

Itad Style Guide

Common grammar and punctuation usage

This guide sets out the core principles of how we use punctuation, spelling, word choice and formatting at Itad.

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Grammar and Formatting

In general, we follow [the Guardian's Style Guide](#) which should be **referred to in most instances**. This document includes a few frequent-use rules; for any uncertainties, please contact communications@itad.com.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

Spell these out in first use, such as *The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)* unless you are confident it is a universally recognised abbreviation.

Do not introduce the acronym/abbreviation if you are not going to use it again in that page/document.

Use uppercase for all acronyms.

Do not use shorthand abbreviations in any web copy.

Avoid **e.g.**, **i.e.** and **etc.** They may not be understood by all readers and can confuse screen-reading programmes.

British vs US English

We use British English spelling as standard and across our website and social media. However, if it is more appropriate to use US English for a specific output (for example in a report for a US client) this is fine providing it is used consistently throughout.

Oxford Comma

We do not use Oxford Commas unless needed for clarity. For more on how to correctly use commas and semi-colons [see the Guardian's Style Guide](#).

Capitalisation

We keep capitalisation to a minimum. [For full guidance refer to the Guardian's style guide](#).

We do not capitalise our **topics or services**, although **programme and project titles** are in Title Case with no quotation marks or italics.

We capitalise the names of a publication series, such as Reports and Think Pieces. **Itad publication titles and web headings** should be in Sentence case.

Title Case should be used when **referencing other works** – do not use italics or quotation marks. Word Choice and Dictionary

For organisation names, we follow the capitalisation as used by the organisation (UNAIDS, not UNaids, for example).

Footnotes

We do not use footnotes in any web copy. Additional details should be either included within the body text or included as a link to other materials.

Lists and bullets

Lists are helpful to break up long paragraphs and allow readers to navigate large bodies of text. They are particularly valuable in web copy.

Use bullet lists unless numbering is important to prioritise points.

If the bullets are short fragments, rather than full sentences, do not add punctuation at the end of each point.

In instances of lists within text, commas can be replaced with a semi-colon to separate items for clarity. However you should also consider if you can replace both with bullet points for easier, clearer reading.

Numbers

Spell out zero to nine unless written as a measurement or abbreviation of a larger number (5 million). Use numerals for 10 upwards. Use comma separators for thousands.

Dates and Times

We use the UK format of Date Month Year (such as 5 January 2023). We always spell out the month and do not use ordinals (st, th) after the date. If including the day of the week this comes before the date.

We format times as [hour]:[minute]am/pm, for example 6:09pm.

For event invitations and other instances where including a time zone is important we generally use UTC, unless another is more suitable for the context.

Measurements, ages, percentages, currencies, conversions and ranges

See the Guardian's Style Guide.

Quotation marks

Double quotation marks

Refer to the Guardian's style guide for how to use quotation marks.

You may want to start a new paragraph for longer quotes, break the quote into multiple paragraphs and/or use formatting to distinguish the quote.

Single quotation marks

Single quotation marks draw attention to words being used in a 'special' way. Use with caution to ensure the meaning is clear to readers.

References

We use the Harvard referencing style for Itad reports unless another style is preferred by the client.

We do not use referencing on the website; any additional information/sources should be included in hyperlinks.

Language guidance

How we talk about ourselves

Having a unified approach to how we talk about Itad helps to strengthen our verbal identity and reinforce our values, particularly our values of inclusion.

Correct	Incorrect	Why we use this language
<p>Itad is an organisation</p> <p>We also use the term 'company' in our internal communications but not externally.</p>	<p>Itad is a firm/business</p>	<p>The connotations of 'firm' versus 'organisation' differ.</p> <p>'Organisation' suggests a focus on group of people working towards the same goal, while 'company' or business implies a stricter focus on profitability.</p>
<p>Independent consultant</p> <p>In contractual and legal contexts only, we use the terms 'suppliers' or 'sub-contractors'.</p> <p>Supply chain</p> <p>Partners</p> <p>Itad community</p>	<p>External consultant</p> <p>Externals</p> <p>Freelancer</p> <p>Suppliers</p>	<p>We want to foster a culture of inclusivity and belonging.</p> <p>Independent consultant gives authority and agency to those we work with while indicating they are an integral part of our Itad community.</p> <p>Terms such as 'external consultant' and 'suppliers' risk implying distance between us and those we work with or a one-way relationship.</p>

Inclusive language

We use **inclusive** and **person-centric** language that is respectful and considerate of our global audience. We are **current** and **considerate** when writing about race, culture, ethnicity, gender and sexuality.

We write in **plain English** and avoid jargon to make our communications as accessible as possible.

[See the related inclusive language and word list guide for more.](#)



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