



STYLE GUIDE

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Introduction

The RUN-EU Style Guide has been produced to be used by staff on behalf of the Regional University Network – European University (RUN-EU) who regularly create content for the web or social media or write, edit, and proofread documents in English. The guidance contained here is part of an agreed in-house style and will be updated regularly to prevent inconsistency and miscommunication across all mediums, both online and offline.

This style guide is not intended to tell RUN-EU staff members how to write or how others should write about RUN-EU. Contrarily, it has been designed to be simple enough to allow some literary variation and creativity. As a network composed of eight European higher education institutions, applying these guidelines will ensure RUN-EU identity has only one voice and face.

For stylistic consistency, the most important and general convention to note is that, as a European institution, RUN-EU uses the variety of English of Britain and Ireland, which in this guide will be called “British English”. However, since most RUN-EU content writers and editors, as well as their target readership, are non-native English speakers, very colloquial British usage should also be avoided.

Where disagreements exist regarding linguistic style and academic terminology preferences, content creators, editors and proof-readers should check this document for guidance.

Other information on RUN-EU branding, including the use of the logo, can be found at the RUN-EU Brand Guide, which is available online at www.run-eu.eu.

If you’re still in doubt about a matter of spelling or English usage, if you spot an error, or if you see something that needs to be updated, please email run-eu@ipleiria.pt.

1. Target Groups and Brand Key Message

Target Groups

- Students, alumni, and potential applicants
- Teachers, researchers, and staff from RUN-EU members
- Higher education institutions on regional, national, European, and global levels
- R&D partners and funders
- Associated partners
- Regional and national authorities, decision-makers, and other relevant stakeholders
- Regional business, industry, and cultural representatives
- Media on regional, national, European, and global levels

Message to Students

Together our eight higher education institutions are producing and enabling teaching, learning, and researching opportunities, and conducting joint projects that will meet future skills needs. This means that students can flexibly participate in mobilities and intensive periods at RUN-EU higher education institutions and complete tailored European degrees.

Message to Staff

We will collaboratively codesign and deliver innovative pedagogical, research, innovation and engagement activities that meet the students' future skills needs and promote regional development. The staff of the RUN-EU higher education institutions will be offered the opportunity to build up international competence through, for example, staff exchanges, and joint education and research projects. Short-term and flexible student and staff mobilities are the key operating models for achieving these goals.

Message to Stakeholders and Society Partners

RUN-EU will secure the sustainable economic, social, cultural, and environmental progress of its regions and stakeholders. We'll implement this mission by delivering the future and advanced skills necessary for its students and stakeholders to successfully meet the challenges of the future, engage in societal transformation and promote active citizenship, thereby leading in the creation of a new multinational interregional alliance, a European Zone for Interregional Development.

Brand Key Phrases

- RUN-EU is here to inspire, innovate and revolutionise higher education in Europe.
- Student-centred. Collaborative. Future-looking.
- Our students are at the core of everything we do.
- We encourage students to join our governing and management bodies, in a participative approach to decision-making.
- We're a regional development-oriented European University.
- We're building a new type of multinational interregional alliance, a European Zone for Interregional Development.
- We're passionate about reducing regional economic, social, cultural, and environmental disparities in the European Union.
- We're committed to transform higher education in Europe, with future and advanced skills-based programmes.
- We embody the values of multiculturalism, inclusiveness, gender equality, and sustainable development in all our work.
- We foster interregional European research and innovation capacity.
- We challenge virtual and physical higher education international mobility.
- We aim to create a truly unique interuniversity campus, where each of the eight RUN-EU members reflects our values and goals.

2. Our Style

2.1. Brand Personality

Professional and Human

We're a prestigious and reliable European University but that doesn't mean we're difficult to understand or boring. Our students, researchers and staff see us not only as a competent and trustworthy alliance, but also as an approachable institution.

Paradigm Shifter and Realistic

We're changing education, but we don't have illusions. We want to inspire action and transform our regions and that takes a lot of courage, hard work, and specially time. In setting and communicating our goals and ambitions, we're reasonable and rational.

Sincere and Positive

We're transparent and truthful in what we are doing. We react with positivity and excitement whenever there's a reason to. People value our genuine enthusiasm.

Youthful and Diplomatic

We're a dynamic, energetic and always courteous European University. We speak with passion and kindness about what we're doing because we're careful not to harm others. We apologise when we think we have made a mistake.

Global and Inclusive

We're citizens of the world. We are an inclusive and open-minded European University, built upon the principle of multiculturalism. We're aware of different cultural understandings and sensitivities. We don't close our eyes to discrimination.

2.2. Brand Tone of Voice

Whilst our personality is static, our tone of voice is dynamic and varies according to the audience, channel and effect. We adopt a more friendly and conversational tone when it's appropriate, and a more serious and informative one when it's required. Yet our voice remains passionate, professional and respectful.

Characteristic	Description	Do	Don't
Conversational	We write so that everyone can understand us.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write naturally. • Use contractions. • Be relatable. • Speak clearly and truthfully. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be too formal. • Use too much jargon. • Take yourself too seriously.
Professional	We deliver our message most of the time in a serious and trustworthy tone of voice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be authoritative and informative. • Go straight to the point. • Be concise. • Omit unnecessary words. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be too casual. • Use inappropriate jokes. • Use slang, jargon, or loose language.
Respectful	We speak in a caring and diplomatic way, aware of different cultural understandings and sensitivities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speak with kindness and humility. • Be careful not to offend others. • Play with words in a respectful way. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be sarcastic, ironic, or rude.
Passionate	We're cheerful about what we're doing and what we want to achieve.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use active voice. • Be factual and inspirational. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use passive voice. • Sound like anyone else. • Be cold.

2.2.1. Tone of Voice Examples

Our tone of voice is responsive; it adapts to the circumstances.

Imagine you're creating a webpage on RUN-EU's website to present the events and activities in which both students and the community at large can get involved in.

Here's the difference tone can make:

Write:

RUN-EU has a wide range of events and activities for you to take part in even if you aren't a student. Find out what we have to offer and join our community.

Don't write:

There are many events for students and non-students to participate in at RUN-EU. Here's what we have to offer.

Whilst the first example creates a sense of warmth and inclusivity and remains direct and professional, the second one is colder and less "human" and enthusiastic.

If you're writing an Instagram post addressed to students, promoting one of our Short Advanced Programmes (SAPs), you will want to sound like you're "speaking" and not like you're writing.

Write:

Have you already registered for our next SAP? Click the link in bio to register.

Write:

Registrations for our next SAP are now open! Click the link in bio to register.

Don't write:

If you would like to register for our next SAP, please find our online form in our bio.

Address the reader in the second person, use contractions, or ask them a question.

On social media, when advertising a videoconference where, for example, EU leaders and partners will be speaking, our target audience will mainly be higher education institutions, R&D and associated partners, and funders.

Although it is a more political event and our tone should be more formal, you can still write naturally and use the words your audience uses. This allows you to be conversational and formal at the same time.

Write:

Tomorrow RUN-EU will host the conference 'From the Sea to Society'. Representatives from European research and innovation centres will come together to discuss the importance of European collaborative networks for the blue bioeconomy and strengthen the bridge between education and the ocean. Join us at 10 o'clock to hear more about the issue.

Don't write:

Tomorrow RUN-EU will host the conference 'From the Sea to Society'. The event intends to be an international forum aiming to share ideas and approaches for sustainable and inclusive development of European coastal communities. Invited speakers will discuss the importance of knowledge and technology in the management of the exploitation of marine resources. The conference starts at 10 o'clock.

2.3. Writing for the Web

Follow these guidelines to produce compelling and effective website content:

- During project level, our website target audience mainly includes higher education institutions and associated partners, and R&D partners and funders, so our tone of voice for the web is more formal and authoritative than casual, to demonstrate professionalism and reliability.
- Be interesting and enthusiastic even when writing about more statistical and informative topics.
- Always ask yourself if the content is valuable and useful for the reader.
- Write in plain, direct, and uncomplicated language.
- Use the active voice.
- Use short sentences and paragraphs (no more than 20 words per sentence and five sentences per paragraph).
- Break up web content into shorter pieces so it is easily scannable.
- When writing news stories or articles, use the journalism writing method of the “inverted pyramid”: start with key information and gradually add more detail.
- The most important information goes on top of the page.
- Use the words our readership uses to help them understand the copy and optimise it for search engines.
- Omit unnecessary words.
- Minimise the use of abbreviations, except generally recognised acronyms.
- Never proofread your own copy; always ask someone else to check and proofread your content.

2.4. Producing Accessible and Inclusive Web Content

In accordance with the [European Union Web Accessibility Directive](#) and our goal of creating an inclusive European university, all our content must be accessible to all users from all backgrounds.

Therefore, you must:

- publish an accessibility statement on RUN-EU’s website explaining how accessible the website is. The statement should be published as an HTML page and updated regularly;
- use HTML headings (H1, H2, H3 and so on) to break up your content into smaller, more specific sections;
- align the text to the left margin of the webpage;
- use descriptive and meaningful text in your links and headings/subheadings to make it easier for people with visual impairments navigate using screen readers;
- avoid writing just ‘click here’, ‘download’ or ‘find out more’. Readers should know what content the link is pointing at, where it sits, if it’s not a normal webpage, and the kind of file it is;
- do not use directional instructions or any language that refers to the layout or design of the page. If you want to direct a user to something else on the page, use an anchor link. If you want a user to click a link, include it in the same body of text, rather than telling the user to go somewhere specifically on the page;
- separate out important links from the main body of your content. Too many links within sentences (known as “inline links”) can be distracting and are often harder to make accessible;
- use bullets instead of numbered lists;
- add alternative text to all images, charts and graphs. Alt text descriptions should be detailed enough so that users with visual impairments receive the same information as those without visual disabilities;
- add closed captions to all videos available for longer than 14 days;
- don't rely on colour alone to highlight information. Use colour to convey information to people who can perceive colour, but then also provide the information in another way for people who can't see colour – for example, in text;
- ensure RUN-EU’s website has a function that allows users to resize text. Test your font sizes thoroughly by increasing the zoom level in your own browser on different devices;
- be able to resize text without assistive technology up to 200 per cent in a way that does not require you to scroll horizontally to read a line of text on a full-screen window.

2.5. Writing for Social Media

2.5.1. General Guidelines

Due to the nature of social networks, our tone of voice on social media is not as formal and informative as it is on the web. However, although we're more conversational and friendly, we maintain our professionalism and reliability and we're never too informal.

We do not use social media to comment on trending topics or current events that are unrelated to RUN-EU. Nonetheless, be aware of what's going on in the news when you're publishing social content, as it can be accidentally inappropriate.

To ensure our content is engaging and effective, it's important to understand that every network is unique and what works today might not work tomorrow.

Follow these content production guidelines for social media:

- Ensure our content resonates with the channel's audience. Always write with our audience's wants and needs in mind.
- Put our audience first. Say 'you' more than you say 'us'.
- Posts should sound as if they could be said by an actual person in conversation.
- Write content people want to share.
- Write short and in plain English.
- Keep paragraphs to only two or three sentences.
- Be clear and concise.
- Use the active voice.
- Use visual content, specially videos, to tell a story where possible.
- Optimise each piece of visual content for the platform you're posting it on to ensure our message is delivered, and that we look professional.
- Use headings, bullets and lists where possible to make our content easier to scan.
- Use the below-presented hashtags.
- Add calls to action.
- Never ask for retweets or likes.

2.5.2. Twitter

Username: [@run_euniversity](#)

Topics to cover: news on relevant project activities and events; key achievements of RUN-EU; news addressing policymaking and top-level initiatives which regard higher education in EU; brand marketing; media mentions; 'we're hiring!' posts.

Posts: text of up to 280 characters. This excludes media attachments (photos, images, videos, etc) and quoted tweets (displaying someone else's tweet within your own) but includes links (a URL is always altered to 23 characters).

How to use it:

- Share short comments, make announcements that can instantaneously reach a large audience or retweet relevant content.
- Incorporate hashtags directly into tweet copy.
- Tag other relevant accounts within your tweet copy.
- Include a picture. It decreases your character count but significantly increases engagement and so reach.
- Most of the time, add a link. Twitter is by nature about getting people's attention, once you've got that attention you can convert that into more meaningful engagement by pointing people to longer content.

Usernames to mention in posts:

[@EU_Commission](#)

[@EUErasmusPlus](#)

Hashtags to mention in posts:

[#run_eu](#)

[#erasmus](#)

[#erasmusplus](#)

[#europeanuniversities](#)

[#europeanunion](#)

Main target groups:

- Students, alumni, and potential applicants
- Teachers, researchers, and staff from RUN-EU members
- Higher education institutions on regional, national, European, and global levels
- R&D partners and funders
- Associated partners
- Regional and national authorities, decision-makers, and other relevant stakeholders
- Regional business, industry, and cultural representatives
- Media on regional, national, European, and global level

2.5.3. Instagram

Username: [@run_europeanuniversity](#)

Topics to cover: news on relevant project events; relevant information for higher education students.

Posts: no character limit but try to keep it short, concise and interesting (between 80 and 150 characters to get more engagement); videos in “story” or “IGTV” format to get more engagement.

How to use it:

- Our tone on Instagram is friendly and inviting. Communicate compassionately with the human touch unlike a robot or corporation. Be relatable and put the audience first.
- Ensure both visual content and text are aligned on Instagram.
- You can add all relevant hashtags at the end of posts.
- Use photos and videos from member higher education institutions.
- Always like and reply comments in a relaxed and friendly tone.
- Include subtitles in video posts where possible.

Usernames to mention in posts:

@europeancommission

@European_Youth_EU

Hashtags to mention in posts:

#run_eu

#erasmus

#erasmusplus

#europeanunion

#europeanuniversities

Main target groups:

- Students, alumni, and potential applicants
- Teachers, researchers, and staff from RUN-EU members
- Higher education institutions on regional, national, European, and global levels

2.5.4. Facebook

Username: [@run.europeanuniversity](#)

Topics to cover: news on relevant project activities and events, including announcing and reporting activities; other relevant news and topics related to RUN-EU; brand marketing; media mentions; 'we're hiring!' posts.

Posts: no character limit but aim for 1-2 short sentences (100-280 characters).

How to use it:

- Our tone on Facebook is friendly and inviting. Communicate compassionately with the human touch unlike a robot or corporation. Be relatable and put the audience first.
- Share media mentions or make announcements that can instantaneously reach a large audience.
- Include photos and videos where possible.
- Tag other relevant accounts within your post to reach a wider audience.
- Add RUN-EU's website link to your post when it's related to it in order to increase website traffic.

Note: important posts, major news or announcements are pinned on top of our Facebook's page, so our visitors see it first. It can increase engagement or inform our audience of upcoming changes or events. Keep track of the pinned post, so it doesn't become outdated.

Hashtags to mention in posts:

#run_eu

#erasmus

#erasmusplus

#europeanunion

#europeanuniversities

Main target groups:

- Students, alumni, and potential applicants
- Teachers, researchers, and staff from RUN-EU members
- Higher education institutions on regional, national, European, and global levels

2.5.5. LinkedIn

Username: [@run-european-university](#)

Topics to cover: news on relevant project activities and events; key achievements of RUN-EU; news addressing policymaking and top-level initiatives which regard higher education in EU; brand marketing; media mentions; 'we're hiring!' posts.

Posts: between 100 and 280 characters with photos and videos to get more engagement.

How to use it:

- Our tone on LinkedIn is professional and authoritative but not overly jargonistic. We still want our audience to understand everything we say.
- Tag other relevant accounts when appropriate.
- Add RUN-EU's website link to your post when it's related to it in order to increase website traffic.

Main target groups:

- Higher education institutions on regional, national, European, and global levels
- R&D partners and funders
- Associated partners

2.5.6. YouTube

Username: [@runeuropeanuniversity](#)

Topics to cover: key achievements of RUN-EU.

Posts: RUN-EU promotional and events videos.

How to use it:

- Our YouTube channel works as a repository of video graphic content produced during project events.
- Include closed captions in English where possible.

Main target groups:

- Students, alumni, and potential applicants
- Media on regional, national, European, and global level

3. General Style Preferences

3.1. Abbreviations

Abbreviations are used for the convenience of the reader, not the writer. As a general rule, do not use full stops after any type of abbreviation.

3.1.1. Acronyms and Initialisms

These are formed using the first letter of several words. They have all capital letters and no full stops.

EU	European Union
EIH	European Innovation Hubs
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

When using an acronym or initialism that may be unfamiliar to your readers, spell it out in full the first time it is mentioned, followed with the abbreviation in brackets; thereafter, use the acronym or initialism alone.

The conference took place at the Polytechnic of Cávado and Ave (IPCA). Future RUN-EU events will also take place at IPCA.

The existence of an acronym or initialism does not mean that they must be used all the time. Minimise the use of abbreviations, except generally recognised acronyms.

NHL Stenden University of Applied Sciences is a Dutch higher education institution. [instead of 'NHL Stenden University of Applied Sciences is a Dutch HEI.']

Note: acronyms of RUN-EU member institutions, and their faculties, schools, colleges, and affiliated institutions, are listed in the [List of Abbreviations](#). However, only use the acronym version of a word when it is helpful for the reader.

3.1.2. Truncated Words

These are formed by omitting letters from the end of a word. Do not use full stops.

Prof	Professor
Mon	Monday
Aug	August

3.1.3. Omitted Letters

These abbreviations are formed by omitting letters from the middle of a word. Do not use full stops.

Mr	Mister
Dept	Department
Dr	Doctor
St	Street

Weight and distance abbreviations are lower case.

kg	kilogram
km	kilometre

3.1.4. Latin Abbreviations

If you are using Latin abbreviations, make sure you know what they mean and when to use them.

The abbreviations 'eg' and 'ie' are not interchangeable. Do not use full stops after them and do not italicise them. They are lower case and are preceded, but not followed, by a comma.

- etc [et cetera] means 'and the rest'. Use to indicate the continuation of a list.

RUN-EU will offer European Degrees in Civil Engineering, Environmental Sciences, Graphic Design, International Business, etc.

- eg [exempli gratia] means 'for example' or 'such as'. Use with examples.

RUN-EU offers three European Degrees, eg Civil Engineering, Graphic Design, and International Business.

- ie [id est] means 'that is'. Use with definitions.

A three-year undergraduate programme has a total of 180 ECTS credits, ie 60 ECTS credits per year.

The following Latin abbreviations are always lower case and are neither preceded nor followed by a comma:

- am [ante meridiem], which means 'before midday'
- pm [post meridiem], which means 'after midday'.

3.2. Capitalisation

Capital letters can be very distracting so do not use them unless it is absolutely required.

Capital letters are used to start sentences and to distinguish the names of people, languages, institutions, places, and organisations.

The basic rule is that proper nouns have an initial capital, but common nouns do not. The exceptions to this rule are listed below.

3.2.1. Agreements, Conventions, Programmes, Policies, Strategies, etc

When using the full title, nouns and adjectives have an initial capital.

The RUN-EU Dissemination and Communication Strategy is an essential communication management tool.

We aim to disseminate best practices to wider European agendas, including the development of the European Education Area, the European Commission Higher Education Policy.

3.2.2. Study Programmes or Courses

Capitalise the name of a subject when it is used as part of a study programme/course title, but not if it is used in other contexts. Also capitalise the subject name when referring to the faculty or school that offers it.

This programme is ideal for those who do not wish to specialise in a particular area of law.

Professor Rui Pedrosa studied Biochemistry at the Faculty of Sciences and Technology.

The Polytechnic of Leiria's School of Education and Social Sciences offers eight undergraduate programmes.

3.2.3. Degrees

Capitalise the level of a degree only when referring to a specific qualification or programme, but not when referring to any qualification at that level.

She finished her Master's in Cellular Biology and started a PhD in Human Biology.

We offer many undergraduate degrees.

You can apply for our European Double Degree in Civil Engineering from tomorrow.

3.2.4. Faculties, Schools, Departments, Divisions

Capitalise only when used as part of the full title of a faculty/school/department/division/unit, not when referring to one without using its full name.

The Polytechnic of Leiria's School of Arts and Design is based in Caldas da Rainha.
The school's dean is Professor João Santos.

3.2.5. Professor

Capitalise only when used as part of an academic's formal title, not when referring to professors in general.

It is common for professors to publish their works in peer-reviewed journals.
The school's dean is Professor João Santos.

See also [Names and Titles](#).

3.2.6. University, Institute, Polytechnic

Capitalise only when writing out titles in full.

Athlone Institute of Technology has four faculties.
Voralberg University of Applied Sciences has five research centres and one research group.
Funding for German universities has been cut recently.

3.2.7. Events

Capitalise the first word of the name of the event, and all words within it except articles (a/an/the), prepositions (to/on/for, etc) and conjunctions (but/and/or, etc).

EU Conference 'European Universities: Pioneering Transformation in Education, Research, and Innovation'

3.2.8. Web Articles, Social Media Posts, and Newsletters Headlines

Only capitalise the first word, any proper nouns and the first word following a full stop/question mark/exclamation mark. Do not use full stops in headlines.

‘European Universities are the most ambitious alliances in Europe’, says European Commission
Hundreds of students have already applied for our 2021 Spring Career Fair

3.2.9. Other Words

Do not capitalise the second word in a compound noun or adjective, except if it is a title.

Geo-ecology; Vice-Chancellor; Vice-President

Do not capitalise the seasons unless they are part of an official name.

This winter was unusually cold.
More than 200 students attended the Polytechnic of Leiria’s 2021 Summer School.

Do not capitalise compass points unless they form part of a proper name.

East; west; north; south; South Africa; Northern Ireland

Use initial capitals for proper geographical nouns, but lower case when describing a geographical area.

The Limerick Institute of Technology is located in the East Midlands region of Ireland.
Austria and Hungary are central European countries.

Whilst the correct use of ‘Wi-Fi’ is always hyphenated and always capitalised, the words ‘internet’ and ‘web’ should be written in lower case, unless they are in the beginning of a sentence or in a heading.

Students can access free Wi-Fi everywhere on campus.

3.3. Names and Titles

Always capitalise personal titles in English and do not use full stops.

Use capitals for titles prefixing names, but not for professions alone. Note that some job descriptions are never used with names, such as 'prime minister'.

The prime minister of The Netherlands will chair this conference.
Professor Crowley opened the lecture.
Alan Crowley, lecturer at The Limerick Institute of Technology, raised his hand.
Mrs Sargento is here.

Give people's title, forename and surname when first mentioned. Use either surname only or title and surname thereafter (unless further information is required to prevent ambiguity), but be consistent with whichever usage you choose.

Mrs Sophia Eriksson-Waterschoot (first mention), Mrs Eriksson-Waterschoot (thereafter)
Mr Mark Rutte (first mention), Mr Rutte (thereafter)

Capitalise both words in a compound title preceding a name.

Vice-President Nuno Rodrigues

3.3.1. Translating Titles

Personal names should keep their original accents, eg Cañete, João, Šefčovič, Häme.

Avoid titles not customary in English, but note that if you use 'Mr' or 'Ms', you must obviously be sure of the gender of the person you are referring to.

If you don't know the person's gender, do not use any title.

'Mx' can be used to represent those who do not want to be identified by gender, including transgender individuals.

For:	Write:
Prof. Dr. H. Schmidt	Prof H. Schmidt
Dipl.-Ing. W. Braun	Mr W. Braun
Drs. A. Baerdemaeker	Ms A. Baerdemaeker
Marion Brown	Marion Brown
Jane Campbell	Mx Jane Campbell

If a body's original-language name is familiar to the intended readership, or the body uses it in its own English texts, use that rather than a translation.

<p>Universitat Internacional de Catalunya is a Catalan university. The Polytechnic of Leiria is the project coordinator of RUN-EU.</p>
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If an organisation or body has an official name in English, always use that. If it does not, you should translate it, preferably with a commonly accepted or previously used term, followed by the original name in brackets. After the first mention, the name given in brackets may be dropped.

<p>The Polytechnic of Cávado and Ave is a Portuguese higher education institution. University of Győr (Széchenyi Istvan University) is a Hungarian higher education institution.</p>
--

Where a body is referred to in the original language by an abbreviation, do not translate it with an improvised English one. Instead, give the English name followed by the original abbreviation in brackets upon first mention.

<p>Häme University of Applied Sciences (HAMK) is one of the eight higher education institutions that compose RUN-EU. HAMK is a Finnish university.</p>
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When translating into English, write 'Minister for...', 'Vice-President for...', 'Deputy Vice-Chancellor for...' and 'Ministry of...'.

3.4. Numbers

3.4.1. Numbers

Spell out whole-number words for numbers from *one* up to and including *nine*; use figures for numbers above nine. However, where numbers in ranges, ratios and other similar constructions fall above and below this limit use figures for both.

9 to 11, **not** 'nine to 11'
3 of the 20, **not** 'three of the 20'

Spell out numbers at the start of a sentence and adjacent modifiers.

Twenty 45-page brochures were printed.

Contrary to other languages, in English, a full stop marks decimals and a comma marks thousands.

1,000,000 [one million]
The population of New York City is estimated to be 8,336,817.

Use a combination of a figure and a word for very large round numbers (such as multiple millions/billions etc). Write 'million' and 'billion' in full.

3.5 million, **not** '3,500,000'

Always use figures and symbols for percentages, measurements, and currency. If there are a lot of figures in a paragraph or text, some above 10 and some below, use figures throughout to allow easy comparison by readers.

In English, there is no space between a currency symbol and the number. The currency symbol comes before the figure.

€10, **not** '€ 10'

For telephone numbers, see [Listing Contact Details](#).

3.4.2. Dates

Days and months begin with a capital letter and should be written out in full. Years should not be abbreviated either. Use days with dates only for emphasis or the avoidance of confusion/ambiguity.

Use a comma after the day.

Do not use 'st', 'nd', 'rd' or 'th' with dates.

Within text, dates should be written out in the following manner:

3 May 2021, **not** '3rd May, 2021'

Monday, 3 May 2021

If the year in question is absolutely clear from the context, the year number may be left out.

Write decades without an apostrophe and with a hyphen.

1960s, **not** '1960's'

mid-1980, **not** 'mid 1980'

The word 'after' should not normally be used to start a time period as it may create confusion. If 'after' is used, the date following it should be the date preceding that on which the period begins.

'after 31 December 2020' means 'on or with effect from 1 January 2021'

3.4.3. Times

Use either the 12- or 24-hour clock system. Do not use both in the same text.

The 12-hour clock uses a full stop between the hours and minutes and a space between the number and the am/pm. The 24-hour clock uses a 'h' and omits am/pm.

The workshop starts at 11.30 am and ends at 1 pm.

The workshop starts at 11h30 and ends at 13h00.

Use 'noon' or 'midnight' instead of '12 am/pm', '12 noon' or '12 midnight'.

The closing date for applications is noon on 25 May.

When using the 12-hour clock system, omit the minutes when the time is on the hour.

Classes starts at 9 am or 9 o'clock.

Classes starts at 11.30 am and ends at 1 pm.

3.5. Listing Contact Details

Write 'email' instead of 'e-mail'.

Web addresses should be given in the simplest and most easily readable form possible.

Only use 'http://' or 'https://' where 'www' does not appear as part of the address.

Write telephone and fax numbers as follows. Use spaces as appropriate to the country's system.

When listing contact details, please follow this order:

Tel: (+351) 244 830 010

Fax: (+351) 244 813 013

Email: run-eu@ipleiria.pt

Web: www.run-eu.eu

3.5.1. URLs, Email Addresses and Hashtags in Print Documents

Where URLs and email addresses appear in the body text of print documents, please colour them in our blue and underline them for clarity. Try to keep them away from punctuation as in print documents is more difficult to distinguish a link from the rest. Hashtags should only be coloured in our blue.

Right:

Find out more about HAMK Design Factory's webinar at www.run-eu.eu/2020/06/05/webinar-design-factory/ and register for the session.

Please email run-eu@ipleiria.pt if you have any questions.

You can use [#run_eu](#) to keep updated with what we're doing.

Wrong:

Visit www.run-eu.eu/2020/06/05/webinar-design-factory/ for more information.

If you have any questions, email us at run-eu@ipleiria.pt.

3.5.2. URLs, Email Addresses and Hashtags in Web Publications

In web publications, URLs and email addresses should not be left exposed. Links should be embedded behind the name or a description of the destination page. Avoid writing just 'click here', 'download' or 'find out more'. Readers should know what content the link is pointing at, where it sits, if it's not a normal webpage, and the kind of file it is.

Right:

Take some time to browse [our website](#) to learn more about us.

Wrong:

Visit [www.run-eu.eu](#) to learn more about us.

Click [here](#) to browse our website.

In web publications, email addresses should also be made a link and embedded behind the word 'email'. Hashtags can just be made a link, but remember to keep them away from punctuation.

Right:

If you have any questions, then please contact us via [email](#) or by telephone ((+351) 244 830 010).

Wrong:

If you have any questions, then please send us an email to run-eu@ipleiria.pt or call us ((+351) 244 830 010).

3.5.3. URLs, Email Addresses and Hashtags in CRM Emails

In customer relationship management (CRM) emails, URLs should be made a link, and embedded behind the name or a description of the destination page.

Right:

Discover our [Short Advanced Programmes](#).

Wrong:

Visit [www.run-eu.eu](#) for more information on our Short Advanced Programmes.

Email addresses, however, should be left exposed in at least one instance, for the benefit of recipients who do not support embedded email links.

Hashtags should be treated in the same way as in a web publication – make them a link, but remember to keep them away from punctuation.

3.6. Highlighting Text

3.6.1. Bold

Use bold cautiously to emphasise the part of the text you wish to stand out. This could be someone's name, a deadline date, or another key piece of information.

Punctuation which follows bold text should not itself be bold (unless the whole sentence is in bold type).

3.6.2. Italics

Use italics to flag part of your text which you would like to distinguish from the rest of the text.

Files *must* be labelled with your name, programme reference and any specific work title.

Use italics for foreign words and phrases embedded within your text, except the Latin abbreviations 'etc', 'am', 'pm', 'eg', and 'ie'.

Do not use italics if a foreign word is so familiar that it has become anglicised.

coup d'état
per capita
per se
ad hoc

3.5.4. Underlining

Avoid using underlining for emphasis, because it generally suggests hyperlinks, especially on webpages.

3.7. Inclusive Language

These are general guidelines. They are included in this style guide to remind you that language shapes people and culture. Please be aware that this is an evolving and sensitive aspect of language.

3.7.1. Gender

Do not use 'he/she' or 's/he'. Write instead 'he or she' and 'him or her' or use the plural form ('students', 'they'). This becomes clumsy if repeated too frequently and should be used with caution.

Speak to your tutor and they may be able to help you.

A day in the life of a RUN-EU student often includes meeting their tutor.

In informal content targeting students, such as in social media, 'he' or 'she' can be avoided by addressing the reader directly ('you', 'your').

Wherever possible, use alternatives for terms containing 'man' to mean people of all genders.

For:	Write:
man-made	human-made
mankind	humanity
chairman	chair or chairperson
spokesman	spokesperson

When writing personal titles, if you use Mr or Ms, you must obviously be sure of the gender of the person you are referring to. Mx can be used to represent those who do not want to be identified by gender, including transgender individuals.

3.7.2. Persons with Disabilities

Use person-first language, which emphasises the person rather than the disability.

People/person with disabilities, **not** 'disabled people/persons'

People/person with disabilities, **not** 'the disabled'

Use neutral expressions instead of negative or passive phrases.

Person with a mental health condition, **not** 'person suffering from a mental disorder'

Wheelchair user, **not** 'person limited to a wheelchair'

3.8. Punctuation

3.8.1. Apostrophe

Do not use an apostrophe with abbreviations in the plural.

FAQs	Frequently Asked Questions
HEIs	Higher Education Institutions
SMEs	Small and Medium-sized Enterprises

Never use an apostrophe with plural nouns.

two photos three schools

Use an apostrophe with possessive forms.

the student's answer the students' answers

When a word ending in 's' is a singular possessive, the apostrophe goes at the end followed by an extra 's'. In case adding an 's' to the end makes it difficult to pronounce or odd, consider rearranging the sentence to avoid the difficulty.

James's book teachers' meeting you must give three months' notice

Do not use an apostrophe in *its* with the meaning 'belonging to it' (this is analogous with his/hers/theirs): note that *it's* is a contraction of 'it is'.

the university and its five schools

3.8.2. Brackets

In a sentence, use round brackets for information that is relevant but not essential.

These findings (and those of other researchers) demonstrate the importance of international mobility for staff.

If a complete sentence is between round brackets (), put the full stop inside.

(Files must be labelled with your name, programme reference and any specific work title.)

Use square brackets [] when adding clarification to a direct quote.

'Let them [the poor] eat cake.'

3.8.3. Bullet Points

Don't punctuate the end of bullet points which are a list of very short phrases or single words.

If the bullet points form a complete sentence with preceding text, add a full stop to the end of the last point. The first letter of each point should be lower case, unless the point contains a proper name or formal title.

Our web content should be:

- engaging
- accessible
- interesting.

Note: capital letters should be used in lists for posters, banners, landing pages and flyers, which may have more visual impact if upper case first letters are used within bullet points.

Where the stem and bullet points combine to form complete sentences, the lower case should be used for each bullet point, unless the point begins with a proper name or formal title. Add a semicolon to the end of each point, 'or' or 'and' (depending on the sense of your sentence) to the end of the penultimate point, and a full stop to the end of the last one.

Our tone of voice:

- is dynamic and varies according to the audience, channel, and effect;
- can be more friendly and conversational when it's appropriate, and more serious and informative when it's required;
- remains passionate, professional, and respectful at all times.

If each bullet point is a complete sentence, then each sentence should start with a capital letter and end with a full stop.

To ensure you use a conversational tone of voice:

- Write naturally.
- Be relatable.
- Speak clearly and truthfully.

3.8.4. Colon

A colon should be used to introduce a quotation or to precede a list.

We don't use a capital letter after a colon except if what follows is a full sentence, a proper noun, or a whole quoted sentence.

Three main topics were discussed: grammar, vocabulary and punctuation.

The European Commission is optimistic about the initiative: 'European Universities are the most ambitious alliances in Europe'.

Do not use a colon before a quotation that begins mid-sentence.

The committee highlighted 'the need to revolutionise the European education and research spaces'.

3.8.5. Comma

Do not use a comma before ‘and’ or ‘or’ in a list of three or more items (the so-called “Oxford” or “serial” comma).

We’re a dynamic, energetic and always courteous European University.

An additional comma may be inserted before the final ‘and’ (or ‘or’) if it helps clarify meaning.

Guest speakers will be able to choose between cereal, eggs and bacon, and hot porridge.

3.8.6. Dash

Dashes (which are longer than hyphens) can be used instead of brackets.

All students – and RUN-EU’s students in particular – are eligible.

When writing the full name of RUN-EU, use a dash instead of a hyphen.

Right:

Regional University Network – European University

Wrong:

Regional University Network - European University

3.8.7. Exclamation Marks

Exclamation marks are used very sparingly in English and often come across as exaggerated.

If in doubt, avoid using them. Never use them in formal documents or headlines.

3.8.8. Hyphens

Use in an adjectival phrase before a noun.

the up-to-date list

a hot-air balloon

With prefixes before a proper name, number or date.

anti-Plagiarism
pre-2000 politics
Second semester starts in mid-January.

In numbers which are spelt out.

Twenty-seven is the most popular 'random' number.

Use a hyphen to separate figures in a range.

15-20

Some words with prefixes are not hyphenated.

coordinate
cooperate
extracurricular
postgraduate
undergraduate

Do not hyphenate the word 'email'.

3.8.9. Italics

Use italics for foreign words and phrases embedded within your text, except the Latin abbreviations 'etc', 'am', 'pm', 'eg', and 'ie'.

Do not use italics if a foreign word is so familiar that it has become anglicised.

coup d'état
per capita
per se
ad hoc

3.8.10. Quotation Marks

Single quotation marks (‘ ’) are used to enclose a quote.

‘European Universities are the most ambitious alliances in Europe’, said European Commission.

Double quotation marks (“ ”) are used for a quote within a quote.

‘European Universities,’ EU Commission said, ‘are the “most ambitious” alliances in Europe’.

Single quotation marks are used (without italics) when referring to the title of an article, lecture, conference, webinar, chapter, song, poem, or other section of a larger publication, book or album within a text.

The webinar ‘Applying virtual environments in distance learning of product development’ will be held on Friday, 5 June.

Single quotation marks should also be employed when a term itself, rather than the concept it signifies, is under discussion. There are instances of this throughout this style guide.

Articles (‘a’, ‘an’, and ‘the’), conjunctions (‘and’, ‘or’, ‘but’) and prepositions (‘at’, ‘under’, ‘near’, ‘upon’, ‘by’, ‘of’) are written with lower case letters unless they start the title.

Neither single nor double quotation marks should be used to suggest emphasis.

If emphasis is absolutely necessary, italics may be used.

Right:

Files *must* be labelled with your name, programme and any specific work title.

Wrong:

You must ‘not’ work more hours than allowed.

Double quotation marks can also function almost as a replacement for the phrase “so called”, holding the term between them up for inspection.

Avoid the use of the “Oxford comma”.

3.8.11. Semicolon

Use a semi-colon to unite two independent clauses (ie sentences) that express closely related ideas.

The authors agreed on a final text; however, the issue of copyright was not addressed.

Use semi-colons to separate long items in a series within a sentence.

Students reflect on their biggest concerns for the future, such as health and well-being; energy, climate and sustainability; life, evolution and the universe.

Use semi-colons in lists where the stem and bullet points combine to form complete sentences.

Our tone of voice:

- is dynamic and varies according to the audience, channel, and effect;
- can be more friendly and conversational when it's appropriate, and more serious and informative when it's required;
- remains passionate, professional, and respectful at all times.

Use semicolons to break up long or complicated lists, particularly where individual items in the list contain the word 'and' or commas.

Deputy Deans, responsible for the quality of teaching and learning across schools; Associate Deans for Research, responsible for taking forward the schools' research plans; and Heads of Department, with responsibility for the development and performance of our academic disciplines.

3.9. Tricky Words

3.9.1. Foreign Words

If a foreign word or phrase is itself the subject of the sentence, it should be written in italics, followed by an explanation.

In The Netherlands, *hogescholen* are universities of applied sciences.

If an organisation's original-language name is believed to be familiar to the intended readership, or if the organisation uses the original language name in its own English texts, use this rather than a translation. When the foreign word is a well-known entity outside its country, italics is not needed.

The Deutsche Bundesbank has issued a new policy directive.
Universitat Internacional de Catalunya is a Catalan university.

For city and geographical names, use well-established English forms where they exist. Do not italicise city and geographical names (either in its original language or English form).

Cologne, **not** 'Köln'
Lisbon, **not** 'Lisboa'

3.9.2. British vs American Spelling

Do not use the American English spelling unless you are quoting an American speaker or from American text (in which case the original should be kept).

Use these tables as a reference.

British	American	British	American
-ce	-se	-our	-or
defence	defense	honour	honor
practice (noun)	practice (noun)	labour	labor
practise (verb)	practice (verb)	colour	color

British	American	British	American
-ll	-l	-re	-er
label / labelled	label / labeled	centre	center
travel / traveller	travel / traveler	metre	meter
travelling	traveling	theatre	theater

British	American	British	American
-ogue	-og	-s	-z
analogue	analog	analyse	analyze
catalogue	catalog	organise	organize
dialogue	dialog	summarise	summarize

British	American	British	American
-ae/-oe	-e	-t	-ed
anaesthetic	anesthetic	burnt	burned
oenology	enology	learnt	learned

3.9.3. Common Pitfalls

- **accommodation**
- **address**
- **advice** (noun)
- **advise** (verb)
- **adviser** (not 'advisor')
- **alumna** (singular; means female former student)
- **alumnae** (plural form for female-only former students)
- **alumni** (plural form for either male-only or mixed-gender former students)
- **alumnus** (singular; means male former student)
- **audiovisual**
- **benefited**
- **biased**
- **campus** (means the buildings of a higher education institution and the land that surrounds them)
- **campuses** (plural form of 'campus')
- **case study** (noun; not hyphenated)
- **case-study** (when used as a modifier, as in 'case-study work')
- **comprise** (not comprise of)
- **cooperation** (not hyphenated)
- **coordination** (not hyphenated)
- **CV** (not 'c.v.' or 'C.V.', for curriculum vitae)
- **dependant** (noun)
- **dependent** (adjective)
- **distance learning** (not hyphenated)
- **email** (lower case and not hyphenated, both as a verb and noun)
- **enquire/enquiry** (preferred to 'inquire/inquiry')
- **enrol** (verb)
- **enrolment** (noun)
- **focused**

- **fundraising**
- **future-looking** (hyphenated)
- **in-person** (hyphenated)
- **instalment**
- **internet** (lower case)
- **interregional** (not hyphenated)
- **judgement** (moral, academic, etc)
- **judgment** (legal decision only)
- **liaise/liaison**
- **manoeuvre**
- **multicultural** (not hyphenated)
- **multidisciplinary** (not hyphenated)
- **no-one** (hyphenated)
- **ongoing**
- **online** (not hyphenated)
- **postdoctoral** (not hyphenated)
- **postgraduate** (not hyphenated, both as noun or adjective)
- **postholder** (not hyphenated and lower case)
- **principal** (noun or adjective: chief, main, head)
- **principle** (noun only: ethical standpoint)
- **program** (means computer applications only)
- **programme** (means a plan of activities to be done or things to be achieved)
- **resign** (means hand in one's notice)
- **re-sign** (means sign a document again)
- **stationary** (means not moving)
- **stationery** (means paper, pens, etc)
- **student-centred** (not 'student-centered')
- **till** (not 'til: not an abbreviation of until)
- **videoconference** (not hyphenated)

- **website/webpage** (not hyphenated and lower case)
- **Wi-Fi** (hyphenated and capital 'W' and 'F')

4. List of Abbreviations

AI	Artificial Intelligence
AIT	Athlone Institute of Technology
ECTS	European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System
EI	Emotional Intelligence
EIH	European Innovation Hubs
EQF	European Qualification Framework
ESG	European Standard Guidelines for Quality Assurance
EU	European Union
EZ-ID	European Zone for Interregional Development
FASA	Future and Advanced Skills Academy
FHV	Vorarlberg University of Applied Sciences
HAMK	Häme University of Applied Sciences
HE	Higher Education
HEI	Higher Education Institution
IPCA	Polytechnic of Cávado and Ave
IPL	Polytechnic of Leiria
ISCED	International Standard Classification of Education
LIT	Limerick Institute of Technology
NHL Stenden	NHL Stenden University of Applied Sciences
QA	Quality Assurance
SAB	Students Advisory Board
SAP	Short Advanced Programme
SAPc	SAP Joint Coordinating Team
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SZE	University of Győr – Széchenyi Istvan University
WP	Work Package
WPcL	Work Package Co-leader
WPL	Work Package Leader

Further Reference

This document has used the [European Commission's English Style Guide](#) as a reference.

There you'll find more information and guidance about other topics not covered here.

Be aware that our guidelines sometimes are different from the conventions stated on that style guide; in that case, follow RUN-EU's style conventions.

Since most RUN-EU's content writers and editors are non-native English speakers, it's normal that more questions about words usage may occur. Please avoid the use of Google Translate.

Instead, give preference to a bilingual dictionary.

www.run-eu.eu

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If you have any queries about using this guide, please contact:

run-eu@ipleiria.pt

