**Publication development guidelines for authors**

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**1.0 Introduction**

The purpose of this document is to give you advice on the best way to prepare your work to maintain consistency across our publications and to help ensure that the production process is as quick and efficient as possible.

Getting to grips with these guidelines should give you a good grasp of the things you can and can’t say; why you can and can’t say them; and the tone of voice in which to say them. This document is not meant to be a rulebook from which you cannot stray; it is intended to guide you in the most effective way to communicate.

The CITB brand has been defined through extensive customer and staff research to ensure it is accurately positioned and reflects who we are, why we exist and what we do. Consistency of visual and verbal communications is really important in creating a strong, cohesive recognisable brand, which is an important part of our publications.

**2.0 Voice**

The way that we write and the tone of voice used affects the impression made on our audience. We need to use a style of writing that has an approachable but professional tone of voice and one that allows our audience to understand what we want to say quickly and easily.

It is essential that new content is written in a style suitable for the audience and not aimed at health, safety or environment experts. (*Refer to the ‘Guidelines – Appendices’ document, Appendix A, for an overview of our core publications and their intended audience*).

The language you use should adopt a tone that is professional, measured, plain, personal and conversational. The aim is to provide the audience with the information they need in a clear, concise way, not to baffle or confuse them with jargon.

* Talk about doing things and using active verbs, rather than nouns, to get the point across.
* Always use plain English.

**3.0 Style**

These simple house rules help to ensure that everyone writes in the same way, ensuring accuracy and consistency throughout our publications and thus providing clarity for our audience. There is also some copy rules (Appendix B), a spellings document (Appendix C) and an icon sheet (Appendix D) that cover additional important rules, within the *‘Guidelines – Appendices’* document.

The information below is intended as a guide if you are creating a new document. However, if you have been sent specific requirements or an existing document to work from, please follow that brief in the first instance and **always** use track changes to show where you have made changes.

* Use a PC and generic Word processing program (such as Microsoft Word), to ensure compatibility.
* Use a clear font, preferably Arial 11pt.
* Left-align text, headings and bullet lists and use unjustified text.
* Indicate the hierarchy of headings to show their relative importance: label the main heading in a section as [A], the sub-heading below that as [B], and so on.
* Number the pages of the manuscript from start to finish (not by chapter or section).
* Avoid using headers or footers (except for page numbering).
* Supply captions for any new tables or images supplied.

**Sentence structure**

Passive verbs and words such as improving, supporting and provision make for dull, heavy reading and often it sounds like nothing is happening in the sentence. Each sentence should contain no more than 20 words. Use active sentences, wherever possible, and use verbs instead of nouns. Some examples are shown below.

**Right Wrong**

Complete Completion

Introduce Introducing

Deliver Delivery

Support Supporting

Provide Providing

**Avoid management speak**

Here are some words that you should do your best to avoid using. You may not always agree, but try to remember that you are not writing for your own benefit, but for your readers’.

**Unadvisable Advisable**

Accessible Easy to get to, easy access

Activities Work

Add value Improve

Additional Extra

Advise Tell

Best practice Good example

Commence Start

Complete Fill in

Comply with Keep to

Consequently So

Engage Talk to, involve, employ

Ensure Make sure

Forward Send

In accordance with Under, keeping to

In excess of More than

In respect of For

In the event of If

Key Most important, main

Going forward From now

On receipt When you get

Particulars Details

Per annum A year

Persons People

Prior to Before

**3.1 Icons**

Throughout our publications we use icons to emphasise important points within the text and also to direct readers to further information (such as web addresses on our companion website).

To use any of the existing icons either copy one of the icon images from the ‘*Guidelines – Appendices’* document, Appendix D, and paste it into your text at the appropriate point, or use square brackets and red text with the appropriate icon caption to indicate that you wish to include an icon at that point, for example [Add Caution icon here]. It may also be useful to highlight the text that goes with the icon in red, particularly if it is a case study or text that is more than one paragraph long (to avoid confusion on where the icon text begins and ends).

**3.2 References**

If you are including texts for further reading, you need to supply us with full details. Ensure that you check the accuracy of the information given and include the following details:

* author(s) or editor(s)
* title of publication
* date of publication
* edition (e.g. 2nd edition)
* publisher
* page reference (if direct quote is being used)
* full website address (if relevant)

(e.g. Hands, D., GE 707 Safe start (2nd edition, 2005), Construction Industry Training Board, page 23–4.)

* If you are referencing resources or contacts, please check that the addresses, telephone numbers and websites of organisations stated are up to date.
* When referring to current legislation, please make sure that you have referenced the most recent version (for example, Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000). The easiest way of doing this is to check the latest legislation on the HMSO website ([www.hmso.gov.uk](http://www.hmso.gov.uk)). Alternatively, legislation relating to health, safety and the environment can be found on the HSE website ([www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)).
  + The date of the legislation will not be included within the publication, other than for the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

**4.0 Imagery**

Photography is a great way to connect with and inspire our audience. The right image can have an immediate impact and create a lasting impression.

When choosing or commissioning photography the style must be confident, simple, understated, clean and modern. Photographs should be believable, realistic, aspirational and in context. They should appear natural and unposed, with a representative range of ethnicity, gender, age, people of all abilities and trades. Whenever possible you should use real people in real situations.

When choosing images there are several key points to consider, shown below.

* What is the image trying to communicate?
* Does it show diversity and convey our brand personality?
* Are workers wearing the appropriate work wear?
* Are current health and safety requirements being adhered to?
* Is the quality acceptable? (*Refer to 4.1 Resolutions.*)
* Do you have permission to use it? (*Refer to 4.2 Permissions.*)

Clearly identify where images are to go by using square brackets in the text that you submit. Also, ensure that it is obvious which image goes where, by giving each one an individual number and adding a brief description of what it is, for example:

* [AW 001] Illustration of high-visibility jacket.

Every new image should be accompanied with a caption, which should be the brief description of the image (as shown above).

If you are revising a publication and wish to remove or replace existing artwork, explain why you are doing so – if it is inaccurate or out of date, we may need to remove it from other publications in which it is used.

If you want to re-use artwork from another CITB publication, list the code number and name of the book, along with the page number and caption, when describing the artwork, for example:

* [GE 700 Construction site safety, Chapter F03, page 24. Timber segregation].

**4.1 Resolution**

To ensure the images you supply are appropriate for use, you need to ensure that the:

* image resolution is a minimum of 300 dpi
* file is saved as a jpeg (to enable upload to our digital asset management system).

As a guide, the file size should be over 1 MB and when you open the image (viewed at 100%) it should be crisp and good quality (not pixelated).

**4.2 Permissions**

Unless it has been agreed otherwise in your contract, it is your responsibility to clear all copyright permissions for any text or images that you include, if similar text or an illustration, table, or data used has been published elsewhere.

Ensure that you have obtained **written** permission from the copyright holder and acknowledge the original source, in square brackets, at the end of the caption. We will need copies of permissions for our files. It is important that you begin clearing permissions as early as possible, as it can often be a slow process. (*Refer to the ‘Guidelines – Appendices’ document, Appendix E for a sample letter requesting permission, and Appendix F for a sample letter granting permission.*)

Material found on the internet is **not** in the public domain. The content is owned by an infinite variety of sources and is subject to copyright law. The expense and effort involved in tracking down contributors and clearing copyright with them is usually not worthwhile. Equally, do not plagiarise text or images from a website – not only is it illegal but it will result in a change in style from the existing publication. Clip art should also not be used.

If you want to use a newspaper or magazine article please make sure you note down the publication date and original headline so that you can trace it easily. However, bear in mind that the publications concerned often do not own the copyright of the individual articles they have published. In most cases, the writers of the articles and the photographers of any images have to grant permission and be paid a fee, making it complicated to include the article in question. Usually, an original article is not necessary, and a paraphrase or mock-up of the news story is sufficient. Therefore, include one only where there is a special reason for doing so (for example, only if it is an integral and necessary part of the text).

Things that do not need clearing are:

* extracts that have fallen out of copyright – 70 years after the death of an author
* short extracts that do not form a substantial part of the original work.

**5.0 Principles of question authoring**

All questions should be structured or worded as follows.

* Multiple choice, with a minimum of four responses (with only one correct answer), or five responses (with two or three correct answers).
* A complete question, finishing with a question mark.
* The responses (a list of statements) will all start with a capital letter but will have no final fullstop.
* Do not ask ‘What would you do?’ as any answer from the candidate would be defensible (avoid ‘you’).
* Emphasise any important words (limited to one word per question). Target words (such as first, least, except, most, etc.) should be emboldened.
* Negative questions should be avoided, wherever possible. If used, always embolden the word ‘not’.
* The number of correct answers should be included in the question stem and emboldened.
* Ensure there is only one correct answer.
* Avoid ‘giving away’ they correct answer in the stem.
* Responses should each be of a similar length.
* Numerical responses should be in ascending order.
* Avoid ‘none of the above’ or ‘all of the above’ as responses.
* Avoid words such as ‘frequently’, ‘sometimes’, ‘always, ‘only’ and ‘never’
* Avoid repetitive wording in the responses – include within the stem, if possible.
* Avoid using ‘/’ as this causes difficulty in translation. Use wording ‘and’, ‘or’ or ‘and/or’ as appropriate.

**Some examples**

Place **most of the phrasing** in the stem.

* Poor stem:

Type II diabetes is

a. also called juvenile-onset

b. characterised by insulin dependency

c. primarily seen in adults over 40

d. often managed by drug therapy

* Better stem:

What is the most frequent age of onset for Type II diabetes?

Avoid **teaching** in the stem.

* Poor stem:

HR professionals are required to undertake continuing professional development. What is the minimum number of hours required in a two-year period?

a. 10

b. 15

c. 20

d. 25

* Better stem:

How many hours of continuing professional development must an HR professional take in a two-year period?

Use active voice, not passive voice.

* Active voice: Subject matter experts write the test items
* Passive voice: The test items are written by subject matter experts

Items should be written in the present tense.

* Present tense: A patient presents to the emergency room
* NOT past tense: A patient presented to the emergency room

Also refer to the copy rules (Appendix B) and spellings document (Appendix C) in the *‘Guidelines – Appendices’* document.

**6.0 Submitting your work**

Please supply your completed work to CITB preferably as an electronic file via email or, if file size is too large, on CD-ROM. If you send a CD, label the disk with your name, the publication title, a list of the files, and the date, and ensure it is clearly marked with the name and department for delivery.

Remember to send any artwork references with your files.