Brand policy (our rules)

Published 15/09/2023

We've created a brand policy so that staff understand the dos and don'ts about using the Services Australia brand. Our brand policy has been approved by the Executive Committee.

About this policy

All staff are custodians of the Services Australia brand.

The Brand Policy helps you understand your role as a brand custodian and supports you when using our brand. It outlines standards you must adhere to when using our brand.

This policy applies to all Services Australia staff and any third parties we've approved to use our brand.

This policy applies to any products, channels, documents or communication that use elements of our Services Australia brand, as outlined below:

Logos

▷ Our symbol	⬦ Our logos
🔒 Our trademarks	⚡ Co-branding
👤 Third party logo requests	🏷 New logos

Tools and resources

Corporate template library

Image governance and corporate photo library

Plain English policy

Preferred terms for Services Australia

Services Australia references

Signature blocks

Style Manual

Writing Guide

Macquarie Dictionary

Brand rules

What we mean by brand

Accessibility

Communication campaigns

Frequently asked questions

Product development

Promotional products

Sponsorship and partnership

Tone of voice

Quick links

Brand home

Our symbol

- 🌐 **Our logos**
- 🌐 **Our trademarks**
- 🌐 **Third party logo requests**
- 🌐 **New logos**

Content details

Business Owner
Brand

Feedback
Email the owner of this page

Our symbol

Published 15/09/2023

The progress symbol is the visual representation of our Services Australia vision and brand.

Its power is in its simplicity. It's modern, clean and distinctive.

The 2 overlapping forward-facing arrows convey a sense of moving forward and advancing.

The negative space within the overlap creates a third forward-facing arrow, signifying progress is at the heart of Services Australia.

Our customers recognise it as progress with a promise of a more modern customer experience. Visually, customers connect the symbol with 'play', 'forward' and 'fast forward'.

For staff, the progress symbol says forward thinking, forward facing and future focused. It reminds us where we are and where we're going. It also signifies our vision and the steps we're taking to achieve it by:

- delivering for the customer
- building the capability for sustained change
- developing networks and partnerships.

The progress symbol represents our 4 Services Australia principles:

- simple
- helpful
- respectful
- transparent.

Application and design

💡 Use our corporate templates for operational documents, reports and presentations—our progress symbol is already applied correctly.

For all other needs contact your Communication Account Team about your requirements. Do not create your own templates.

Incorrect use

To maintain consistency and preserve the integrity of our brand, there are essential rules for applying our brand.

s 47E(d)

Quick links

🌐 **Brand rules**

🌐 **Brand home**

Related links

🌐 **Our logos**

🌐 **Our trademarks**

🌐 **Co-branding**

🌐 **Corporate Template Library**

Content details

Business Owner
Brand

Feedback
Email the owner of this page

Our logos

Published 14/11/2024

As part of our identity system, we have approved logos and trademarks that support our brand.

Some people refer to logos and trademarks interchangeably but there is a difference. Simply put, a logo is a visual identifier for a product, service or company and is an element of a brand; while a trademark is a logo, word, image, smell or sound that is protected by trademark law. For details on our trademarks, see our trademarks.

As Australian Government employees, it's our responsibility to ensure we use our logos correctly.

Use our corporate templates for documents, reports and presentations—our logo is already applied correctly.

For all other needs contact your Communication Account Team about your requirements.

Our logos are:

1. Co-branded logo
2. Unique logo
3. Australian Government logo
4. Service delivery brand logos (used externally):
    - Centrelink service delivery brand logo
    - Medicare service delivery brand logo
    - Child Support service delivery brand logo
5. myGov logo (used externally).

Co-branded logo

Our logo has been developed in 2 versions, with the Australian Government logo combined with the progress symbol and the words 'Services Australia'.

It also features the progress symbol which demonstrates our proven service improvements in line with our Services Australia 2030 Vision.

This first version is the preferred and used in most cases.

This second version is only used in limited circumstances.

Application and design

How the logo is used depends on the product and audience. Generally it is:

> 💡 Use our corporate templates for operational documents, reports and presentations—our cobranded logo is already applied correctly.

For all other needs contact your Communication Account Team about your requirements. Do not create your own templates.

Incorrect use

To maintain consistency and preserve the integrity of our brand, there are essential rules for applying our brand.

s 47E(d)

Australian Government logo

There will be some cases where we still use our Australian Government logo, particularly where more formality is required. It features the Commonwealth Coat of Arms—the formal symbol of the Commonwealth of Australia that signifies Commonwealth authority and ownership.

s 47E(d)

Application and design

> (i) Use our corporate templates for operational documents, reports and presentations—our logo is already applied correctly.

For all other needs contact your Communication Account Team about your requirements. Do not create your own templates.

Incorrect use

To maintain consistency and preserve the integrity of our brand, there are essential rules for applying our brand.

Unique logo

The Services Australia unique logo consists of our progress symbol accompanied by the words 'Services' and 'Australia'.

Application and design

> ⓘ Use our corporate templates for operational documents, reports and presentations—our logo is already applied correctly.

For all other needs contact your Communication Account Team about your requirements. Do not create your own templates.

Incorrect use

To maintain consistency and preserve the integrity of our brand, there are essential rules for applying our brand.

(i) Use our corporate templates for operational documents, reports and presentations—our logo is already applied correctly s 47E(d)
s 47E(d)

For all other needs contact your Communication Account Team about your requirements. Do not create your own templates.

Quick links

🌐 Brand policy (our rules)

🌐 Brand home

Related links

🌐 Corporate templates

🌐 Preferred terms

🌐 The Writing Guide

🌐 Communications Division

✉ Contact the Brand team

🌐 Communication account managers

Content details

Business Owner
Brand

Feedback
Email the owner of this page

Our trademarks

Published 15/09/2023

About trademarks

Trademarks are used to distinguish goods and services and they are enforceable by law.

A trademark can be a letter, number, word, phrase, sound, smell, shape, logo, picture, aspect of packaging or any combination of these.

Trademarks give the owner rights to:

- use the trademark in Australia
- stop other people from using the trademark on similar goods or services
- licence the use of the trademark to others.

Our trademarks

Our agency has a number of registered trademarks including our logos and service delivery brand names:

- Centrelink name
- Medicare name
- Medicare 'lozenge' image (used on the Medicare card)
- Unity Star image
- myGov name
- myGov images.

Where appropriate, we also trademark specific programs, products and services such as Centrepay (names only).

New trademarks

We don't support the creation or use of new logos or symbols (and associated trademarking). This is to protect our existing brands and ensure we are not infringing on other trademarks.

Our agency already has a defined number of approved logos. Any new logo must be endorsed by the Brand Team and approved by the CEO (and possibly the Minister and Prime Minister).

Occasionally we may need to develop a new name for a product or service. This is usually at the request of the CEO, Minister or Prime Minister. In these instances, trademarking should be considered and the Brand Team is here to help.

The first step is to review existing trademarks to ensure we are not infringing on anyone else's trademark. We recommend this prior to committing to, or seeking approval of, any program, product or service names.

If you are thinking of using any form of the Coat of Arms (as seen in the Australian Government logo and the Services Australia logo) let us know. The Coat of Arms is the formal symbol of the Commonwealth of Australia that signifies Commonwealth authority and ownership. It is protected by a Royal Warrant and therefore requires the correct application, consultation and approvals. The Brand Team can assist with this.

There is a cost associated with trademarking and the process takes a minimum of 7 months.

Quick links

⊕ Brand home

⊕ Brand rules

Related links

⊕ Corporate templates

⊕ Preferred terms

⊕ The Writing Guide

⊕ Communications Division

Contact the Brand Team

Find your Communication Account Manager

Content details

Business Owner
Brand

Feedback
Email the owner of this page

Co-branding

Draft saved 25/11/2024

s 47E(d)

Quick links

🌐 Brand home

🌐 Brand rules

Related links

🌐 Our symbol

🌐 Our logos

🌐 Our trademarks

🌐 Third party logo requests

🌐 New logos

Content details

Business Owner
Brand

Feedback
Email the owner of this page

Third party logo requests

Published 15/09/2023

s 47E(d)

Trademark law protects our logos and any unauthorised use may be a breach of these laws. There are also strict guidelines for using the Australian Government logo and the Commonwealth Coat of Arms and the Brand Team liaises with the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet as required.

To request a logo, send an email to the Brand Team with the following information:

- name of project or event
- implementation date or date of event
- what role does our agency have in the project or event, and
- how the logo will be used.

Quick Links

⊕ **Brand rules**

⊕ **Brand home**

Related links

⊕ **Corporate template**

⊕ **Preferred terms**

⊕ **The Writing Guide**

⊕ **Communications Division**

✉ **Contact the Brand Team**

⊕ **Find your Communication Account Manager**

Content details

Business Owner
Brand

Feedback
Email the owner of this page

New logos

Published 15/09/2023

> ⚠ We don't support the creation or use of new logos or symbols.

This is because they can:

- confuse or mislead staff and customers
- breach an existing trademark
- dilute and weaken our brand.

We have a defined number of approved logos. They provide clear and consistent branding and it's clear that communication is from an official Australian Government source.

Our approved logos work for all projects, products and services our agency provides.

Help keep our brand strong

We have approved trademarks (logos and words)—use the right one.

Use our corporate templates which already have the right branding applied.

If you think there is a genuine requirement for a new logo, consult with the Brand Team first. Any new logo created for use by the agency (internally or externally) must be endorsed by the Brand Team and approved by the CEO (and possibly the Minister and Prime Minister).

Note: if you are thinking about developing and applying for a registered trademark—it is a legal process and can take several months. Read more about our trademarks.

Quick links

⊕ **Brand rules**

⊕ **Brand home**

Related links

⊕ **Corporate templates**

⊕ **Preferred terms**

⊕ **The Writing Guide**

⊕ **Communications Division**

✉ **Contact the Brand Team**

⊕ **Find your Communication Account Team**

Content details

Business Owner
Brand

Feedback
Email the owner of this page

Corporate template library

Published 04/11/2024

Our corporate template library includes a range of templates to support your communication with staff, stakeholders, the Minister and external non-customer audiences.

Always use the templates as they are designed and never copy and paste graphic elements into other documents. If you need assistance, access the links and information from this page, or contact your Communication Account Team for guidance.

s 47E(d)

Read on to learn about the templates and identify which one will suit your purpose.

Essential knowledge when using corporate templates

| Access templates from Microsoft Office | Apply rules and guidelines to corporate templates | Use Microsoft Office to create accessible documents |

General correspondence templates

Access these templates from Microsoft Word.

These are our corporate stationery. Use them for internal and external non-customer audiences such as stakeholders and other government departments and agencies.

Templates include a:

- fax template
- meeting agenda template
- meeting minutes template
- letter template
- memo template
- minute template.

For customer correspondence, go to How to request a new or updated correspondence product.

s 47E(d)

General document templates

Access these templates from Microsoft Word.

Use these for shorter, operational corporate documents that don't require a cover page.

Templates include a:

- Word template (portrait)
- Word template (landscape)
- Excel template (portrait)
- Excel template (landscape).

s 47E(d)

Essential knowledge when using corporate templates

Access templates from Microsoft Office	Apply rules and guidelines to corporate templates	Use Microsoft Office to create accessible documents

Operational document templates

Access these templates from Microsoft Word.

Use these for operational corporate documents like reports, branch plans and information sheets.

Templates include:

- operational document templates with a cover for longer documents – blue, grey, navy and salmon options
- operational document templates without a cover for shorter documents – blue option
- Indigenous operational document templates with and without covers – blue and navy options.

s 47E(d)

Essential knowledge when using corporate templates

Access templates from Microsoft Office	Apply rules and guidelines to corporate templates	Use Microsoft Office to create accessible documents

Internal and external presentation templates

Access these templates from Microsoft PowerPoint.

Use these for all presentations, both internal and external. Each template includes multiple layout options and an icon set.

Templates include a:

- corporate presentation template with blue, grey, navy and salmon options
- corporate presentation template for Indigenous audiences with blue and navy options.

> (i) If you're preparing a presentation for the Minister, contact your Communication Account Team for guidance.

s 47E(d)

Essential knowledge when using corporate templates

Access templates from Microsoft Office	Apply rules and guidelines to corporate templates	Use Microsoft Office to create accessible documents

s 47E(d)

Essential knowledge when using corporate templates

Access templates from Microsoft Office	Apply rules and guidelines to corporate templates	Use Microsoft Office to create accessible documents

Internal newsletter templates

Access the operational template (without cover) from s 47E(d) or division or branch newsletters.

For an email (text only) option, download and save the email newsletter template and follow the instructions included within.

s 47E(d)

If you're preparing an external newsletter, contact your Communication Account Team for guidance.

s 47E(d)

An example of the newsletter templates

Essential knowledge when using corporate templates

Access templates from Microsoft Office	Apply rules and guidelines to corporate templates	Use Microsoft Office to create accessible documents
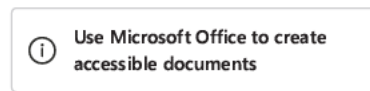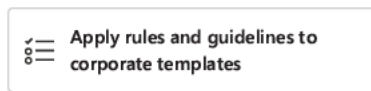
Email signature block template

Download and save the email signature block template.

Use this for your email signature block. Follow the instructions in the template.

Read the email signature block guidelines.

s 47E(d)
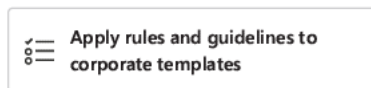
Corporate background templates for virtual meetings

s 47E(d)

Do not create your own backgrounds.

The backgrounds can be added to applications like Microsoft Teams or Zoom, to visually represent our agency when meeting virtually with colleagues and stakeholders.

Download and install backgrounds to Microsoft Teams

s 47E(d)

5. **Save** the file to your computer and follow the instructions in the template to create image files.
6. Then, during a Teams' meeting select the **More** option from the menu.
7. Select **Video effects and settings**.
8. Select **Add new**, then choose one of the background image files that you saved earlier from the Teams' background file. Repeat if you'd like to add more.

Custom backgrounds may be approved for use in limited circumstances, depending on the business need. Contact your Communication Account Team about your requirement.

s 47E(d)

Essential knowledge when using corporate templates

Access templates from Microsoft Office	Apply rules and guidelines to corporate templates	Use Microsoft Office to create accessible documents
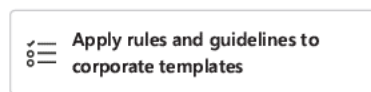
Certificate template

A certificate template for local recognition is available on the Awards and honours overview page.

Letter templates

For customers (people who receive our services).

Go to, How to request a new or updated correspondence product if you're sending a letter to:

- customers
- third parties
- health professionals
- other people who receive our services.

Building signage

For building signage requirements at our service centres, such as decals on entry and other fixed building signs, please contact the Property Design Team.

Ink stamps

We use ink stamps to mark documents with actions such as dated, received or sighted. If you require a new stamp, please contact the Brand team. You can continue to use any existing stamps you have, as long as they're still clear and not confusing to customers.

Business cards, name badges and desk plates

You can order these items using our ordering system.

Other internal templates

If you have an internal communication need that isn't covered by the templates on this page, please contact your Communication Account Team to discuss your requirements.

Please do not create your own templates.

Resources

⊕ Brand Home	⊕ The Writing Guide
⊕ Australian Government Style Manual	⊕ Plain English Policy
⊕ Preferred terms	⊕ Access templates from Microsoft Office
⊕ Apply rules and guidelines to corporate templates	⊕ Use Microsoft Office to create accessible documents

Content details

Business Owner
Brand Team

Feedback
Email the owner of this page

Corporate image library

Published 10/10/2024

Communications Division maintains a photo library of corporate images for use on communication products.

The photo library is not accessible to all staff. This ensures good governance so images are used appropriately. Image use must have a purpose that:

- aligns to agency principles and the integrated brand
- adds to the product's effectiveness
- is relevant to both the content and its audience
- remains current throughout the product's duration of use.

> 💡 In general, images shouldn't be used in a purely decorative way or to break up content - they must serve a purpose.

Guidelines for use

Use of corporate images is appropriate for products and work Communications Division supports, such as external marketing, social media, key corporate documents and centrally designed products.

Use of images from the photo library won't be supported for:

- Viva Engage posts
- internal newsletters
- division intranet and SharePoint pages
- presentations (except stakeholder presentations by exception only)
- internal posters
- division or branch products
- training documentation (excluding online course modules).

Requesting an image

> (i) Important! Ensure you're using agency approved corporate templates. These have been designed from a unified brand perspective using approved brand elements. These add visual interest to your documents, and take into account accessibility.

Contact your Communication Account Team to discuss your image requirements. We'll need the following details:

- a copy of the draft document or product
- product background, intended audience and duration of use
- a description of the desired image
- what purpose the image will serve for the intended audience.

Note: image approvals are for single use only and should not be shared or stored for ongoing or alternate use.

Using third-party images

The same rules apply as the above. They must have a purpose.

Please don't use any third-party images that you don't have explicit permission for. This includes images from other government departments or agencies.

Use of stock images is discouraged as an alternative.

Stock images aren't specific to our agency or audience, nor is the previous use known. They may have been used by another organisation on a campaign that doesn't align with our values and principles.

Use of images generated by artificial intelligence is also not supported.

Related links

| ⊕ Communications Division | ⊕ Communication tools and resources |

Content details

Business Owner
Creative Design

Feedback
Email the owner of this page

Signature blocks

Published 15/09/2023

Email signature block guidelines

Signature blocks are not the place to get fancy with fonts, images and quotes.

We are all employees of Services Australia and our signature block should reflect this.

We have an approved email signature block template and guidelines to ensure email signatures are appropriate and meet agency standards.

First the do's

- Use the approved email signature block template.
s 47E(d)

And the don'ts
s 47E(d)

Quick links

🌐 **Brand home**

Related links

🌐 Corporate templates	🌐 Preferred terms
🌐 The Writing Guide	🌐 Communications Division
✉ Contact the Brand Team	🌐 Find your Communication Account Manager

Content details

Business Owner
Brand

Feedback
Email the owner of this page

The Writing Guide

Published 20/11/2024

Welcome to the updated Writing Guide. This guide is to be read alongside the Australian Government Style Manual . The Style Manual is the standard for all general writing. This Writing Guide, our Preferred Terms page and our Services Australia referencing page, set out our agency-specific and channel-specific uses. Where possible, we use the standards to ensure consistency across government.

Plain English

⌄ Our plain English

Our Plain English policy page explains how to write in plain English and how to check if a document meets our benchmarks. It details how staff can meet policy requirements through 5 elements: planning, structure, design, expression and evaluation.

It expands on the 5 elements and 12 criteria in the Plain English checklist [PDF].

You should use the standard when you want to check if you're writing in plain English and if you need to improve your communication.

⌄ Benefits of plain English

Plain English doesn't mean 'dumbing down' or compromising content. It simply means adapting our writing to be as effective as possible.

Multiple studies have shown that plain English is:

- faster to write
- faster to read
- easier to understand.

This helps:

- improve the customer experience
- reduce call and network demand
- reduce complaints
- improve cost efficiencies.

See our Plain English policy page for more information on these topics:

- planning
- structure
- design
- expression
- evaluation.

Style

⌄ About our style

The style section of The Writing Guide focuses on lower-level issues related to spelling, presentation of numbers, punctuation and formatting of text. It covers some basics as per the Style Manual, as well as some variation and specifics as needed for our agency.

Any variation from the Style Manual will be clearly labelled.

⌄ Benefits of using the right style

Using a consistent, professional writing style shows the public our professionalism. A good example of this is phishing emails – we are suspicious of any emails with spelling, punctuation or grammatical errors. Official communications are expected to get this right.

Using style standards also saves time. When we work to a single standard, there is less editing and discussion about the 'correct' approach.

⌄ Contemporary style

We all have personal preferences when it comes to style. Often these were picked up at school or university. Bear in mind that many aspects of style have evolved in recent years, so you may need to update your approach.

⌄ Using the Style Manual

The Style Manual is grouped into these broad topics:

- About the Style Manual
- Getting started

- Changelog
- User needs
- Format, writing and structure
- Style rules and conventions

Quick style summary

Below is a summary of the most commonly queried style topics in our agency.

∨ Addresses

Format addresses in line with Australia Post's style, which suits their mail-sorting equipment:

- Use short forms of states and territories in capitals with no punctuation.
- Left align and indent the text.
- Use bold font.

Services Australia
Rural and Climate Change Services
Reply Paid 7816
CANBERRA BC ACT 2610

This advice is specific to our agency.

∨ Capitals

✔Use	✔Example
Use sentence case for headings, page titles and menu items.	• Business innovation incentives • Contact us.
Use title case for full, formal titles, full, formal government and department names and proper nouns.	• Minister Sue Jones, MP • the Australian Government • Reserve Bank of Australia.
Use lower case for short form titles, short forms of government and department names and generic nouns.	• the minister • a federal government initiative • the bank.

⌄ Conjunctions

It is perfectly fine to use a coordinating conjunction (and, but, for, nor, or, so, yet) at the start of a sentence. This helps to create a human and engaging tone, particularly on the website.

✔Please ask us your questions on social media. But remember, don't include any details in your post that could identify you.

At the same time, use this device only occasionally. And make sure that any sentence starting with a conjunction is complete and not a sentence fragment.

This advice is specific to our agency.

⌄ Disclaimers

Use disclaimers on all customer products or content which:

- contain facts, figures or specialist advice
- contain a '13' or '1800' phone number
- request personal information
- contain images of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Disclaimer	Details
General disclaimer	This publication is a guide to payments and services. You must consider your own circumstances and decide for yourself if you want to apply for a payment.
Date disclaimer	This information is accurate as at [Month YYYY]. (Use with the general disclaimer in printed products with rates.)
Phone number disclaimer	Calls to '13' numbers from your home phone anywhere in Australia are charged at a fixed rate. This might differ from the local call rate and between phone providers. Calls to '1800' numbers from your home phone are free. Calls from public and mobile phones may be timed and charged at a higher rate.
Images of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples	Warning: we advise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people that this product may have images of deceased people.

See also our website disclaimer   on servicesaustralia.gov.au

This advice is specific to our agency.

∨ Dates

✔30 June 2017

✔Wednesday 30 June 2017

∨ Hyphens and dashes

We use hyphens and dashes in different ways to clarify information:

- hyphens (-) join 2 or more words to express a single idea
- en-dash (spaced)(–) for sentence interruption, similar to a comma
- en-dash (not spaced)(–) link related words or numbers that have separate meanings
- em-dash (—) not used in agency products
- these are also known as en-rules and em-rules.

Hyphens

✔Use	Example
to join compound adjectives that modify a noun	User-centred design is best. Please present the up-to-date information.

✔Use	Example
to join words into a compound noun with a new meaning	He is semi-skilled in this area. The correspondent is a 30-year-old woman.
to distinguish similar words that may be ambiguous	They will re-cover the existing printouts. The department must recover the costs.

✖Avoid	Example
to join compound adjectives that come after the noun	The service is first-class. The information pack is up-to-date.
or compound nouns where the spelling has merged into a single word (check the Macquarie Dictionary if needed)	Please co-ordinate the replies. I didn't receive the e-mail.
between adverbs and nouns	He is a highly-valued staff member. This quickly-agreed solution needs work.

En dashes

Take care with en-dashes as screen readers may not read them correctly or may ignore them entirely.

✔Use	Example
without spaces to link 2 words that keep their discrete meanings	They have done a cost–benefit analysis of the Melbourne–Brisbane rail project.
without spaces for financial years	This is for the 1990–91 financial year. The 2019–20 budget.
with spaces to link more than 2 words that keep their discrete meanings	This is a Commonwealth – New South Wales agreement.

Add an en dash: Ctrl + - (hyphen on numeric keypad) on PC, Option + - on Mac.

∨ Inclusive language

Ability and gender

Do not use discriminatory language or language that has negative associations for members of the community.

✔Use	✘Avoid
people with disability	people with a disability, disabled people, handicapped people
people with intellectual disability	intellectually disabled, intellectually impaired
people who are deaf or hard of hearing	hearing impaired
people who are blind or have a vision impairment	blind
older people, seniors	pensioners, old-aged pensioners, the aged

✔Use	✖Avoid
young people	juveniles

See also the Style Manual on <u>Inclusive Language</u>   and People with Disability's <u>Language Guide</u>   .

Where it makes sense to do so use gender-neutral terms, including 'they' as a singular pronoun.

✔Use
they
their
themselves
child, parent, grandparent, guardian

Or rewrite the sentence to avoid pronouns.

✔Every employee must fill out the employment declaration.

✔Employees must fill out the employment declaration.

✖Every employee must fill out his employment declaration.

Use gender-neutral job titles except for those without suitable replacements.

✔Use
worker

✔Use
business person
chairperson
midwife

Use gendered terms only...	✔Examples
as part of a formal payment, program or project title	Dad and Partner Pay Wife pension
as part of an organisation's name	Country Women's Association
as part of a text owned by another department that we do not have permission to change	First speak to your ministerial officer. If he cannot resolve the problem, you may need to escalate the query to the Executive.
as written into policy or law	grandfathering arrangement
to refer to a single gender	Mother's Day Father's Day

See also our preferred terms on our intranet.

Examples for gendered terms are specific to our agency.

Culturally and linguistically diverse audiences

When creating content for a culturally diverse audience or people who do not speak English as their first language, consider their background and needs. Do not rely on stereotypes or make assumptions.

Ask your communication contact for help if you need it.

Check that your writing respects different:

- cultural, philosophical or religious values
- socio-economic backgrounds
- education levels and systems
- generational attitudes
- gender roles.

Also consider:

- different rules around sincerity and politeness
- different perceptions of social and support concepts
- any political impacts on life events
- the ongoing effects of wars.

Follow these principles to speak to the person rather than to their difference:

- Use clear and simple language.
- Avoid jargon.
- Limit contractions.
- Use visuals to support multicultural audiences.
- Consider translation for culturally and linguistically diverse audiences.

See our The Writing Guide: Standards for more on plain English and translation.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander audiences

Use a disclaimer in any content that includes images of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (see disclaimers in this guide).

Always use our preferred terms for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples or contact the Indigenous Communication Account Team for more information.

Consider the varied backgrounds and needs of Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders. For some, English may be a second language or difficult to read. In that case, aim for a Flesch-Kincaid reading level of 6 or less.

See The Writing Guide: Standards for more on reading levels.

⌄ Inclusive and safe language

When talking about mental health use hopeful and person-centred words

✔Use	✘Avoid
a person living with a mental health condition	they are mentally ill
a person diagnosed with	they are not normal
they have been told they have...	they are crazy; schizophrenic; mental; bipolar
they are relief seeking with substances	they are an addict
they are fearful others want to harm them	they are paranoid and delusional

When talking about behaviour use specific and respectful words

✔Use	✖Avoid
they are trying hard to self-advocate	they are manipulative, unreasonable
I sometimes find it challenging to work with them	they have challenging behaviour
they are choosing not to…	they have a history of non-compliance
they would like more choice and control over their options	they are uncooperative
they tend to (describe actions) when upset	they are dangerous, abusive or aggressive
a person with complex needs trying to get their needs met; staff managing challenging customer behaviour while maintaining their own wellbeing; staff addressing complex customer behaviour while maintaining their own healthy coping; customer incident; signs of customer distress	customer aggression; aggressive customer

When talking about others use hopeful and person-centred words

✔Use	✖Avoid
start where you feel comfortable	you have already provided this information
this information is helpful, but what about also telling me about…	that information is not relevant

When talking about suicide use contemporary and specific words

✔Use	✖Avoid
non-fatal or made an attempt on their life	unsuccessful suicide
died by suicide	successful suicide,
ended their own life	committed or commit suicide
concerning rates of suicide	suicide epidemic

⌄ Intellectual property

We must acknowledge the source of any information we haven't written, including other people's intellectual property (IP) or copyrighted information.

Where you wish to use someone else's IP or copyright material, you may need to seek their permission.

See publications and citations in this guide for referencing, and the IP Australia   and Copyright Agency   websites for more information on IP and copyright.

Some government websites allow their content to be shared, copied and redistributed under a Creative Commons licence. Check the website's copyright or legal notices section to comply with the terms of the licence.

Material used under a creative commons licence often needs to be marked as '© [Agency Name]'.

See the copyright section   in our site notices for an example.

⌄ Numerals

As per the Style Manual section on numbers , zero and one are normally written as words, numbers 2 and above are written as numerals.

However, there are some exceptions. For instance, all numbers are written as words if they are at the start of a sentence.

Also, all numbers are written as numerals if:

- referring to units of measurement
- using equations, ratios, and decimals
- you are comparing numbers
- in tables.

✔zero

✔8

✔12

✔1,000

✔25,100

✔506,000

✔10 million

✔2,540,320

✔2m (in a heading or table)

∨ Percentages

✔5%

∨ Phone numbers

Correct:

✔131 234

✔1800 100 200

✔02 6255 0011.

∨ Time

Correct:

✔9:30 am

✔4 pm

✔19:45.

⌄ Emphasis

Use **bold** for emphasis instead of italics or underlining.

⌄ Lists

Format a list of **run-on sentences** with:

- an introductory phrase that each item logically follows
- a colon at the end of the introductory phrase
- at least 2 list items
- no capital letters at the start of each item
- no semi-colons, commas or conjunctions
- a full stop only on the final point.

Format a list of **stand-alone sentences** as below:

- Write an introductory phrase, followed by a colon.
- Include at least 2 list items.
- Use an initial capital letter and full stop on each item.

⌄ Referencing Services Australia

Use Services Australia when referring to our agency. Services Australia is our legal name and our preferred term.

After introducing 'Services Australia', you can use 'the agency' (use lower case 'a') and personal pronouns 'we', 'our', 'us' thereafter.

We still deliver payments and services under our service delivery brands Medicare, Centrelink, and Child Support. When communicating with the public you can use these brands to help customers recognise and navigate our services.

Go to the Services Australia references page for a full list of agency terms.

This advice is specific to our agency.

⌄ Spaces

Use a single space after terminal marks like full stops and questions marks.

⌄ Web addresses

Format web addresses in a different colour or bold text if needed. Do not include a full stop after a web address if it ends a sentence.

✔Go to www.ato.gov.au   for more advice.

✔Go to **www.ato.gov.au** for more information. (This example is for printed information).

✔The best place to start is www.ato.gov.au

Do not use underlining where it is not a link. Do not use brackets, except in reference lists.

✘The <www.myskills.gov.au   > website is a great resource.

Displaying servicesaustralia.gov.au

Refer to our website without the initial 'https://www'. For all other websites, keep the 'www'.

Do not use www when referring to servicesaustralia.gov.au, because it works without it and is simpler.

✔Explore the services we offer at servicesaustralia.gov.au
Use a short web address to direct readers to specific content where possible. Talk to your communication contact about which short addresses exist for our website or to request a new one.

✔Find the right advice at servicesaustralia.gov.au/olderaustralians

You should **not** apply this rule to other websites, as these other sites may not work without www. You should clarify how those websites prefer you link them.

Resources

🌐 Corporate template library	📄 Plain English Checklist
🌐 Preferred terms for Services Australia	📄 Proofreading checklist

Quick links

🌐 Plain English Policy	↗ Macquarie Dictionary

Content details

12/18/24, 2:09 PM

The Writing Guide

Business Owner
Brand Team

Feedback
Email the owner of this page

What we mean by brand

Published 15/09/2023

Brand is much more than a logo!

The vision for Services Australia is to make government services simple so people can get on with their lives.

In a word, **progress**.

Our brand represents this vision.

Every interaction we have with our customers, everything our customers hear or read about us, creates their perception of Services Australia. This is our brand.

Our brand also provides consistency across the agency. Consistency in how we communicate and how we present ourselves ultimately influences how people perceive us. It also conveys organisational alignment and professionalism.

As a result, we have a single brand that we use internally and externally. We use it for our corporate products and apply it at every customer touchpoint.

Our identity system supports our brand by creating the look and feel of the agency.

We do this through the different brand elements that work together to create a unique Services Australia identity and support a consistent experience for our customers.

Brand elements include:

- symbols
- logos
- typefaces
- colours
- photos

- writing style.

Quick links

⊕ **Brand rules**

⊕ **Our symbol**

⊕ **Our logos**

⊕ **Our trademarks**

⊕ **Third party logo requests**

⊕ **New logos**

Content details

Business Owner
Brand

Feedback
Email the owner of this page

Accessibility

Published 15/09/2023

> ⚠️ We need to follow accessibility standards!

Accessibility standards ensure that all people, regardless of disability or other barriers, have equal access to information. Barriers may include visual, auditory, physical, speech, cognitive, language, learning and neurological disabilities.

Accessibility is about more than just technical compliance. It involves content and design elements such as reading level, alternate formats, display contrast and the user experience.

See our Digital Accessibility page for more information about our accessibility standards.

See the Adding Metadata page for a step by step guide on adding properties to corporate documents and presentation resources being published.

Quick links

🌐 Brand home

🌐 Brand rules

🌐 Frequently asked questions

Content details

Business Owner
Brand

Feedback
Email the owner of this page

Communication campaigns

Published 15/09/2023

Communications Division determines which activities are **communication campaigns**. For campaigns, we must still **apply branding** to the creative.

We use communication campaigns for large-scale awareness activities. Campaigns are a set of planned tactics with common objectives and a clear call to action. They have a specific lifespan (usually 3 – 12 months) and dedicated budget.

Internally, this is strategic all staff communication like the Enterprise Agreement and Family and Domestic Violence 'enough' campaigns.

Externally this can be a new payment or service, like when we introduced JobSeeker payment. It can also be a peak period like the annual families reconciliation.

External communication campaigns often also include advertising we produce and book to appear through paid media channels.

The creative may have a look and feel applied to bring consistency and support key messages.

We still apply Services Australia branding to the creative. This maintains the campaign integrity, while disclosing the source of the communication—Services Australia.

We retire the creative look and feel once the campaign has finished.

Related content

| 🌐 Brand |

| 🌐 Communications Division |

Photo Library

Macquarie Dictionary

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flag use

Content details

Business Owner
Brand Team

Feedback
Email the owner of this page

Brand - frequently asked questions

Draft saved 25/11/2024

These frequently asked questions may help with finding more information about our agency brand.

∨ Who can use the Services Australia brand

All staff can use the Services Australia brand, but must do so in line with the brand policy. Use the corporate template library on the intranet. Use these templates as they have our brand applied correctly. **You must not create new or different templates or brand applications.**

Staff wanting to use the Services Australia brand for applications outside of the corporate template library should contact Communications Division to discuss their requirements and how we can assist you.

∨ I'm attending a community information session can I use our logo

In general, the Brand team will approve a community organisation to use our logo on their exhibitor material to promote an event or information session when our staff are presenting or providing an information service at the event.

To request a logo, send an email to the Brand team with the following information:

- name of event
- date of event
- what role the agency will be playing in the event, and
- how the logo will be used, for example shown on a flyer or poster.

Once the Brand team have this information, they will review and provide advice.

∨ I need information about the previous Department of Human Services brand

If you have any questions about our previous Department of Human Services brand, contact the Brand team.

∨ I need to request a logo

To request a logo, send an email to the Brand team with the following information:

- name of project or event
- implementation date or date of event
- what role does our agency have in the project or event, and
- how the logo will be used.

∨ I'm applying for an award nomination through an external organisation – can I use the Services Australia logo?

You likely will be able to, however we'll need to review use before providing approval. Please provide your Communication Account team with the following information:

- What is the name of the award we're applying for?
- Who is the business team we're submitting the nomination for?
- What project are we submitting a nomination about?
- What are the specifications for logo use?
  - Share a link to the nomination process – this helps us to understand specifications of use.

Important: If supporting information is being attached with the award nomination, ensure you're using an approved corporate template. Supporting images need to be relevant to the submission. Photos from the corporate photo library shouldn't be used.

∨ Who can have access to Brand Hub?

In general Brand Hub is used by Communications Division to share guidelines for product development. If you are external to Communications Division contact your Communication Account Team about your requirements.

For other registration issues, contact the Brand team.

⌄ I think someone on a social media platform is impersonating the agency, who do I report this to?

If you think someone is impersonating the agency on a social media platform, you should email the Brand team. When you send through an email, please also include the URL and a screenshot of the impersonator.

This could also be scam related. Go to How to report a scam for more information.

⌄ I've seen some merchandise for sale with our logo on it, who do I report this to?

If you find merchandise online with any of our logo's or service brands like myGov, Centrelink, Medicare, you should email the Brand team. When you send through an email, please also include the URL of the website and a screenshot.

⌄ I'm attending an expo, can the exhibitor use our logo on their promotional material?

In general the Brand team will approve a community organisation to use our logo on their exhibitor material to promote an event or information session when our staff are presenting or providing an information service at the event.

To request a logo, send an email to the Brand team with the following information:

- name of event
- date of event
- what role the agency will be playing in the event, and
- how the logo will be used, for instance, shown on a flyer or poster.

Once the Brand team have this information, they will review and provide advice.

⌄ How do I dispose of old branded products or promotional items?

Disposal of promotional material can be done at your location, as long as it's in a secure way.

⌄ Can I change the look and feel of the corporate templates?

No. It's important that we have consistency on all channels to maintain the integrity of our brand and build audience recognition of progress.

Corporate templates have been designed intentionally with our agency brand elements, consider accessibility needs and are simple in structure making it easier for all audiences to focus on the message.

⌄ How can I add a new term in the agency's preferred terms?

The Brand team in the Communications Division manages the preferred terms. If there's a term that your Branch/Division commonly use and you feel it should be consistent in the whole agency, contact your Communication Account Team and they'll work with the Brand team on how/if it can be added to the agencies preferred terms.

⌄ Can I create my own Signature Block?

No, signature blocks are not the place to get fancy with fonts, images and quotes.

We have an approved email signature block template and guidelines to ensure email signatures are appropriate and meet agency standards. For more information go to Signature blocks.

⌄ Where can I find the corporate templates?

Many of the corporate templates have been included in Office 365 applications. Select **'New'** and then the **'Services Australia'** tab within Word, PowerPoint or Excel.

Can't see the corporate templates? Open your office application, go to your account settings (top right in the menu bar) and ensure your email account option is signed in (not userID@internal.dept.local).

For other templates go to the corporate template library.

When using the corporate templates can I change the colours?

No, templates have been assigned with our corporate colours. They are to be used as supplied to maintain the integrity of our brand.

However, you may select additional colours for your diagram or graph, for example, selecting a green for a traffic light report. Any colours you do select for diagrams should not be used for colouring text, or for any of the elements already applied to the corporate template.

When using the corporate templates can I change the font?

No, templates have been assigned with our corporate font. They are to be used as supplied to maintain the integrity of our brand.

Can I use a co-branded logo on corporate templates?

s 47E(d)

I'm developing a divisional SharePoint page, what resources can I access?

We suggest taking the lead from our intranet publishing standards which consider brand, accessibility needs, and common and intuitive elements for improving user experience.

⌄ Do you have a branded background template to use in MS Teams?

Yes, corporate backgrounds are available. For more information, go to Corporate background templates for virtual meetings.

⌄ Can I create my own MS Teams background using brand elements?

No. It's important that we have consistency on all channels to maintain the integrity of our brand and build audience recognition of progress.

Corporate backgrounds are available. For more information, go to Corporate background templates for virtual meetings.

Quick links

🌐	Brand home

🌐	Brand rules

🌐	Our brand

🌐	Governance

Content details

Business Owner
Brand

Feedback
Email the owner of this page

Product development

Published 15/09/2023

Information for staff developing videos, digital products, learning materials and more.

Help keep our brand strong. We have various resources to assist in the development of these products to uphold the integrity of our brand.

If your materials also include a document file you must use the corporate templates available.

Do not interpret design elements from other materials and create your own look. For instance, using a design element seen on customer products may not be approved for use on a video. Using it impacts the integrity of our brand.

Contact your Communication Account Team about your requirements. Provide detail about what you're hoping to achieve, critical dates for implementation and background about your project.

Quick links

⊕ Brand home

⊕ Brand rules

⊕ Corporate template library

Content details

Business Owner
Brand

Feedback
Email the owner of this page

Promotional products

Published 15/09/2023

> ⚠ The agency supports promotional products in very limited circumstances.

The General Manager, Communications Division must approve the purchase of any merchandise or promotional products.

Merchandise and promotional products include any items the agency purchases to give away:

- to promote an initiative or program
- at events
- to recognise achievements.

Products also include apparel for a program or project. Merchandise and promotional products often include a logo, tagline, website address or phone number. Common products include lapel pins, mascots, medals, stress balls, lanyards and t-shirts.

Communications Division will only approve them where they:

- support the agency's overall strategic direction
- reinforce our principles of simple, helpful, respectful and transparent services
- are part of a broader government campaign or initiative, with supporting communication tactics.

Products also need to have:

- a defined objective
- evidence that they will reach the relevant audience
- a clear call to action
- defined effectiveness measures.

Products that don't meet these objectives are likely not a proper use of public funds.

Quick links

🌐 Brand policy (our rules)

🌐 Brand home

Related links

🌐 Corporate template library

🌐 The Writing Guide

🌐 Communications Division

✉ Contact the Brand Team

🌐 Find your Communication Account Manager

Content details

Business Owner
Brand Team

Feedback
Email the owner of this page

Sponsorship and partnership

Published 15/09/2023

Get approval before using our logo for a sponsorship, partnership or event

Seek the right approvals **before** agreeing to a partnership or sponsorship of an external organisation or event, which intends to use our logo. This includes conferences and local events.

Read about sponsorship guidelines on the Financial Policy, Assurance and Training pages. They state, these arrangements must not be entered into without prior approval from the Chief Financial Officer (CFO). Read their quick guide on grants and sponsorships [PDF].

Once CFO approval has been given, Brand will also need to request approval for third party logo use. If you talk to us early, we may be able to seek this approval at the same time.

This does not include commercial supplier arrangements. We don't supply our logo to commercial suppliers.

Get approval before using our logo for a sporting or charity event

The agency already has a defined number of charities and events officially endorsed by our executive each year. Read the charity pages for details and email the Charities Team for guidelines. You must get approval from the Brand Team before supplying our logo to any third party.

Quick links

🌐 Brand home

Related links

| | Corporate templates |

| | Preferred terms |

| | The Writing Guide |

| | Communications Division |

| | Contact the Brand Team |

| | Find your Communication Account Manager |

Content details

Business Owner
Brand

Feedback
Email the owner of this page

Tone of voice

Published 15/09/2023

Our tone of voice needs to reflect our principles of **simple, helpful, respectful and transparent.**

Tone of voice is how we communicate in written, spoken and visual language. It's the tone we use, how we speak and our choice of words.

We're essentially speaking with all Australians—a diverse range of people with differing needs. Whether they're experiencing an emergency or hardship, starting study or having a baby, we communicate with a consistent, unifying voice.

It's up to us to make sure our customers always feel we're putting them at the centre of everything we do.

See our plain English policy and Writing Guide pages for more information about our writing style.

Quick links

🌐 Preferred terms for Services Australia
🌐 The Writing Guide
🌐 Photo Library
🌐 Corporate Template Library
🌐 Signature blocks

Content details

Business Owner
Brand

Feedback
Email the owner of this page