# UW

# Office of Research Style Guide

**Purpose**

This Style Guide provides guidance for all Office of Research writers for all communication mediums: publications, emails and writing for the web. It contains:

* A content style guide to show how the copy and text are represented.
* A visual style guide and templates for creating and updating webpages (coming soon).
* A “cheat sheet” for easy access to most often used style guide contents.

Please use it as a reference when you are writing for the Office of Research.

**Benefits**

A major benefit to this guide is that it will support the writing of clear and consistent content across teams and channels. Having all guidance in one place will increase efficiencies and save staff time.

**Description**

This is an OR writers’ reference guide to use with all the content you publish. The Guide is divided by topic based on the content type. This document will contain style guidance for:

* Resource Documentation
* Voice and Tone
* Content Guidelines
* Web Elements and Guidelines
* Appendices
  + Appendix A: Cheat Sheet
  + Appendix B: Commonly Used Acronyms and Abbreviations
  + Appendix C: Terminology for Schools and Colleges
  + Appendix D: Frequently Used Content Types
  + Appendix E. Version Table

**Resource Documentation**

| **Item** | **Description** |
| --- | --- |
| **Author** | Linda Gamman |
| **Date** | 10/14/19 |
| **Scope** | Office of Research publications and web pages |
| **Owner(s)** | Office of Research |
| **Audience, users** | Communication Team, all OR writers and publishers |
| **Dictionary** | *Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, 11th edition* |
| **Style manual** | *The Chicago Manual of Style, Sixteenth Edition (*[*http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org*](http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org)  Styles sheets: p. 903, 2.52, fig. 2.3  Cleaning up electronic files: 2.77  Proofreading: 2.107-2115, 2.133 |
| **Other resources** | *Office of Research Annual Report:* Definitions of proposals, awards, expenditures, international support, centers or institutes, proposal and award data, clinical trial data, and gift funds are found in the body of the OR annual report and are included within this guide. |
| **Location and archiving** | Office of Research Intranet (post each version to new document) |
| **Updating and version control** | Approval by Director of Strategic Initiatives and Communication with input from OR Communication Team |

# Voice and Tone

The Office of Research has four units with different missions and business needs. Because of this, we understand the different voice and tone that may be required for our various business activities and will not make any requirements for a universal voice and tone. However, we do ask that you discuss voice and tone within your own units’ communication strategies.

**Voice** is consistent and represents the way your unit communicates your business practices to your partners and stakeholders. It also applies for those of us writing for others – it is very important to use a consistent voice to those we write for. Our voice doesn’t change much from day to day, but our tone changes all the time. This also applies for our unit web pages for which we are developing content and updating content. Write in an active voice.

**Tone** can vary depending on messaging, and often multiple “reads” to make sure the tone fits the message. OR’s tone is usually formal, but that should be adjusted appropriately and there are multiple considerations. Is the audience under a tight deadline and need the information quickly? Are they confused and seeking our help? Are they curious about an announcement? Once you have an idea of their emotional state, you can adjust your tone accordingly.

## 

## Content Guidelines

OR follows many of the posted UW brand guidelines, see [UW Brand Style and Punctuation Guidelines](http://www.washington.edu/brand/editorial-elements/style-and-punctuation/). For items specific to OR see our “Cheat Sheet” in the appendix of this guide. Please print and access as you write.

**Terminology**

Use the same naming as on the Office of Research Annual Report, which is audited, approved, institutional data (found in data cube / EDW). Please see the list of terms for schools and colleges as well as sponsors in the appendix of this guide.

**Permissions/credits/version control**

Check all permissions and labels for images (unless using free stock, UW Marketing, UW Today or OR). Use version control for all policies, procedures or guidance documents (e.g. “Last update: September 18, 2016”).

# Web Elements and Guidelines

All published content is supported by several smaller pieces. This section lays out our style in regards to web elements.

### Alt-text (REQUIRED)

Alt-text is a way to label images, and it's especially important for people who can’t see the images on our website. Alt text should describe the image in a brief sentence or two. For more on how and why we use alt text, read the [UW Accessibility](http://www.washington.edu/accessibility/checklist/) section.

### Buttons

Buttons should always contain actions. The language should be clear and concise. Capitalize every word, including articles. It’s OK to use an ampersand in button copy. Standard website buttons include:

* Log In
* Sign Up Free
* Subscribe
* Email Us

### Checkboxes

Use sentence case for checkboxes.

### Drop-down menus

Use title case for menu names and sentence case for menu items.

**Forms**

* Form titles should clearly and quickly explain the purpose of the form.
* Use title case for form titles and sentence case for form fields. Keep forms as short as possible.
* Only request information that we need and intend to use. Don’t ask for information that could be considered private or personal, including gender. If you need to ask for gender, provide a field the user can fill in on their own, not a drop-down menu.

### Headings and subheadings

* Headings and subheadings organize content for readers. Be generous and descriptive.
* Headings (H1) give people a taste of what they’re about to read. Use them for page and blog titles only.
* Use Heading (H2) as the first content heading. Subheadings (H3, H4, etc.) break articles into smaller, more specific sections. They give readers avenues into your content and make it easier to scan content.
* Headings and subheadings should be organized in a hierarchy, with heading first, followed by subheadings in order. (An H3 will nestle under H2, and on down.)
* Include the most relevant keywords in your headings and subheadings, and make sure you cover the main point of the content.
* Use title case, unless the heading is a punctuated sentence. If the heading is a punctuated sentence, use sentence case. Use sentence case for subheadings regardless of end punctuation.

### Links

* Provide a link whenever you’re referring to something on an external website. Use links to point users to relevant content and trusted external resources.
* Don’t include preceding articles (a, an, the, our) when you link text. For example:
  + Yes: Read the [automation guide](http://styleguide.mailchimp.com/web-elements/) for details.
  + No: Read [the automation guide](http://styleguide.mailchimp.com/web-elements/) for details.
* If a link comes at the end of a sentence or before a comma, don’t link the punctuation mark.
* Link relevant words in a sentence. Don’t say things like “Click here!” or “Click for more information” or “Read this.” Write the sentence as you normally would, and link relevant keywords.
* Links should look different than regular copy, strong text, or emphasis text. They should have a hover state that communicates they’re interactive and should have a distinctly active and visited state. When setting the hover state of links, be sure to include focus state as well, to help readers using assistive technologies and touch devices.

### Lists

* Use lists to present steps, groups, or sets of information. Give context for the list with a brief introduction. Number lists when the order is important, like when you’re describing steps of a process. Don’t use numbers when the list’s order doesn’t matter.
* If one of the list items is a complete sentence, use proper punctuation and capitalization on all of the items. If list items are not complete sentences, don’t use punctuation, but do capitalize the first word of each item.

### Navigation

* Use title case for main or global navigation. Use sentence case for sub-navigation.
* Navigation links should be clear and concise.
* For all content for the MyResearch Project Lifecycle/Tier 2 pages use the following order for resources:
  + Tools/Resources
  + Compliance
  + Training
  + Announcements
  + FAQs

### Related articles

Sometimes a long piece of copy lends itself to a list of related links at the end. Don’t go overboard—four is usually plenty.

**Accessibility**

Review the SharePoint document for reference: [Accessibility for Content Editors Using WordPress](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1mm24w6Cc2CHj-G4U7VGB74KZFIUzcsbggm6LpQUM2Mk/edit#heading=h.jdlk7vxfvw4e)

**Appendix A: Cheat Sheet**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Description** | **Usage** | **Reference (if applicable)/Notes** |
| Dates | * FY 2012 (space after FY and 2012) * Use cardinal, not ordinal, numbers: April 1*, not* April 1st*;* July 4*, not* July 4th * 2016-2017 (no space) * Use a comma before and after the year if placing a full date (month + day + year) within a sentence: The board met on September 25, 2014, to review the report. | UW Fiscal year is July 1 to June 30  <http://www.washington.edu/brand/editorial-elements/style-and-punctuation> |
| Capitalization: Buildings | Capitalize places, buildings and monuments such as Suzzallo Library, Mary Gates Hall, the Ave, the Quad, University Bridge, etc. | http://www.washington.edu/brand/editorial-elements/style-and-punctuation |
| Capitalization: Products | Capitalize the proper names of OR products, features, pages, and tools.   * MyResearch * Zipline * Hoverboard * SAGE |  |
| Capitalization: Titles | * Don’t capitalize provost, dean, president, etc. unless it is preceding the name * Use AP Style (capped only before names): Vice Provost Lidstrom * Don’t capitalize federal or non-federal (unless used in a heading) | <http://www.washington.edu/brand/editorial-elements/style-and-punctuation> |
| General | Add one space only after each period. |  |
| Office of Research Legal Title | Our company's legal entity name is the "University of Washington Office of Research." Use "University of Washington Office of Research" only when writing legal documents or contracts. Otherwise, use "OR” or “Office of Research” |  |
| Web and File Extensions | * When referring generally to a file extension type, use all uppercase without a period. Add a lowercase “s” to make plural: GIF, PDF, HTML, JPGs * When referring to a specific file, the filename should be lowercase: orstyleguide.gif * Capitalize the names of websites and web publications. Don’t italicize * Avoid spelling out URLs, but when you need to, leave off the http://www. |  |
| Numerals/Dollars | * $1.53M (no .00 – round up) or $1.53B (no space) * Spell out *zero* through *nine* |  |
| Percentages | * In-text, use figures and write percent rather than using the % sign: 45 percent of students agree with the initiative * In charts, graphs and more visual mediums, social media or communications where space is limited, the percent sign is permissible: *33% of Huskies are first-generation college students* * The percent takes a singular verb when standing alone or when a singular word follows an of construction: *The professor said 70 percent was a passing grade*. It takes a plural verb when a plural word follows an of construction: *He said 50 percent of the attendees were female* |  |
| Telephone Numbers | * Use periods between numbers (no parentheses or dashes): 555.867.5309 | Use periods between numbers (no parentheses or dashes) |
| Terminology: Schools and Colleges and Sponsors | * Use the same naming as on the Office of Research Annual Report, which is audited, approved, institutional data (found in data cube / EDW). | See Appendix for List |
| Time | * Use numerals and am or pm without a space. * Don’t use minutes for on-the-hour time: 7am, 7:30pm * Use a hyphen between times to indicate a time period 7am-10:30pm * Specify time zones when writing about an event with partners in other time zones (we default in Seattle to PT) |  |
| Titles and Awards | * Ph.D., MS, BA or BS * 2nd reference: use the last name only * Section heads: Initial-cap all words in sections heads * Job titles in photo captions: Use initial caps | The 2010 Nobel Prize in Medicine, a Nobel Prize winner, a Nobel Peace Prize, etc. |

**Appendix B: Commonly Used Acronyms and Abbreviations (first instance spell out)**

**General**

Department of Defense DOD

Department of Education DOEd

Department of Energy DOE

Environmental Health and Safety EH&S

Executive Committee ExCom

Frequently asked questions FAQs

Grant & Contract Accounting GCA

Grants Information Memorandum GIM

(Write out GIM with space between GIM # and full title: GIM 23 Sponsored Research Costing Policy)

Human Subjects Division HSD

Improving Service to Advance Research iSTAR

Management Accounting and Analysis MAA

National Science Foundation NSF

National Institutes of Health NIH

National Institute of Standards and NIST

Technology

Office of Animal Welfare OAW

Office of Research OR

Office of Research Central ORC

Office of Sponsored Programs OSP

Office of Research Information Services ORIS

Organized Research Units ORUs

Post Award Fiscal Compliance PAFC

Principal Investigator (s) PI and PIs

Royalty Research Fund RRF

Science, Technology, Engineering, STEM

and Mathematics

Sponsored Projects Administration & SPAERC

Electronic Research Compliance

System to Administer Grants Electronically SAGE

University of Washington UW

UW Bothell UWB

UW Tacoma UWT

Washington State Department of Social DSHS

And Health Services

**Appendix C: Terminology for Schools and Colleges**

Use the same naming as on the Office of Research Annual Report, which is audited, approved, institutional data (found in data cube / EDW):

|  |
| --- |
| **College of Arts and Sciences** |
| American Indian Studies |
| Anthropology |
| Applied Mathematics |
| Art |
| Asian Languages and Literature |
| Astronomy |
| Biology |
| Burke Museum |
| Center for Humanities |
| Center for Statistics and the Social Sciences |
| Center for Studies in Demography and Ecology |
| Chemistry |
| Classics |
| Comparative Literature |
| English |
| French and Italian |
| Geography |
| History |
| Institute for Learning and Brain Sciences |
| Institute for Nuclear Theory |
| International Studies |
| Language Learning Center |
| Law, Societies, and Justice Program |
| Linguistics |
| Mathematics |
| Near East |
| Philosophy |
| Physics |
| Political Science |
| Psychology |
| Public Performing Arts |
| Sociology |
| Speech and Hearing Sciences |
| Statistics |
| Women's Center |
| **College of Built Environments** |
| Dean's Office |
| Architecture |
| Construction Management |
| Landscape Architecture |
| Urban Design and Planning |
| **College of Education** |
| Coeducational Research |
| Department of Education |
| Experimental Education Unit |
| **College of Engineering** |
| Dean's Office |
| Aeronautics and Astronautics |
| Bioengineering |
| Chemical Engineering |
| Civil and Environmental Engineering |
| Computer Science and Engineering |
| Electrical Engineering |
| Human Centered Design and Engineering |
| Industrial Engineering Program |
| Materials Science and Engineering |
| Mechanical Engineering |
| Washington State Transportation Center |
| **College of the Environment** |
| Dean's Office |
| Aquatic and Fishery Sciences |
| Atmospheric Science |
| College of the Environment Initiatives |
| Environmental and Forest Sciences |
| Friday Harbor Laboratories |
| Joint Institute for the Study of the Atmosphere and Ocean |
| Marine and Environmental Affairs |
| Oceanography |
| Washington Sea Grant |
| **CoMotion** |
| CoMotion |
| **Dean of Libraries** |
| Dean of Libraries |
| **Educational Outreach** |
| UW Educational Outreach Academic Programs Program Management |
| **Evans School of Public Policy & Governance** |
| Evans School of Public Policy & Governance |
| **Foster Business School** |
| Global Business Center |
| Leadership Center |
| **Graduate School** |
| Dean's Office |
| Fellowships |
| Molecular and Cellular Biology |
| Neurobiology and Behavior |
| UW Press |
| **Health Sciences Administration** |
| Alcohol and Drug Abuse Institute |
| Center on Human Development and Disability Administration |
| Environmental Health and Safety |
| Regional Primate Center |
| **Medical Centers** |
| General Services |
| **Office of Minority Affairs & Diversity** |
| Office of Minority Affairs & Diversity |
| Vice President for Minority Affairs |
| **Office of Research** |
| Applied Physics Laboratory |
| Office Of Research |
| **Office of the Provost** |
| Office of Global Affairs |
| **School of Dentistry** |
| Dean's Office |
| Dental Clinic |
| Endodontics |
| Oral Health Sciences |
| Orthodontics |
| Pediatric Dentistry |
| Periodontics |
| Restorative Dentistry |
| **School of Law** |
| Law |
| **School of Medicine** |
| Dean's Office |
| Anesthesiology and Pain Medicine |
| Biochemistry |
| Bioengineering |
| Bioethics and Humanities |
| Biological Structure |
| Biomedical Informatics and Medical Education |
| Comparative Medicine |
| Family Medicine |
| Genome Sciences |
| Global Health |
| Immunology |
| Laboratory Medicine |
| Medicine |
| Microbiology |
| Neurological Surgery |
| Neurology |
| Obstetrics and Gynecology |
| Ophthalmology |
| Orthopaedics and Sports Medicine |
| Otolaryngology |
| Pathology |
| Pediatrics |
| Pharmacology |
| Physiology and Biophysics |
| Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences |
| Radiation Oncology |
| Radiology |
| Rehabilitation Medicine |
| Surgery |
| Urology |
| **School of Nursing** |
| Biobehavioral Nursing and Health Systems |
| Family and Child Nursing |
| Psychosocial and Community Health |
| **School of Pharmacy** |
| Department of Pharmacy |
| Medicinal Chemistry |
| Pharmaceutics |
| **School of Public Health** |
| Biostatistics |
| Environmental and Occupational Health |
| Epidemiology |
| Global Health |
| Health Services Main |
| **School of Social Work** |
| School of Social Work |
| **The Information School** |
| The Information School |
| The Information School Research |
| **Undergraduate Academic Affairs** |
| Undergraduate Academic Affairs |
| **UW Bothell** |
| UW Bothell |
| **UW Student Life** |
| Counseling Center |
| **UW Tacoma** |
| Division of Sciences and Mathematics |
| UW Tacoma |
| **Vice President for Development** |
| Development and Alumni Relations |

**Appendix D: Frequently Used Content Types**

# Content Types

Content in OR takes many forms. Here’s a rundown of the types of content we most often write, the functions they serve, and the teams that handle them.

## Short

### Error or failure message

What: Short message that alerts the user to a problem with an application

Length: 20-75 words

Owner: Product

Avenue: MailChimp, MRAM, Marketo

Example:

## Medium

### Compliance announcement

What: A message warning users that an item within compliance has been updated

Length: 10-500 words

Owner: Compliance

Avenue: WordPress

Example:

### Job listing

What: Short description of company, role, and candidate qualifications

Length: 75-100 words

Owner: Office/Unit

Avenue:

Example:

### Promotional website copy

What: Messaging that promotes products to users and potential users

Length: 10-1,000 words

Owner: Office/Unit

Avenue:

Example:

### Video tutorial

What: Short videos that provide users with step-by-step guidance

Length: 1-2 minutes

Owner: Office/Unit

Avenue:

Example:

## 

## Long

### Announcement Post

What: Informative articles about OR users, features, and announcements

Length: 400-800 words

Owner: Office/Unit

Avenue:

Example:

### Email newsletter

What: Email campaigns that market our products and inform or empower our users

Length: 200-1000 words

Owner: Office/Unit

Avenue: WordPress, MRAM

Example:

### Help document

What: Easily digestible content that walks users through a process or a problem

Length: 300-1,000 words

Owner: Office/Unit

Avenue: PDF

Example:

### Legal content

What: Policies that explain how we protect user privacy and handle specific types of research

Length: 1,000-4,000 words

Owner: Office/Unit

Avenue:

Example:

### Press release

What: Quick, informative announcements that we send to UW Marketing.

Length: 300-500 words

Owner: Office/Unit

Avenue: Microsoft Outlook (email)

Example:

**Appendix E: Version Table**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Version | Date | Author | Description |
| V0.1 | 9/12/2016 | L Gamman | Draft |

1. Style guide: Author: OR, includes direction on style, language,

3. Design booklet: Author: ORIS, describes how to input info into system, use layouts, theme and modules, direction on accessibility.

[Research Website Design & Job Aid Booklet](https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B46arljNPEusN0FvODBfZVZiejA/view)