This diversity is acknowledged by adding an 's' to 'people' ('Aboriginal peoples'). 'Aboriginal people' can also be used to refer to more than one Aboriginal person.

(see also Indigenous Australians)

### ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLES

Capitalise first letters, so it reads: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

This is the preferred term, as opposed to Indigenous Australians, or First Nations peoples.

### ACRONYMS

- In formal writing, spell out in its entirety in first instance, e.g. Australian Academy of Cinema & Television Arts (AACTA) and use acronym from thereon.
- The exception is for the states, where NSW does not need to be spelled out as New South Wales in the first instance. It is up to the author.

- In editorial (e.g. Screen News), where it is a well-known organisation such as NIDA, there is no need to spell out. Use discretion as to whether average reader will know the acronym.

## ALIGNMENT

Align text left (rather than full justify)

## B

### BOLD

Bold should be used for emphasis as underlining can appear to be a hyperlink.

### BRACKETS

- Put acronyms in brackets after the first mention of an organisation if mentioned extensively throughout, e.g. Australian Film, Television and Radio School (AFTRS). Thereafter just use the acronym. See also *acronyms*.
- For PDFs or hard copy documents (research papers, legal documents etc.) that refer to another part of the same document: use brackets, section in single quotes, capitalise only the first word and list the page number, e.g. (see 'Financial considerations for production in Australia' on page XX).
- When adding extra words into a quote to clarify, use hard brackets. E.g. "[But] then we finished [additional] filming."

### BROADCASTERS

#### Public broadcasters

ABC -- ABC iview -- ABC Me

SBS -- SBS Viceland

#### Commercial broadcasters

Nine Network

Channel Seven

Network Ten

### BULLET POINTS

Bulleted lists:

- are preferable to lists using numbers or letters as they are easier to read and take up less space
- need to be left justified
- should come after a colon.

**When bullets are fragments of a sentence, do not use a semi-colon, full stop, comma - *except* for the last bullet point, where you should use a full stop. Do not use capitals.**

**E.g.**

Screen Australia staff enjoy reading this Style Guide because it is:

- somewhat short
- kind of snappy
- very informative.

**When bullets are complete sentences, use capitals at beginning and full stops at the end of each bullet point, e.g.**

For this type of bulleted list:

- Capitals should be at the beginning of each bullet point.
- Full stops should be at the end of each bullet point.

**If you need to indent your bulleted list further, use a dash, e.g.**

There are many terrific examples of Australian films:

- *Picnic at Hanging Rock*
  - wonderful use of cinematography
  - great acting
- *Lion*

## C

### CAPITALS

- Capitalise first letter of job titles that precede a name, e.g. Head of Production Sally Caplan
- Capitalise the first letters of departments and units at Screen Australia, e.g. the Legal Department, Business & Audience Department and the Documentary Unit
- Capitalise the word ‘government’ only when referring to the proper noun, e.g. the Australian Government
- Capitalise the word ‘festival’ only when referring to the proper noun, e.g. Cannes Film Festival is one of many festivals around the world that screen films
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, First Nations peoples, and Indigenous Australians must be written as such
- Capitalise Producer Offset, Location Offset, PDV Offset and references to the Offset
- Capitalise Co-production only when referring to an official Co-production (see below)

### CO-PRODUCTION

Some tips for **WHEN** to capitalise:

- When writing out POCU in full: Producer Offset and Co-production Unit
- When referring to an Official Co-production e.g. provisional Co-production approval was given to the great film *blah blah*. This means *blah blah* will still need final approval before it is considered an Official Co-production.

And **WHEN NOT** to capitalise:

- When you are referring to a co-production that is not an Official Co-production e.g. *Hacksaw Ridge* was a Australian/US co-production, or; “we’ve got the Netflix’s, the Amazon’s knocking on our door and increasingly looking for co-productions”
- When the sentence is referring to co-production as a *verb*, not a *noun* (as was the case here with Official Co-production *Cleverman*) e.g. Goalpost Pictures Australia and Pukeko Pictures co-produced a second season of *Cleverman* for ABC TV in co-production with SundanceTV and Red Arrow

**Also note:**

In documents/media releases etc, countries should be written as Australian/partner country  
Co-production

E.g. In this case, we would say Australian/Chinese Co-production *7 Guardians of the Tomb*,  
and Australian/New Zealand Co-production *Cleverman*.

## D

### DASHES

**Group words that together become an adjective.**

Note the two examples below:

1. [Mustangs FC](#) is about a group of teens who start an **all-girl** team at their football club.
2. The trend toward shorter length, **high-cost** TV dramas continued with a large number of **short-run** shows (mini-series) such as *Barracuda*, *Deep Water* and *The Secret Daughter*, but zero **long-form** series (comprising 20 or more episodes).

**Insert a pause that's longer than a comma, but less than a full stop.**

It's not just money - it's the organisations and the people and platforms that come behind it.

**Separate a thought from the rest of the sentence.**

It managed to tell me so much about Australia during that post-war period - those 10 years between 1946 and 1956 - while at the same time being so entertaining.

### DATES

Should read: number-month-year

E.g. The film festival will start on 20 April 2017

## E

## F

### FIRST NATIONS PEOPLES

Capitalise first letter of each word, so it reads: First Nations peoples. See also: *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples*.

### FONT

The Screen Australia font is 'Flama'

Flama is not a standard Word font, but you can email Computer Support and have it installed.

If Flama is not available, use Trebuchet MS (which is the same font used in emails)

Different font sizes are suited to different readers and contexts:

- 6 to 8 pt for captions and footnotes
- in general, 9 to 12 pt for continuous reading
- 14 pt or larger for primary school readers
- 14 to 20 pt for older readers and people with visual impairments.

People should only use templates that are available in DAVO - do not create your own.

### FOREIGN PROJECTS

**Foreign** projects are defined as those under foreign creative control, originated and developed by non-Australians. This includes foreign projects with an Australian production company operating in a service capacity.

## G

## H

## I

### INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIANS

Must be spelled Indigenous with a capital 'I'

This term encompasses First Nation peoples including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. See also *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples*.

Please see [here](#) for further reading from the Australian Human Rights Commission, who state:

The 'I' in 'Indigenous' is capitalised when referring specifically to Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The lower case 'i' for 'indigenous' is only used when referring to people originating in more than one region or country such as the Pacific region, Asiatic region, Canada or New Zealand.

### ITALICS

- All titles are *italicised* and where possible, hyperlinked to The Screen Guide
- *Italics* or **bold** should be used for emphasis as underlining can appear to be a hyperlink
- Reports such as *Seeing ourselves* can be italicised, but not the annual Drama Report or Annual Report
- Do not italicise initiatives such as Art Bites, Hot Docs etc.

## J

## K

## L

## M

### MINI-SERIES

A **mini-series** is a program comprising up to 13 hours total duration

E.g. *Wentworth, Doctor Doctor, The Secret Daughter, The Wrong Girl, Seven Types of Ambiguity, The Family Law*.

### MORE THAN V OVER

Attempt to use *more than* instead of *over* if it is before a number

E.g.

**More than** 87 people applied for this round  
is more correct than

**Over** 87 people applied for this round

However, as time goes on, it is becoming more and more accepted to interchange *more than* and *over*, so it is your personal choice whether you think it looks cleaner or need to minimise word count by using *over*.

## N

### NUMBERS

- For numerals within the body text, nine and under should be **spelled out in words**, 10 and over in numerals e.g. nine, 10, 11, 12 **except** when together in a sentence, e.g. fifteen 90-second films
- All numbers must be spelled out in full if they begin a sentence
- Use % instead of per cent in editorial copy on Screen News, tables or where several percentages are used. All percentages should use numerals
- For larger numbers in the thousands use commas, e.g. 6,000; 200,000
- 30s versus thirties: when referring to an era - use 30s; when referring to someone's age group (ie Max is in his....) use thirties.

**The following styles should be used for periods of history:**

- 1970s, 1990s (no apostrophes)
- 1980/81, 1921/22, 2001/02 (financial years)
- 20th century, 19th century (not twentieth century)

**The following styles should be used for expressing periods of time:**

- 90-second commercial, 10-minute short
- 9am, 10.30pm, 7-8.30pm

## O

### OFFICIAL CO-PRODUCTIONS

Capitalise the 'O' and the 'C', but not the 'p' e.g. Official Co-productions

And **WHEN NOT** to capitalise:

- When you are referring to a co-production that is not an Official Co-production e.g. *Hacksaw Ridge* was a Australian/US co-production, or; "we've got the Netflix's, the Amazon's knocking on our door and increasingly looking for co-productions"
- When the sentence is referring to co-production as a *verb*, not a *noun* (as was the case here with Official Co-production *Cleverman*) e.g. Goalpost Pictures Australia and Pukeko Pictures co-produced a second season of *Cleverman* for ABC TV in co-production with SundanceTV and Red Arrow

**Also note:**

In documents/media releases etc, countries should be written as Australian/partner country  
Co-production

E.g. In this case, we would say Australian/Chinese Co-production *7 Guardians of the Tomb*, and Australian/New Zealand Co-production *Cleverman*.

## P

### POSSESSIVE CREDIT

A director can take the possessive credit of a film (e.g. Baz Luhrmann's *Moulin Rouge!* or Jocelyn Moorhouse's *The Dressmaker*) if they have also written the screenplay.

This is based on a ruling by the Directors Guild of the US.

## Q

### QUOTATION MARKS

Here are a couple of different types of sentences with different punctuation (ending in question marks etc.):

**Quotation marks fall outside full stops, question marks, commas, etc.**

"I love punctuation and learning about it so damn much," the Screen Australia worker said.

"It's just the best part of my day."

**Quotation marks fall outside full stops, question marks, commas, etc.**

"Do I love punctuation?" Ms Screen Australia said. "Why yes, I do!"

**Quotation marks outside the full stop if a broken quote - where only part of it is used - is at the end of a sentence**

Mr Screen Australia said he loved learning about punctuation so much that "it was the best part of my day."

**No need for full stops or commas inside the quotation marks if within the middle of a sentence like this...**

The Screen Australia worker said she "enjoyed" learning about punctuation, saying "it was the best", and her colleague agreed.

**Quoting inside a quote - use single quotation marks**

"The style guide writer told me 'here's a witty sentence about punctuation' and I didn't believe her... but then I read it and she was *so* right," Ms Screen Australia said.

**If a quote runs over two lines, use quotation marks only to close the quote at the end (\*note: this does not apply to media releases, which have their own quotation style\*)**

"Well this is a great quote

## R

### REFERENCING

**When citing books, journal articles and websites for reference purposes, use the author-date system, e.g.**

- Krauth, K 2003, *A comma in a haystack*, Allen and Unwin, Sydney (book)
- Webster, M 2003, 'The hidden secrets of publishing', *Trade Writing Journal*, vol. 52, pp. 50-52 (journal article)
- Jennings, F 2003, 'Creative writing 101', University of NSW, Sydney, viewed 6 May 2003, [www.unsw.com.au](http://www.unsw.com.au) (website).

**When listing a long quote place it after a colon, indent the paragraph, use a slightly smaller font and right justify the reference in brackets, e.g.**

If you are serious about becoming a writer it is essential that you join the Australian Writers' Guild—to increase your bargaining power and to give you access to industry information as well as a wide range of services. Put simply, membership of the AWG is the best investment you can make in your career.

(Australian Writers' Guild, Sydney, viewed 6 May 2003, [www.awg.com.au](http://www.awg.com.au))

Titles of pieces of legislation—Acts, Regulations—should be listed with the date and in italics, eg *Screen Australia Act 2008*. Subsequent mentions should be in plain text and the date no longer needs to be included, or simply refer to the Act.

## S

### SEASON VS SERIES

Season = released this year

Series = general term

E.g.

1. The Katering Show season 2 released last week and is the best thing since sliced bread.
2. A woman's mind has exploded after watching the series **\*\*insert movie/TV title here\*\***. Not literally. It was just very good.

### SERIALS/SERIES

Long-form programs (more than 13 hours total duration), as well as multi-part programs with episodes shorter than one commercial broadcast hour (e.g. *Home and Away*, *Neighbours*, *Packed to the Rafters*).

### SPACING

Only use a single space at the end of sentences. Double spacing is a hangover from the days of typewriters and is now considered incorrect grammar. However, if an employee felt the need to write some copy on a typewriter and circulate around the office, they could use double spaces without fear of retribution.

## T

### TELEMOVIE

One or two-part feature length programs (e.g. *Hoges: The Paul Hogan Story*, *Mary: The Making of a Princess*).

### TEMPLATES

People should only use templates that are available in DAVO - do not create your own.

### THE SCREEN GUIDE

All titles and key creatives should be hyperlinked to The Screen Guide

E.g. [Dr George Miller](#) has made both [Mad Max](#) and [Babe](#).

### TITLES



- Titles of films, publications and plays are *italicised* and where possible, hyperlinked to The Screen Guide (see: The Screen Guide).

E.g. [Crocodile Dundee](#)

- For titles, the words ‘on’, ‘the’, ‘of’, ‘and’, ‘so’ etc (articles, prepositions, conjunctions) should be in lower case.
- Titles of pieces of legislation—Acts, Regulations—should be listed with the date and in italics, eg *Screen Australia Act 2008*. Subsequent mentions should be in plain text and the date no longer needs to be included, or simply refer to the Act.

## TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER

Must be spelled with a capital letter at the beginning of each word, so it reads Torres Strait Islander.

See also *Indigenous Australians, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples*.

## TV DRAMA

TV drama is defined according to [ACMA guidelines](#). It comprises scripted programs including series/serials, mini-series and telemovies of all genres, for both adults and children.

## U

### UNDERLINE

Avoid underlining within stories and use **bold** for emphasis instead. Underlined words can be mistaken for hyperlinks.

## V

## W

### WEBSITES

Websites, email addresses, or links to news stories should be hyperlinked into the text, e.g. The [Australian Directors’ Guild](#) (ADG) is calling on female directors [to apply for a new mentorship program](#) as part of Screen Australia’s [Gender Matters](#) initiative. Submit your application to [fakeexample@screenaustralia.gov.au](mailto:fakeexample@screenaustralia.gov.au) before 5pm, 1 April.

If you must write a website out in full, you do not need to include http://

## X

## Y

## Z

## COMMONLY USED SPELLINGS

Please use the following guide for general spelling.  
Please note the use of hyphens, capitals and apostrophes.  
Please let the Communications Team know of any new terms that you come across and they will incorporate into the list.

A	B	C
the Academy Awards® arthouse audiovisual ( <i>no hyphen</i> ) Aurora Script Workshop Australia-US Free Trade Agreement ( <i>en rule</i> ) Australian Content Standard Australian Directors' Guild (ADG) Australian Government (see <i>Capitals</i> section) Australian Writers' Guild (AWG) AWGIE Awards	back-end (eg database) box office box-office results	Cannes Film Festival or Festival de Cannes (note lowercase 'd' on 'de' - also see <i>Capitals</i> section for when to capitalize Film Festival) cashflow CD-ROM/CD-ROMs Chain of Title chat room cinemagoers CineMedia (directory) co-financing co-investing official Co-production program Commonwealth Government community TV Cooperate coordinated Critics' Prize (Cannes) crossover cross-platform cross-reference cross-section
D	E	F
Database de facto decision making the Depression deregulation Development Department (see <i>Capitals</i> section) Directors' Fortnight (Cannes) Division 10BA/10B	Email em rule en rule <i>Encore Directory</i> export-related Emmy® Award	Federal Government (see <i>Capitals</i> section) federally funded fee-based fine cut First World War first-run focusing/focused Film Licensed Investment Company scheme (FLICs) film-related filmmaking/er (one word) FILMINK FIPRESCI First-hand first-time filmmaker follow-up free-to-air Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) series full-length full-time full stop fully funded FX (effects) Final Certificate (for Producer Offset)

<b>G</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>I</b>
Golden Globe® Goods and Services Tax (GST) government-subsidised guidelines (cap if part of official document title) groundbreaking	high-profile event high profile HIVE initiative	IF - Inside Film Indigenous Australians Indigenous Department in-house interactive digital media interlibrary loan internet Internet Movie Database (IMDb)
<b>J</b>	<b>K</b>	<b>L</b>
Jury Members (Cannes)	keyword/s	loan-out lineup (e.g. lineup announced)
<b>M</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>O</b>
make-up (cosmetics) marketplace media-related Melbourne International Film Festival (MIFF - see <i>acronyms</i> ) mid-1890s mini-series multi-channelling multimedia multiplatform multi-strand	National Interest Program non-deductible non-lending non-profit non-residents	off-screen Official Co-production Program Official Co-productions ongoing online onscreen Oscar®
<b>P</b>	<b>Q</b>	<b>R</b>
Palme d'Or part-time pay TV PDF per cent postgraduate postmarked post-production pre-production pre-sale/s Prix du Jury print-based production-based The Production Book Producer Offset (and Offset, non-Offset) post, digital and visual effects (PDV) Provisional Certificate (for Producer Offset) program (not programme; cap if part of official title)	Queensland Government qualifying Australian production expenditure (QAPE)	reassigned re-established reinvested rewrite RealTime Regional Filming Fund (FTO) Research Coordinator residential workshop (SP*RK - no capitals) renamed reworked right justify rough cut Royal Commission
<b>S</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>U</b>
screen-based	TAFE Takeover	up-to-date US-based

screen development organisation (no capitals) screenplay screenwriter Script Assessment Service (AWG) Second World War self-addressed semicolon shortlist/ed showreel single-sided sitcom South-East Asia SP*RK Program State Government but government state-based state-funded storytelling subcategory Subclass (visas) super 8 Sydney Film Festival (SFF - see <i>acronyms</i> )	Targeted Telefeature Telemovie top-rating TV Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF - see <i>acronyms</i> ) TV drama	US (not USA)
<b>V</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>X, Y &amp; Z</b>
VCR	website well-known world-class World War I World War II worldwide write-off	Young Filmmakers Fund (no apostrophe) zero-fee licensing