

Writing for the Web

QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

Top tips:

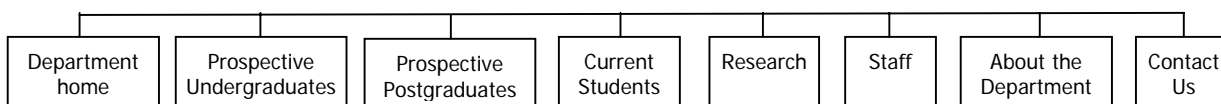
1. Who is your audience? – Write in an appropriate tone
2. Keep it concise - summarise at the start
3. Break up structure – title, headings, paragraphs, bullets, links
4. Make sure links are descriptive
5. No underline, italics, upper case. Use bold sparingly
6. Check pages thoroughly and test links

Simple structure:

A common mistake is that of basing website design on organisational structure. Prospective students do not want (or need) to know the bureaucratic set-up of a department.

A well-designed home page addresses all the department's audiences. The information structure should naturally divide these users, leading to information which meets their needs and expectations.

Keep navigation simple and consistent. Here's an example of top-level navigation:



Useful information:

CMS training server: <http://cms-training.shef.ac.uk/pilot/gui-jsp/Login.jsp>

CMS live site log-in screen: <http://cms.shef.ac.uk/pilot/gui-jsp/Login.jsp> (once CiCS have provided you with an account).

CiCS web providers' pages: <http://www.shef.ac.uk/cics/www/>. Please do look at these pages as they include **legal requirements** for web pages. The official Polopoly CMS training manual can be found at: www.shef.ac.uk/cics/cms in the downloads box.

Web marketing CMS pages: <http://www.shef.ac.uk/marcoms/cms>

Includes writing for web documentation, editorial style guide to download (Word and PDF format), FAQs and more to come – please feel free to suggest anything you would like to see on these pages.

Technical issues: CMS@shef.ac.uk

Managed by Neil Campbell n.campbell@shef.ac.uk (x.21175)

FAQs (send us questions, feedback and we'll add them in)

Style and content issues: webmarketing@shef.ac.uk

Team: Dave Stanley (manager) d.stanley@shef.ac.uk (x.21048); Alan Blackwood (web editor) a.blackwood@shef.ac.uk (x.21015); Isobel Boreham (web editor) i.boreham@shef.ac.uk (x.21011)

A-Z help:

'Downloads' boxes: When adding links to documents for a user to download, remember to use the Downloads box ('Downloads' button in templates). Make sure you indicate format and size (eg. Editorial style guide (Word, 22k), Editorial style guide (PDF, 33k)) – see also **PDF** and **Word** below.

File size: Have a look at pages from home to get an idea of how long it takes for pages to download from an external internet connection. If a page is slow, is it too long? Are your images too big?

Images: See pictures.

Naming articles: If you are re-creating pages which already exist outside the CMS (ie. your current web pages), please, if possible, give them the same name when you create them in the CMS. If it's a new page, please name it logically (ie. /applying rather than /apply12035).

PDFs: If you are saving files as PDF format to put on the web, please make sure you have no spaces in the file name. (eg. writingfortheweb.pdf, not writing for the web.pdf). Some computers won't be able to recognise or download the file if the name contains spaces.

Pictures: Keep file sizes as small as possible. For a small image: ideally 10k or under. Larger images: 20-30k. Image formats should be gifs (.gif) or jpegs (.jpg). An official style guide will be devised along with the new University corporate identity.

Publishing live: If your new pages are not publishing to the live site have you:
(a) Renamed your old pages (so they no longer show); (b) Had workflow applied to the pages (so they are awaiting approval from the web marketing team)?

Quick links: Remember you can use Quick links boxes (the button saying 'Right hand' within the template – you have to name it and choose a colour) for short cuts or relevant links within your own pages.

'See also' boxes: Remember you can use the 'Links' button in the templates to create right hand side boxes for useful links (generally external links, or links to other pages on our own website).

TOC: This means table of contents and is the way Polopoly refer to the left hand navigation menu.

Workflow: The web marketing team will apply a workflow process to some pages. This simply means that when you go to publish, the page will be put in a holding area for one of the web marketing team to check before it goes live.

Word files: If you are providing links to Word documents, make sure the file name contains no spaces. Some computers won't be able to recognise or download the file if the name contains spaces.