



## **APM style guide**

These guidelines provide a clear and consistent set of rules for anyone creating copy on behalf APM (blogs, publications, reports etc.). Normal grammar and punctuation rules apply unless otherwise stated. Any queries should go to the marketing department.

## **A**

### **Abbreviations**

No full points or spaces between initials e.g. APM. Spell out on first mention e.g. Specific Interest Group (SIG), SIG thereafter.

Association for Project Management can be abbreviated as 'APM' (not the APM) or 'association',

Abbreviate measurements, e.g. ha (not hectares); m (not metres) and km, but write out million when not used with currency.

*Exceptions:* Do not abbreviate *APM Body of Knowledge* e.g. Body of Knowledge or BoK. Spell out project manager (lower case) not PM

### **Acronyms**

Cap up e.g. SIG, PRAM, PMP. Explain acronyms in the first instance, then abbreviate.

**Agile** - lower case unless describing a product, *see Capitals*

## **B**

### **Bullet points**

Square bullets – see APM Brand guidelines

See *Lists* for rules on using bullet points

**Business-as-usual** – hyphenated

## **C**

### **Capitals**

The general rule is use lower case; however, as with any aspect of style it is almost impossible to be entirely consistent. Here are the main principles:

*Job titles* – e.g. APM president, chairman, board member, project/programme/portfolio manager; company director, CEO (as well-known), but chief operating officer (as less well-known)

*Project management terminology* – eg agile, risk management, project management plan (PMP)

*Groups* – initial cap, eg APM North West branch, use lower case for generic use APM branch.

*Product names* – initial caps eg The APM Project Management Qualification. Don't capitalise names, unless trademarked and spelt out with capitals e.g. MSP©, PRINCE2®

**Continual improvement** – preferred to continuous improvement

## G

### Geographical

south-west London, BUT the West End

the South East, BUT north-east England

south-east Asia

## I

### *Italics*

Titles of books, journals, reports, etc. *APM Body of Knowledge 6<sup>th</sup> edition*

## L

**Lessons learned** – preferred to lessons learnt

**Life cycle** – two words

### Lists

Use bullet points with capitals if they are not directly following on from text, i.e. standalone bullets.

*For example:*

The life cycle describes the broad flow of the project.

- The concept phase.
- The definition phase.
- The development phase.
- Handover and closure.

However, if bullets are following on from a sentence, after a colon or semi colon, use lower case letters at the start of each bullet point (apart from when it's a question); only add a full stop after the last one.

*For example:*

During handover the project team will:

- hand over all the deliverables;
- create operating procedures;
- hand over formal ownership of products.

M

**Members** – cap up Associate member, Fellows of APM

N

**Numbers**

One to nine written out in full, 10 upwards in digits

£316bn and £5m abbreviated, but £20 trillion written out

Write out per cent and use figures: 8 per cent and 20 per cent; use the % symbol only in pull-out stats, but not in pull quotes

Dates: 2008-2015, 26 January 2016 (no commas); 21<sup>st</sup> century.

P

**Paragraphs**

New paragraphs should be separated by a line space and shouldn't be indented.

Paragraphs under a heading should be marked full out to the margin.

**Project professional** – generic term used to describe people who consider their career to be in project management. Preferred to 'project practitioner'.

**Punctuation**

Minimal punctuation is recommended in printed text. Omit the 'Oxford' comma in 'apples, pears and mangoes' (i.e. not apples, pears, and mangoes).

Exclamation marks should not be used, unless quoting from another source.

Punctuation marks should be omitted at the end of headings and subheadings. Use three points to indicate an ellipsis (...)

Q

**Quotes**

"Double quote marks for speech"

'Single quote marks for things that are not direct quotes'

(News) He said: “

(Features) He says: “

No full stop at the end of a pull quote

## **R**

### **References**

Use the (author, date) Harvard system e.g. Bloggs, J. (2004) *The Management of Projects*, APM Publishing, Princes Risborough.

## **S**

### **Spelling**

UK English should be used as opposed to US English.

For verbs ending in 'ise' or 'ize', the 'ise' is always preferred. E.g. supervise, organise, recognise.

The '&' symbol should not be used, except if already existing in a company name.

### **Style**

Keep sentences short.

Avoid long words; look to simplify where possible e.g. utilise (use), initial (first)

Use third person e.g. 'managers' in preference to 'we'

## **T**

### **Tone**

Write in active voice, avoiding use of first person.

## **W**

### **Websites**

Use apm.org.uk

Use a full stop after websites within the body of the text