



The Church of England
Diocese of Ely

Editorial style guide

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Introduction

Style n. the particular mode of orthography, punctuation and design followed in a book, journal, etc. or in a printing or publishing house ... for the use of writers.

Orthography is the method of writing a language. It includes rules of spelling, hyphenation, capitalisation, word breaks, emphasis and punctuation.

This editorial guide is the house style for the Diocese of Ely and is designed to help and support us all in writing clearly, and in using grammar and punctuation accurately and consistently.

The conventions used have been chosen so that all diocesan communications have a standard and consistent appearance and tone.

The guide will be updated as and when required.

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House style

Abbreviations and acronyms

Do not use full stops in these common abbreviations: eg, am, pm, ie, or after Mr, Mrs, Prof, Dr, Revd or St (saint).

When using the abbreviation of et cetera at the end of a list of similar items, include a comma at the end of the word prior and close with a full stop (, etc.).

Acronyms should only be used having explained what the letters stand for. Do not assume your reader knows what an acronym stands for. Therefore, spell out abbreviations in full at first mention in the text, eg Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC), Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF).

There is no need to write the following in full: USA, UK, BBC, ITV, DVD, etc.

Addresses

Use open punctuation for addresses in correspondence:

Diocesan Office
Bishop Woodford House
Barton Road
Ely
Cambridgeshire CB7 4DX

NB punctuation commas should be included for clarity where addresses are linear, eg in an email footer.

Apostrophes and plurals

Apostrophes indicate a missing letter – wasn't (was not), can't (cannot), it's (it is), I'll (I will), they're (they are).

You're welcome (you are welcome, NOT your welcome)

Apostrophes are also used to indicate possession. With nouns (both singular and plural) that do not end with the letter s, add an apostrophe and s

Women's rights, Caroline's party

For possessive plurals ending in *s*, the apostrophe goes after the *s*

The bishops' mitres, in six months' time

A master's degree (for singular), masters' degrees (for plural)

Do not use apostrophes for straight plurals, eg MPs, PCCs, Boeing 747s.

With the exception of the word *one's*, possessive pronouns (*its, hers, his, theirs, yours, ours, whose*) NEVER have an apostrophe because they already show possession.

The dog wagged its tail (not *it's* tail).

The speaker whose tie has gravy on it (not *who's* tie).

Bullet points

If you are using a complete sentence to introduce a bulleted list, end it with a full stop and not a colon. Use a colon if the text is the heading of a bulleted list.

If your bullet points are full sentences, start with a capital letter and end with full stop.

If your bullet points are not full sentences, start with lower case letters and only use a full stop at the end of the final bullet point.

Capital letters

Avoid overuse of capital letters and use lower case as much as possible. Using lower case increases readability.

Names, personal titles and adjectives denoting nationality begin with a capital letter.

Use sentence case in headlines:

Government announces £15 million roofs scheme for listed church buildings

New Children's Adviser appointed in Diocese of Ely

General job titles are lower case; however, specific roles take initial capitals, eg 'Director of Ministry' but 'the directors'.

On Easter Sunday, Bishop Stephen went to church.

The congregation saw the bishop.

Do not capitalise words, eg government, council, except where it is part of a specific entity.

The Diocese of Ely is recruiting new ministers.
She hopes to be promoted within the diocese.

Use capitals for abbreviations if the words they stand for are capitalised.

MD MP PhD

Points of the compass (north, south) and regional terms should only be capitalised if they are part of a title.

Eastern Europe, Central America, the East of England, the West Country

Do not use capitals as part of a general description: south of the city, northern Scotland.

Do not capitalise the seasons.

Clergy titles; names and initials

Always use Revd or Reverend, never Rev or Rev'd.

Reverend, Right Reverend, Very Reverend, Most Reverend and Venerable, whether abbreviated or not, should ALWAYS be preceded by the definite article.

The Rt Revd Stephen Conway, Bishop of Ely

The Venerable Hugh McCurdy, Archdeacon of Huntingdon and Wisbech

The Most Revd and Rt Hon Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury

If a cleric's name or initials are unknown, he or she should be addressed as the Revd-Smith or the Revd Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms Smith. Never as the Revd Smith.

There is no universally accepted way of addressing an envelope to a married clergy couple. The CofE recommends the style 'The Revd A B and the Revd C D Smith'.

When a member of the clergy holds more than one title, eg an academic one, the ecclesiastical title traditionally takes precedence. Use according to context.

The Revd Professor A B Smith
But the title can be written Professor the Revd A B Smith.

For clerics who are also doctors use either the Revd Dr J D Smith or the Revd J D Smith (degree).

See www.churchofengland.org/contact-us/addressingtheclergy.aspx or on the Debrett's website: www.debretts.com/forms-address/professions/religion for more information. (Debrett's usefully lists how to address clergy at the beginning of a letter, on envelopes and verbally.)

The recommended social style for addressing a bishop is as follows:

Beginning of letter	Dear Bishop
Envelope	The Rt Revd the Bishop of <i>blank</i> or The Rt Reverend the Bishop of <i>blank</i>
Verbal address	Bishop (or My Lord Bishop)
Description in conversation	The Bishop of <i>blank</i>

The recommended social style for addressing a canon is as follows:

Beginning of letter	Dear Canon or Dear Canon Smith
Envelope	The Revd Canon John Smith
Verbal address	Canon or Canon Smith
Description in conversation	The Canon or Canon Smith

Further guidance on how to address the clergy can be found in Crockford's Clerical Directory (a copy is kept in reception).

Full stops are not used after initials, eg Mr J P Jones (space between each initial).

There should not be a comma between a name and an honorarium, eg Sir Norman Wisdom OBE.

When alphabetical lists of names are used, follow strict alphabetical order, eg Mac before Mc.

Colon and semi colon

In text, use a colon before a list. It is a mark of expectation that there is more to come.

There are three kinds of lies: lies, damned lies, and statistics. (Benjamin Disraeli)

A semi colon is a stronger break than a comma. Use between independent clauses that are too closely related to be written as separate sentences.

It is with narrow-souled people as with narrow-necked bottles; the less they have in them, the more noise they make in pouring out. (Alexander Pope)

Commas

Use a comma to separate, introduce or enclose. Commas help create a pause where words might otherwise be misunderstood.

Use a comma to distinguish between the elements of a series of three or more words, phrases or clauses.

The family meal was soup, beans on toast, and ice cream.

'We'll be friends forever, won't we, Pooh?' asked Piglet. 'Even longer,' Pooh answered. (A A Milne)

Dashes and hyphens

Dashes are used for pauses, emphasis or sudden interruptions. Hyphens join words. A hyphen (-) is half the length of a dash (–).

pre-Christmas up-to-date twenty-first century re-imagining

It takes two to speak the truth – one to speak, and the other to hear. (Thoreau)

Use a hyphen to form compound adjectives, eg the three-year rolling budget.

The third-party administrator went carefully through all the books.

Adverbs that end in 'ly' do not use hyphens, eg slowly moving train.

The following should NOT be hyphenated or written as separate words:

online email website ongoing foodbank fundraising

Use a hyphen to indicate a number span, eg Lk 10.1-25. Use a dash to indicate a time span.

Use a dash for emphasis, to indicate an abrupt change or interruption, or with explanatory phrases or words (in place of commas or parentheses).

The rule is, jam tomorrow and jam yesterday – but never jam today. (Lewis Carroll)

However, avoid routinely using the dash in place of commas. Overuse loses the effectiveness of this punctuation mark.

Dates (see also numbers)

Dates are expressed as (day) date/month/year.

1 July 2012 or Tuesday 1 July 2012

Use Friday 16 January or 21 January and not 16th or 21st January.

Only use th or st in dates when it is needed for the clarity of a sentence.

Payment is expected by the 12th of each month.

Use 1890s, 1970s and not 1890's, 1970's.

Diocese of Ely

The Diocese of Ely is the official name of the diocese and should not be used without the definite article unless used as a heading. Ely Diocese should always have initial capitals.

When referring to the diocese generally in text, use lower case.

The diocese should always be referred to as singular: is, has, etc.

Email and web addresses

Always write email and web addresses in lower case unless the address HAS to have an upper case character for it to be read.

sarah.williams@elydiocese.org www.elydiocese.org

You may not need to include *http://* at the beginning if the address contains *www*.

Do include a full stop if the web or email address appears at the end of a sentence.

Full stop and ellipsis

Use only a single space after a full stop between sentences.

Use ellipses to indicate an omission. Use three spaced stops with single space before and after.

Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and talking with each other about all these things that had happened.

Now on that same day two of them were ... talking with each other about all these things that had happened. (Lk 24.13-14)

Do not use full stop to close a pull-out quote or in headings.

Headings

Headings, headlines and subheadings take an initial cap only and should use sentence case. Do not use block capital letters for headings or subheadings.

Use active rather than passive voice for headlines.

Bishop of Ely signs up for mission to Mars.

Italics

Italics should only be used where necessary in distinguishing text within a paragraph.

Use italics for book titles. Use single quotes for chapter and article titles. The books or journals in which they appear should be in italics.

Measurements

Avoid leaving a space between a number and a unit of measurement.

20km NOT 20 km

15cm NOT 15 cm

Numbers and numerical ranges

Numbers up to and including ten should be written in full. Numbers 11 up to 999,999 should be written in figures.

Spell out numbers at the beginning of a sentence.

Three people chose Cadbury's Creme Eggs.

Sixty-four students applied for visas.

Also when representing round numbers of indefinite expression.

several thousand people in her eighties

Spell out million, billion. Use figures when working with currency.

The Bishop of Ely has raised £20 million for the diocesan mission fund.

When comparing two figures, spell it out in full, eg between £4 million and £13 million.

In body text, commas should be inserted into numbers over one thousand.

1,428 500,000

If working with a word-based description AND using a numerical range, use from and to

Children aged from 13 to 18.

If there are two numbers in a sentence, one below and one above ten, use figures for both.

Use hyphen when indicating ages adjectively, eg

My daughter is two years old.
My two-year old daughter.

Figures and captions

Use Figure 1, Figure 2.1 and not Figure One. Use sentence case for captions.

Fractions should be written without a hyphen, eg two thirds. But hyphenate if used adjectively, eg a two-thirds majority.

Percentages within body text should be spelled out as two words eg five per cent, 28 per cent. Use % sign in tables or diagrams.

Telephone numbers should be written

01353 652728 +44 (0)1353 652728

Mobile numbers use the format 07xxx xxxxxx.

Times (see also **dates**) should be expressed in the 12-hour clock. Use closed up dash (not hyphen) when expressing a timeframe.

Lunch will be served at 12.45pm.
The seminar will run from 7.30pm–9.00pm.

Bible references

The style of Bible references vary considerably across publishing houses. The diocesan convention is Luke 12.1-10 or Lk 12.1-10.

Obliques

Do not insert spaces between words when using obliques.

Parentheses

Parentheses signal a 'by the way' to the reader (non-essential information). Use curved brackets () in body text; do not use square brackets [].

Quotation/speech marks

Use single quotation marks for direct quotes or speech. Use double quotation marks to indicate a quote within a quote.

A comma should be inserted to introduce a quotation.

He looked for a moment at Elizabeth, till catching her eye, he withdrew his own and coldly said, 'She is tolerable; but not handsome enough to tempt me.'
(Jane Austen)

Use the full stop within the quotation marks if the quotation is a complete sentence.

A full stop is used outside the quotation mark if the quote is only part of a sentence.

The scientists believed that there was a real need 'to get out of the office and into the field'.

The closing of speech marks indicates the end of direct speech. If a quotation runs to a second paragraph, OMIT the closing marks at the end of the first paragraph. Start the second paragraph with opening speech marks.

Appendix A

Writing in plain English

Plain English is about clear communications. It means writing so the reader understands what you are saying the first time they read it. Writing in plain English is not about 'dumbing down' nor does it mean having to change the meaning of the message. It is about writing so that you can be understood.

Writing in plain English means you keep sentences short, avoid jargon and use an active voice.

According to the Plain English Campaign, active sentences are crisp and professional; passive sentences are stuffy and bureaucratic.

There are three main parts to every sentence:

- the doer (the person, group or thing doing the action)
- a verb (the action itself)
- an object (the person, group or thing that the action is done to).

To make a sentence active you need to:

- put the doer (the person, group or thing doing the action) before the verb (the action)
- use 'I', 'you' and 'we'
- reduce the number of redundant or wasteful words
- avoid the verb 'to be'.

An active sentence reads as follows: 'Paul (doer) wrote (verb) the report (object).'

In passive sentences, the order is different: object, verb, doer. So the sentence would read, 'The report was written by Paul.'

More information is available from the Plain English Campaign (www.plainenglish.co.uk).

'It is more fun to talk with someone who doesn't use long, difficult words but rather short, easy words like, "What about lunch?"' (A A Milne)

Appendix B

Confused and abused words

The difference between the right word and the almost right word is the difference between lightning and the lightning bug. (Mark Twain)

The words below can sometimes create confusion in writing. They are offered here for easy clarification. Others may be added in due course.

Accept/except

'Accept' is a verb.

I accept this award on behalf of the whole cast and crew.

'Except' is used as a preposition, that is, a word which precedes a noun (or pronoun) to show the noun's (or the pronoun's) relationship to another word in a sentence.

I can resist everything except temptation. (Oscar Wilde)

Advice/advise

'Advice' is a noun.

Please accept my advice.

'Advise' is the verb.

Please advise me on this problem.

Use adviser rather than advisor when referring to a job role.

Affect/effect

'Affect' is almost always used as a verb

That wine affected me badly.

'Effect' can be used as a noun

That wine had a bad effect on me.

It can also be used as a verb when it means to bring something about, eg to effect a reconciliation.

Alternately/alternatively

'Alternately' means 'one after the other'.

'When you walk you use alternate feet.

'Alternatively' means 'in the alternative' where someone has a choice between two possibilities.

You can have soup or, alternatively, you can have a prawn cocktail.

Among/between

'Among' is used when there are more than two people. You would share your lottery winnings among four children, but between them if you had two.

Ante/anti

These are both prefixes. 'Ante' means before, as in 'ante-natal.' 'Anti' means against, as in 'anti-smoking'.

Appraise/apprise

'Appraise' means to evaluate or assess. 'Apprise' means to inform or tell.

You can appraise a candidate for a job by interviewing them, or a racehorse from his appearance in the paddock.

Can/may

'Can' means the ability or power to do something; 'may' means permission to do it.

Complement/compliment

'Complement' means a complete amount or number, eg a full complement of staff. 'To compliment' someone is to praise them. Free tickets are 'complimentary ones'.

Council/counsel

'A council' is a noun, eg Cambridge City Council of which a member is a councillor.

'Counsel' may be used as a verb or a noun. 'To counsel someone' is to give them advice. When used as a noun it means either advice or a person (counsellor).

Discreet/discrete

'Discreet' is used to describe behaviour that is prudent or respectful of propriety. 'Discrete' means separate, distinct or individual.

Due to/because of

'Due to' modifies or describes nouns.

John's success is due to his determination.

'Because of' modifies verbs.

John resigned because of poor health.

Enquire/inquire

The traditional difference between these two verbs is that 'enquire' is used in the general sense of 'to ask', while 'inquire' is reserved for uses meaning 'make a formal investigation'. A government investigation is always an inquiry.

Ensure/insure

'To ensure' is to make sure. 'To insure' something is to take out an insurance policy.

Formally/formerly

'Formally' is the opposite of informally. 'Formerly' means previously.

Less/fewer

'Less' is used for degree, quantity or extent; 'fewer' is used for number. Use 'fewer' when referring to individual numbers or units. Use 'less' in sentences involving periods of time, sums of money or measures of distance and weight.

Automation requires more machines and fewer people.
He ran the mile in less than four minutes.

Lay/lie

'To lay' is to put something or someone down. 'To lie' is to recline.

Lay the package on the table.
Lie on your exercise mat.

Mitigate/militate

'Mitigate' means to soften or modify the effects of something. 'Militate' (with 'against') presents a solid argument against something or offers a reason not to take a course of action.

Practice/practise

'Practice' is the noun.

Some practice would help you improve.

'Practise' is the verb.

You must practise if you wish to improve.

Precipitate/precipitous

'Precipitate' means hasty and ill considered, while 'precipitous' means steep or vertiginous.

Principal/principle

'Principal' can be used as both a noun and an adjective. When used as a noun, it means the head of something. When used as an adjective, it means chief or main. 'Principle' is always used as a noun meaning rule or standard.

Stationary/stationery

'Stationary' is an adjective that means fixed in one place. 'Stationery' refers to pens, paper, envelopes, etc.

Who/whom

An easy way to decide which of these words to use is to substitute a personal pronoun in place of the word. So if he, she or they would fit, use 'who'. If him, her or them would fit, use 'whom'.

Appendix C – Quick guide to addressing clergy in correspondence

The Revd F Darcy
The Vicarage
Church Lane
Ely CB2 2DU

Dear Mr Darcy

I would like to invite you to a buffet lunch at Pemberley, organised by the Archdeacon of Waterside, the Ven Elizabeth Bennet.

The lunch will also be attended by Canon William Collins.

Elizabeth and William hope that you will be able to join them and look forward to hearing from you.

NB the convention for the diocese is to use the shortened versions 'Revd' and 'Ven', no full point.

If you do not know a person's initial, in the address line write 'The Revd Mr Darcy' or 'The Revd-Darcy', do not use 'The Revd Darcy'.

When referring in text to 'the Revd Bennet', the definite article 'the' is always lower case.

	Address line	Salutation	In text, first mention	In text, thereafter
Reverend	The Revd F Darcy	Dear Mr Darcy	organised by the Revd E Bennet	First name can be used
Canon	The Revd Canon F Darcy	Dear Canon Darcy	organised by Canon Bennet	First name can be used
Archdeacon	The Venerable the Archdeacon of X (The Venerable F Darcy if an archdeacon emeritus)	Dear Archdeacon (or more formally, Mr/Madam Archdeacon)	organised by the Archdeacon of X	Archdeacon
Deans and Provosts	The Very Revd the Dean/Provost of X	Dear Dean/Provost (or more formally, Mr Dean/Provost)	organised by the Dean/Provost of X	the Dean
Bishops, Diocesan and Suffragan	The Right Revd the Bishop of X, or The Right Revd the Lord Bishop of X	Dear Bishop (or more formally, My Lord)	organised by the Bishop of X	the Bishop
Assistant and Retired Bishops	The Right Revd F Darcy	Dear Bishop	organised by Bishop Bennet	the Bishop
Archbishops	The Most Revd the Lord Archbishop of X	Dear Archbishop (or more formally, Your Grace)	organised by the Archbishop of X	the Archbishop
Revd Canon Dr or Revd Canon Professor	The Revd Canon F Darcy or The Revd Dr/Professor F Darcy	Dear Canon Darcy or Dear Dr/Professor Darcy	organised by Canon Darcy or organised by Dr/Professor Darcy	First name can be used