

Style guide

Our house style and A-Z guide

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The Queen Mary boilerplate

At Queen Mary University of London, we believe that a diversity of ideas helps us achieve the previously unthinkable.

Throughout our history, we've fostered social justice and improved lives through academic excellence. And we continue to live and breathe this spirit today, not because it's simply 'the right thing to do' but for what it helps us achieve and the intellectual brilliance it delivers.

Our reformer heritage informs our conviction that great ideas can and should come from anywhere. It's an approach that has brought results across the globe, from the communities of East London to the favelas of Rio de Janeiro.

We continue to embrace diversity of thought and opinion in everything we do, in the belief that when views collide, disciplines interact, and perspectives intersect, truly original thought takes form.



Introduction

Capitalisation, naming conventions, accessibility and, of course, acronyms – there’s a lot to consider when writing for Queen Mary. Writing with one voice is a vital part of brand consistency, and this guide has been put together to cover (hopefully) all the main topics, areas and questions that come up, as well as the finer details.

If our tone of voice guide covers the ‘how’ of copywriting, then this house style guide is designed to cover the ‘what’. It can be used alongside our tone of voice guide, but it’s also a useful standalone tool for when you need to look up something specific.

You will find the basic rules covered here, as well as detailed guidance on a range of topics that our work encompasses, such as writing inclusively and with web accessibility in mind.



Inclusion and diversity

We recognise that language around many of the protected characteristics is personal and ever-evolving and so we will be sensitive to these changes and update this advice on an ongoing basis. This guidance is structured in a way that you can navigate terminology and style based on specific characteristics.

1 Race

Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) or Black and Minority Ethnic (BME): These terms are very commonly used across the UK, by the media, businesses and organisations, including within higher education. However, they have been criticised as acronyms that homogenise diverse identities and backgrounds. They also note that these terms involve a confusing combination of race, ethnicity and nationality whilst ignoring individual identity and experiences. They also make ‘White’ the standard and class everyone else as ‘other’.

Some people feel that using the ‘long’ form of the term ‘Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic’ can be more useful than the catch-all acronym, BAME, as it does draw out some specific identities (unlike ‘people of colour’).

Please note that at Queen Mary we currently use the term ‘BAME’, as this reflects the way we collect and store staff and student data, and with our reporting obligations and usage within the majority of other Higher Education institutions. However, as we are aware that this term is considered by some to be problematic, we will continue to review our use of language around race and ethnicity, through our Race Equality Action Group.

Ethnic minority groups is a UK term used to refer to all ethnic groups except the White British group. This includes White minorities, such as Gypsy, Roma and Irish Traveller groups. Some organisations (like AdvanceHE) avoid this term, as they feel that ‘ethnic minority’ places the emphasis on ethnicity as the main issue, especially as the term ‘ethnic’ is often incorrectly seen as synonymous with non-White in the UK. However the UK Government has recently moved from using BAME to people from ethnic minority backgrounds.

Minority ethnic groups is used by some people to place the emphasis on the minority (or minoritised) status as opposed to the ethnicity. It also arguably makes it clearer that everyone has an ethnicity (including White British people), not just those who are minoritised.

These terms are felt by some to have negative connotations relating to being marginal, or less important. Some people prefer to use the verb ‘minoritised’ to reflect that people are minoritised against their will.

Global majority (or ‘People of the Global Majority’): This is a collective term that encourages those of African, Asian, Latin American and Arab descent to recognise that although ‘people of colour’ are often referred to as ethnic minorities, on a global scale they represent around 80 per cent of the world’s

population. However, it is not always as useful in the UK context where the use of the term majority could lead to confusion and lack of understanding.

People/Communities of Colour: This is a term that is mostly used in a US context, but is becoming a more common term among some groups in the UK, to refer to groups of people who are not White or of European heritage.

However, this term is felt by some to inaccurately suggest that skin colour is the only issue or common factor between people who experience racism. Like other terms listed here, it also homogenises all people who are not White, and arguably centres whiteness as the default norm, with all others 'of colour'. It also excludes some groups who may be (or be perceived to be) White, such as Gypsy, Roma and Irish Traveller groups, and those of Eastern European or Jewish descent. It is also sometimes confused with 'coloured', an offensive and outdated term in the UK.

Racially minoritised groups/communities: A term that aims to recognise that individuals have been actively minoritised through social processes of power and domination, rather than just existing in distinct statistical minorities. This term is less well used in the mainstream, but is increasingly preferred by some who wish to capture the importance of power when talking about race.

Things to note

Be clear. For example, if you are writing specifically about Black people, use the term 'Black' rather than BAME.

Identity is extremely personal and important, so one of the best ways to develop your understanding is to listen, educate yourself, learn, and politely ask about preferences, if in doubt.

2 Gender identity

Gender is a person's sense of self – whether this is being a man, woman or otherwise self-defined; this may, or may not, correspond to an individual's sex assigned at birth.

Using the correct pronouns is incredibly important, as it can make trans and gender non-conforming people feel seen and welcome.

Use of gender neutral pronouns is also helpful in a practical sense, as names do not denote gender.

Pronouns: If you are writing to or about someone, using the correct pronouns shows respect for that person's gender identity and builds on our culture of inclusivity. Some points you may wish to take on board:

- We suggest everyone considers including their own preferred pronouns in their email signature if they feel comfortable doing so. The practice of including pronouns in email signatures normalises the idea that gender shouldn't be assumed, and demonstrates the University's commitment to recognising diverse identities and gender expressions.
- Until you know someone's pronouns, try to use 'they/them' where possible and/or their first name. If you are unsure of their pronouns then it is OK to ask politely and respectfully – perhaps sharing your own pronouns first.

- The most common pronouns are she / her and he / him, but many people choose to use different gender-neutral pronouns such as they / them. Alternatively, a person may wish to be referred to by their first name instead of a personal pronoun. Queen Mary has a Pronouns Matter leaflet that you can refer to, if you want to learn more.
- When creating forms and / or collecting personal information and when using titles, remember that not everybody will be comfortable using gendered titles. Consider including non-gendered alternatives such as 'Mx'.

Useful terms when writing about gender identity:

- **Cisgender** – A person whose gender identity aligns with the sex they were assigned at birth (non-trans).
- **Gender dysphoria** – When a person experiences discomfort and anxiety because their gender identity does not align with their sex assigned at birth.
- **Gender identity** – A person's sense of their own internal gender. This may or may not align with the sex they were assigned at birth.
- **Gender reassignment** – Gender reassignment describes the characteristic of an individual who is proposing to undergo, is undergoing, or has undergone a process (or part of a process) of reassigning their person sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex. Queen Mary refers to 'trans people' to reflect language and terminology that is used in our society today.
- **Intersex** – An intersex person is born with ambiguous genitalia and/or sex chromosomal variations, making it difficult to classify their biological sex as either male or female at birth. There are many different intersex variations. An intersex person may self-identify as male, female or non-binary.
- **Non-binary** – An umbrella term to describe people whose gender identity doesn't sit comfortably with the binary of 'man' or 'woman', and a distinct gender in itself. Some non-binary people may identify with some aspects of binary identities (e.g. they may feel they embody some elements of masculinity or femininity or both), while others reject them entirely. Rather than he or she, non-binary people may use gender-neutral pronouns.
- **Transgender or 'trans'** – The diverse range of people whose gender identity does not align with the sex they were assigned at birth, eg. a trans woman could be a woman whose sex assigned at birth was male, but identifies and lives as a woman. Trans includes non-binary people. At Queen Mary we refer to 'trans people' to reflect current language and terminology that is used in our society today.
- **Transphobia** – Unlawful prejudice against trans people. It may be realised through acts of discrimination, bullying and harassment.

Things to note

We have covered topics and terms that we believe will be useful in your day-to-day Queen Mary life and work. There are [further definitions and resources](#) available too.

3 Sexual identity

At Queen Mary we aim to use open and inclusive language that better reflects contemporary relationships and families to represent the diversity of our community.

Inclusive terms and principles when writing about sexual orientation:

- **Sexual orientation** is the term we use at Queen Mary when referring to a person's attraction to other people, or lack thereof.
- We are also careful to use **person-centered language**, eg, lesbian, gay, bisexual people/members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual community.
- The use of inclusive language such as **parents/caregivers** is less likely to be exclusionary or othering, especially if family formation is not specified/unknown.
- Similarly the use of **partner/spouse** (if the gender of the person's partner is not specified/unknown) is inclusive.

Useful terms when writing about sexual orientation:

- **Ace** – Ace is an umbrella term used to describe a variation in levels of romantic and/or sexual attraction, including a lack of attraction.
- **Ally** – Allyship is about being an active and ongoing supporter and champion in solidarity with a marginalised group of people, such as LGBTQA+ people.
- **Asexual** – Someone who is asexual does not experience sexual attraction to anyone.
- **Bisexual/Bi** – Bi is an umbrella term used to describe a romantic and/or sexual orientation towards more than one gender.
- **LGBTQA+** – The acronym for lesbian, gay, bi and trans, queer and asexual/ace.
- **Pansexual** – Refers to a person whose romantic and/or sexual attraction towards others is not limited by sex or gender.
- **Questioning** – The process of exploring your own sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

- **Queer** – Queer is a term used by those wanting to reject specific labels of romantic orientation, sexual orientation and/or gender identity and more broadly by the LGBTQA+ community. A process of reclaiming the slur began in the late 80s; however, queer is not a universally accepted term and its use will depend upon context. It is always best to respectfully and politely ask individuals how they self-describe before labelling their sexual orientation.
- **Straight/heterosexual** – A person who has a romantic and/or sexual attraction towards people of the opposite sex.

Things to note

There is [further information available](#) about sexual orientation at Queen Mary, including information about our LGBTQA+ staff network, QMOUT, and support for staff and students.

4 Accessibility and disability

Accessibility

As a public sector body, we are duty bound to comply with the Public Sector Bodies Accessibility Regulations that came into effect on 23 September 2018. This means our content needs to be accessible for everyone. Below is a digital accessibility checklist:

- Avoid underlining, italics and using capital letters for emphasis. Instead, use bold font.
- Use the active voice, rather than the passive voice.
- Hyperlinks should be text-based and descriptive – the aim is that the text tells the user where the link will take them. For example, use “more information can be found on our dedicated research facilities page” and not “Click here for our research facilities page” or “Find out more on our research facilities page”.
- Make sure that the colour contrasts used on the page work well. You can check this at [WebAIM color checker](#).
- When using pictures, charts or diagrams, add ALT text plus an explanation in words underneath images, pictures and charts.
- Where possible, be sparing with charts or diagrams in your content. If you do need to use them, add ALT text ([guidance on ALT text](#)) with an explanation in words underneath the images/pictures/charts.
- With images, remember to also repeat any text within the image in the alt text.
- On reading documents, your font should be no smaller than size 12. Avoid fonts such as Times, Times New Roman and Courier.
- Accompany your video content with a text-based transcript or closed captions.

- Avoid using flashing lights, bold regular patterns or regular moving patterns in your video, image or animation content. If they are essential, you should add a disclaimer.

Things to note

For further advice on making your content accessible in PowerPoint, on course layout pages, teaching materials and assessments, the Disability and Dyslexia Service at Queen Mary [provides extensive guidance](#).

Disability

When writing about disability, we should not use victimising or negative terms that characterise people as belonging to a group with common needs. Always put the person before the disability. We have listed some common errors and the alternatives that we should adopt instead.

Terms to use

- People with a disability
- With a learning disability/with learning disabilities
- Has [name of condition]
- Non-disabled
- Person with epilepsy, child with autism, a person with depression or someone who has epilepsy, autism or depression

- Seizures
- Wheelchair user

Terms to avoid

- The handicapped/the disabled
- Mentally handicapped/mentally disabled
- Afflicted by/suffers from/victim of
- Able-bodied
- An epileptic/an autistic child/a diabetic etc
- Fits/spells/attacks
- Wheelchair-bound/confined to a wheelchair

Things to note

As with many protected characteristics, the language around disability is continuously evolving, and so is our understanding of what disability fully entails. These are some basic guidelines we will update when needed. The [Government's website](#) also offers guidance on writing about disability.

Our geography

Our location forms a strong part of our brand identity, and we like to shout about this wherever appropriate. Whether the focus is the history of this unique part of London, the diverse communities with whom we work closely, or the opportunities that a world city has to offer, location is a vital and fascinating part of Queen Mary's story.

1 Campuses

Queen Mary has five campuses in London and four overseas campuses:

- **Mile End:** Our largest campus, home to most academic schools as well as several halls of residence, lecture theatres, and the Mile End Library. Note: while this is our largest campus, we never refer to it as our 'main campus'.
- **Whitechapel:** Down the road from our Mile End campus is our Whitechapel campus. This is the main home for our Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry where many of our Institutes and The Royal London Hospital can be found.
- **Charterhouse Square:** Home to the Wolfson Institute of Population Health, the John Vane Science Centre, the Joseph Rotblat Building and the William Harvey Heart Centre.
- **West Smithfield:** A number of our cardiovascular, cancer, epidemiology and public health research facilities are located here, as well as St Bartholomew's Hospital and the West Smithfield Medical Library.

- **Lincoln's Inn Fields:** Home to our Postgraduate Law Centre, the Centre for Commercial Law Studies.
- **Malta:** We established a medical school on the island of Gozo in 2017 with a campus in Victoria.
- **China:** Queen Mary runs a number of joint programmes with universities in China: Beijing University of Posts and Telecommunications; a Joint Education Initiative in Hainan Education Zone; Nanchang University; and Northwestern Polytechnical University.
- **Singapore:** Queen Mary offers a Dual LLM in Commercial Law in collaboration with Singapore Management University
- **Paris:** Queen Mary delivers its LLM programme in the heart of Paris, at the University of London Institute Paris with intakes in both September and January.

2 Notable buildings, places and spaces

- Queens' Building (home to the Octagon)
- Graduate Centre
- People's Palace

- Novo Cemetery
- Regent's canalside
- Whitechapel Medical Library
- St Bartholomew's Hospital (Barts) – home to West Smithfield Library
- The Blizzard Building and Centre of the Cell

3 Talking about our location

Queen Mary provides a community and the security of a campus university within a dynamic and fast-moving city, and the (East) “London advantage” is a strength we like to play to. If you need to promote our location, then feel free to lift from the following copy, or use it as a guide (taken from our Complete University Guide 2022/2023 profile):

- London attracts people from all over the globe. Its world-class museums and events cater for every interest. Queen Mary has five campuses across London. Its largest campus is in East London, just 15 minutes from central London and home to a diverse, creative atmosphere and exciting nightlife.
- On our campuses, Drapers Bar & Kitchen and The Griff Inn provide great quality food and drink by day. By night, they host entertainment, live sport and weekly club nights.
- Queen Mary is based in the heart of East London, home to

quirky museums and art galleries, pop-up restaurants, bars, clubs, vintage shops, markets and independent cinemas.

- Local attractions popular with students include Brick Lane, the Whitechapel Gallery, Boxpark Shoreditch, the Mile End Climbing Wall and the Genesis independent cinema.
- Queen Mary's Mile End campus is one stop on the Tube from the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and one of Europe's biggest urban shopping centres, Westfield Stratford City.
- The Mile End campus is also a short walk from Victoria Park, one of London's most popular green spaces, which hosts a food market on Sundays and music festivals in summer.
- Queen Mary has campuses in east and central London. Undergraduate students are based in Mile End or Whitechapel, both in Zone 2.
- All campuses are easily accessible by public transport. Many students commute from home, and there is dedicated support for them.
- London has excellent rail connections to the rest of the UK. Queen Mary's location offers easy access to all London airports.

Things to note

Our capitalisation section and index offer detailed guidance on words and names that should be capitalised. But, while you're here, there are two quick rules to note:

- Capitalise 'University' when we are talking about Queen Mary but not when we talk about universities in general.
- Lecture theatres, department names and buildings are always capitalised.

Grammar and punctuation

We should try to write with simplicity as much as possible. The grammar and punctuation rules outlined in this section have been put together with this goal in mind.

1 Abbreviations

These should be written out without punctuation: eg, etc

Things to note

- Screen readers can sometimes read aloud eg as ‘egg’. Better alternatives are ‘for example’, ‘such as’ or ‘including’.
- Take care with ie, it’s not always widely understood. We use ie to clarify a sentence, so instead try rewriting your sentence to provide this clarity. Otherwise, ‘meaning’ and ‘that is’ are good alternatives.
- When abbreviating a phrase, rather than a name or title, use lower case (ie lbw, mph).

2 Acronyms

We should spell out a name in full with the acronym in brackets after it. Then use the acronym on its own eg ‘The Department for Education (DfE) provided funding to the five institutions. DfE is a central government department.’

Things to note

Exceptions to this rule include organisations that are known by their abbreviated name: eg UCAS, BBC, NHS.

Acronyms to avoid in external communications:

- **Acronyms for Schools (eg SBBS instead of School of Biological and Behavioural Sciences):** Write out the name in full the first time and then use ‘School’.
- **Higher Education Institutions (HEI):** Instead use ‘universities’ or ‘higher education institutions’ (Note: lower case)
- **Russell Group (RG):** This can be abbreviated in internal communications but should be written out in external communications.

3 Active voice vs passive voice

When writing, use the active voice at all times. It’s a much clearer way of conveying a message where the subject of the sentence performs the action (eg who’s done what to whom or, if you’re giving instructions, who must do what).

With the passive voice, the subject receives the action. This can a) make things confusing and b) dilutes the message of the sentence. The passive voice is useful if you need to emphasise the action rather than the actor, or to sound more authoritative. But as a rule, we should use the active voice.

Active voice example: The dog bit the man.

Passive voice example: The man was bitten by the dog.

Things to note

If you're unsure about which voice you've been using, look for phrases using 'by'. This is a good indicator that the sentence is written in the passive voice.

4 Apostrophes

- Apostrophes are used to indicate a missing letter eg don't, can't, won't or possession eg Jasmine's book.
- For plurals, words and names ending in 's', add an apostrophe eg 'Mr Jones' cat', 'the ladies' luggage'.
- Use in phrases such as six years' experience or three days' time, where the time period modifies the noun.
- Don't use in six weeks old or nine months pregnant, where the time period modifies an adjective. You can check whether this is right by using a singular example eg one year's experience, one week old.

5 Colons

- We use these between two sentences or two parts of a sentence, where the second explains or expands on the first eg Our founding institutions gave us values that are relevant today: a commitment to social justice and equality.
- To introduce a quote that is a stand-alone sentence eg Bailey said: Queen Mary is an outstanding University.
- To introduce bullet points.

6 Contractions

These should be used sparingly in formal writing. If the tone is meant to be chatty, then contractions within reason are fine.

Things to note

When addressing students, you'll is fine, but try to think of alternative ways of saying what it is you want to say. Eg on our Student life page, it says 'When you study at Queen Mary, you get to live in one of the world's most exciting cities' and not '[...] you'll get to live in one of the world's most exciting cities'.

7 Dashes and hyphens

Be economical with dashes where possible. Commas can be used in the first instance, as can semicolons.

If you do use dashes, use the en-dash with a space before and (if in the middle of the sentence) after, and as a strong interruption from the main body of a sentence. Eg ‘Our reformer heritage informs our conviction that great ideas can and should come from anywhere and anyone – no matter what their background.’

Hyphens remove ambiguity when used correctly as compound modifiers. A popular example from the fifties is, ‘His face turned an ugly brick-red’. This reads differently to ‘His face turned an ugly brick red’.

We use hyphens when:

- Forming short and commonly used adverbs to avoid confusion eg much-needed, new-found.
- Using short compound adjectives that precede a noun, eg kind-hearted person, mid-life crisis.
- No concrete rule exists when using hyphens with prefixes. You can have an antihero who can be anti-establishment. A good, loose rule of thumb is if the lack of hyphen makes the sentence harder to read, then add one.

8 Exclamation marks

Use these very sparingly. However, it is OK to use them in pull-quotes from student or staff interviews and profiles.

9 Fewer vs less

- Use fewer when writing about something that can be counted eg ‘fewer students’.
- Use less when writing about something that can’t be counted or doesn’t have a plural eg ‘less money’, ‘less time’.

10 Quotation marks

- Use double quotation marks at the start and end of a quoted section with single quotes for quoted words within that section.
- Where a quote is more than one paragraph long, open each paragraph with a double quote mark, but don’t close with quote marks until the end of the final paragraph.
- Pull quotes should use double quote marks but should end without a full stop: eg “Queen Mary is the only central London University to offer students a completely integrated residential campus”

11 Starting a sentence with ‘and’

This is fine to do but use this sparingly. It shouldn't be a commonplace feature in our writing.

12 That vs which

- ‘That’ is used to modify an existing clause. This means another part of the sentence depends on it for meaning. It is used without a comma.
- ‘Which’ is used to introduce a new clause and uses a comma before the ‘which’ and after the clause.

Here are two examples where that and which alter the meaning of the same sentence.

1. Our office, which has a roof terrace, is located in Whitechapel.
 2. Our office that has a roof terrace is located in Whitechapel.
- The first sentence tells us that there's just one office, and it happens to have a roof terrace.
 - The clause ‘which has a roof terrace’ introduces new information but does not change the overall meaning of the sentence.
 - The second sentence suggests that there is more than one office, but that the one with a roof terrace is in Whitechapel.

- The ‘that has a roof terrace’ part cannot be removed because it is the modifier and another part of the sentence (our office) depends on it. If you took it out, it would change the meaning of the sentence.

Rule of thumb

If you took the ‘which’ clause out of the sentence, it should still make sense. So you can check you have used the right word by trying to remove the phrase.

Typography

Queen Mary uses Source Sans Pro for all of our copy. If this is not available to download on your computer, then you may use Arial.

1 Typeface and font

- To install Source Sans Pro, go to Google Fonts.

2 Emphasis

If you need to emphasise a word or a point, use bold font.

Avoid underlining, italics and using capital letters for emphasis. These are not accessible font types

3 Italics

Confusingly, that's not to say to avoid italics altogether! There are rules for when we should be using them:

- Use italics for titles of books, films and journals, as well as foreign language words.
- In the case of an article within a journal, the article should appear in inverted commas and the journal name should be italicised: eg Daniels, S., Keiller, P., Massey, D. and Wright, P. (2012). '*To dispel a great malady: Robinson in Ruins, the future of landscape and the moving image*'. Tate Papers, (17), pp.1-16.

4 Capitalisation rules

- Use title case for publication titles (as well as italics).
- Use sentence case for headings and sub-headings eg Fees and funding opportunities.
- Use initial capitals for department names eg, Department of English/Linguistics/Film.
- Initial capitals for event names eg Barts Cancer Institute's Online Christmas Auction.
- Use initial capitals for job titles eg Vice-Principal.
- Use initial capitals for lecture theatres, awards and buildings eg David Sizer Lecture Theatre, Teacher of the Year, Queens' Building.
- Initial capitals should be used for languages eg French, English, Chinese.
- And when talking about specific programmes or degrees, eg Global Health. If you're writing about a subject in a general sense then keep it lower case, eg 'Chemistry is often thought of as the central science, bringing together mathematics, physics, biology and medicine'.

5 Webpage headings

- Headings are a useful way of signposting your copy and breaking it up.
- As mentioned above, we use sentence case for these.
- Use the closest thing you have to a heading size.

Naming conventions

Names come up a lot in a Higher Education environment, whether it's a building or a course. Here are the main rules you'll need to bear in mind for your writing.

1 Faculty and School names

- When referring to our Faculties and Schools in external communications, use their full name in the first instance eg 'Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry' and 'School of Law'.
- For following mentions, it's fine to use 'the Faculty' or 'the School'. In internal communications, we can refer simply to eg 'Medicine and Dentistry', but never externally.

2 Course names

- The word 'course' can be used in a general sense, especially when referring to studies undertaken in other institutions.
- When referring to degrees, use 'degree programmes' rather than 'degree courses'.
- If stating what course a student has done or is doing, write it out as follows: BSc Business Management, BA Comparative Literature with a Year Abroad (note the capitalisation of Year Abroad).

3 Building names

- Always remember to specify the campus a specific building is located at: eg 'ArtsOne (Mile End)' or '(Mile End campus)'.

4 Magazine and journal articles

- These should be placed within single quote marks: eg 'Understanding Human Behaviour'.
- All newspaper and journal names should be italicised, eg *The Guardian*.

Numbers

From phone numbers to spelling out the time, we have a few simple rules for you to follow when using numbers in your copy.

1 General

- Spell out numbers one to nine in words. For number 10 and above, use digits, eg eight and 87.
- Use commas in numbers over a thousand: eg 1,000.
- Use m for numbers in millions: eg £5m and 145m.

2 Page numbers

These should be bracketed, lower case and unabbreviated: eg '(see page four or 10)'.

3 Phone numbers

- Write these in the following format externally +44 (0)20 XXXX XXXX or +44 (0)7XXX XXX XXX for mobiles.
- Where applicable, internally, extensions alone can be used.
- Include the country code: eg Tel: +44 (0)20 7882 7882 or +44 (0)7749 XXX XXX.

4 Time

- Use the 12 hour clock: eg 7am and 1.30pm. Note the use of a full stop and no space between the digits and the am/pm.
- Use a hyphen to separate starting and finishing times: eg 7-9am with no spaces before or after the hyphen.

5 Years of study

- When briefly describing which year a student is in and their degree, it's fine to use the numeric form, eg '5th-year dental student'.
- For longer descriptions, use the word in full: 'Mari, a second-year student on the BEng Design, Innovation and Creative Engineering degree'.

6 Numbers in headlines

- We can use digits for numbers below 10 in headlines, as in Queen Mary economists weigh in as Pound falls to 5-year low.
- Don't start a sentence or headline with digits (eg: Twelve alumni who have gone on to do great things) unless it's a listicle-style article where this is fine.

Common pitfalls and cliches

There are a few traps we all fall into from time to time. Below is a round-up of words or phrases to avoid where possible. There is a much more exhaustive list in our index.

1 General rules

- English is full of idioms and strange turns of phrase, many of which dilute the meaning and impact of a phrase or sentence. International audiences may not understand all of these.
- Unless you're writing for a very specific audience, don't assume everyone will understand business, clinical or technical terms.
- We use a lot of acronyms in Higher Education that take some getting to know, so be mindful of this if someone is new.

Take it to the next level

The best of both worlds

We have you covered / we've got you covered

Let's circle back

Think outside the box

110 per cent

Note

We're lucky to have a community of staff from all over the world. If you are not sure if a phrase is well understood, please ask a colleague.

2 Cliches, jargon and idioms to avoid

At the end of the day

Back to the drawing board

Barking up the wrong tree

Hit the ground running

If you fancy

3 Words that are often misused

- Affect means to influence something. Effect as a noun means a result or outcome; effect as a verb means to bring about change eg We have effected changes that will affect our students.
- Altogether is an adverb that means completely eg 'He was altogether confused'. All together means in a group eg 'We will gather all together in front of the Student Union'.

- Every day means daily, everyday means something is usual eg an everyday occurrence.
- Impactful – is the impact good or bad?
- Less – use less when writing about something that can't be counted or doesn't have a plural eg 'less money', 'less time'. Use fewer when writing about something that can be counted eg 'fewer students'.
- On to should be used rather than onto.
- Literally should not be used for emphasis.
- More than should be used rather than over, which is a colloquialism.
- Past vs last – rather than 'last 10 years', use 'past 10 years'.
- Both – this is overused and is often not needed eg 'Both undergraduates and postgraduates live on the Mile End campus'.
- Cutting-edge – only use if something really is. Avoid using it the rest of the time.
- Deliver – we use this a lot. Try to alternate it with more human-sounding alternatives eg create, provide.
- Detail as a verb.
- Engage/engaging with – think of another way of explaining the relationship: eg working alongside, supporting etc.
- Excellent – can be overused.
- Feed through into...
- Fit-for-purpose
- Innovative (unless the element described is a genuine innovation: eg technological developments).
- It's no surprise that...
- Key
- Kick-start
- Major
- Meanwhile
- Ongoing

4 Words that are often overused

- Agile – think of alternatives eg adaptable, ready for anything.
- Also – overused and can often be removed from a sentence without changing the meaning.
- Amazing – too many superlatives can make copy sound fake.
- At the heart of...
- Basically – overused and can often be removed from a sentence without changing the meaning.

- Pioneering – only use if something really is
- State-of-the-art – again, only use if something really is
- Ultimate
- Utilise – use is fine

A-Z guide

A

- abbreviations – these should always be written without punctuation: eg, etc.
- Abernethy Building (Whitechapel campus)
- Academic Ranking of World Universities – also known as the Shanghai ranking.
- Academic Registrar – this job title is always capped (as are all job titles)
- Advice and Counselling Service (Mile End campus)
- Advisor (rather than adviser) should be capitalised
- affect means to influence something, effect as a noun means a result or outcome, effect as a verb means to bring about change eg ‘We have effected changes that will affect our students’.
- agile - use another alternative
- A-levels
- Albert Stern Cottages (Mile End campus)
- Albert Stern House (Mile End campus)
- all right (rather than alright)
- also can be overused and is best to avoid.
- altogether is an adverb that means ‘completely’ eg ‘he was altogether confused’. All together means in a group eg ‘we will gather all together in front of the Student Union’.
- alumni (and alum/alumna/alumnus) – Alumni (noun, plural) are the former students or graduates of a university. At Queen Mary, we use the terms alumni and graduates rather than former students. In some contexts, the term alumni can have advantages because it is more specifically linked to our graduates, rather than graduates in general eg as a section heading on the Queen Mary homepage: www.qmul.ac.uk.
- alum is the gender-neutral form, alumna is the feminine form of the noun, and alumnus is the masculine form of the noun. However, we try to avoid these terms as many people are unfamiliar with their meaning and they tend to sound old-fashioned. Find a way around it, for example: ‘Jane Smith, one of our alumni, is now a leading clinician’; or ‘One of our graduates, Jane Smith is now a leading clinician’.
- amazing – this is overused
- among not amongst
- ampersands – see ‘And’ below
- amount – as a noun, amount should be used with nouns that can’t be counted eg ‘the amount of time you spend revising’.
- analyse (rather than analyze)
- and – write out in full, unless ‘&’ is part of a company name or book title: eg Proctor & Gamble

- and/or – don't use this if possible. Try and re-write your sentence instead.
- articles – magazine and journal article names should be placed within single quote marks: eg 'Understanding Human Behaviour'. See our House Style for guidance on italics.
- ArtsOne and ArtsTwo (Mile End campus) – always a closed space between each word, with both elements capitalised.
- Arts Research Centre (Mile End campus)
- at the heart of – this is overused
- autumn (no caps for seasons)

B

- BA (Hons)(Cantab) – leave no space between awarding institution in brackets after qualification.
- BAME – this stands for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic. See our chapter on race about using this term.
- bachelors (no caps or apostrophe)
- Bancroft Building (Mile End campus) – formerly the Francis Bancroft Building. Use lowercase 'the' when referring to it in a sentence: eg 'lectures will be held in the Bancroft Building'.
- Bancroft Road Teaching Rooms (Mile End campus)
- BEng
- Black – use this (where appropriate) instead of BAME and remember to capitalise it.
- Blackboard Collaborate – this is an online classroom tool used for mixed mode.
- Blended learning – we now refer to this as Mixed Mode Education (MME).
- Blizzard Building (Whitechapel campus) - note that Blizzard has only one z.
- Blizzard Institute
- BLOC (Mile End Campus)
- blog – a blog is a collection of online articles, a blogpost is a single article. It can also be used as a verb eg 'I blogged about the seminar'.
- BMus
- both – this is overused and is often not needed eg 'Both undergraduates and postgraduates live on the Mile End campus'.
- BSc
- Building names – always remember to specify the campus a specific building is located at: eg 'ArtsOne (Mile End)' or '(Mile End campus)'.
- bullets – see our House Style

C

- campus – use a lower case ‘c’: eg the Mile End campus.
- Canalside (Mile End campus) – to be used when referring to the study space beneath France House.
- capitals – see our House Style for guidance on words and names that should be capitalised. One of the most important rules is to capitalise University when we are talking about Queen Mary but not when we talk about universities in general eg ‘Queen Mary is a Russell Group University, operating across five campuses in London and at sites across Europe and Asia’ but ‘Russell Group universities are renowned for their commitment to excellence’.
- cardiovascular (not two words or hyphenated)
- Careers and Enterprise – the Careers and Enterprise service is run by the Careers and Enterprise team.
- Centre for Commercial Law Studies (CCLS) (Lincoln’s Inn Fields campus)
- Centre of the Cell (Whitechapel campus)
- Century – always detail in lower case: eg 19th century.
- Chapman House (Mile End campus)
- Charterhouse Square
- Chesney House (Mile End campus)
- Cisgender or cis
- city – when referring to a city, lower case. When referring to the City of London, use capitals eg ‘Our Careers and Enterprise team hosts recruitment events with employers from the City of London’.
- college or university – with regard to legal status, we are a university of London. See also Talking about ourselves and Capitalisation in our House Style.
- Complete University Guide
- contractions – please see Grammar and Punctuation for when to use these.
- co-operative
- co-ordinate
- CopyShop (Mile End campus) – ensure no space sits between the two words, and use a lowercase ‘the’ when using in a sentence: eg ‘the CopyShop’ rather than ‘The Copy Shop’.
- course – when referring to degrees, use ‘degree programmes’ rather than ‘degree courses’; however, the word ‘course’ can be used in a general sense, especially when referring to studies undertaken in other institutions.
- coursemates – try to avoid using coursemates as it can sound old-fashioned; an alternative is ‘fellow students’ or ‘others studying on your course’.

- Coursework
- Creed Court (Mile End campus)
- currency – when the whole word is used, it is lower case: euro, pound, sterling, dong, etc. Abbreviate dollars as per the following model: \$50 (US dollars); A\$50 (Australian dollars); HK\$50 (Hong Kong dollars).
- curriculums – use the plural rather than curricula, which can sound old-fashioned.
- cutting-edge – Only use this if something really is.

D

- dashes – see the House Style for correct use of hyphens.
- data is technically a plural but the singular datum shouldn't be used. Data should take a singular verb eg 'the data is clear' not 'the data are clear'.
- dates – write dates in the following format: Saturday 6 May 2023 (rather than Sat 6th May or May 6). It's 2022/23 (not 2022-23).
- Dawson Hall (Charterhouse Square campus)
- Dean Rees House (Charterhouse Square campus)
- decades – write as 1990s or the Nineties, for example, rather than using an apostrophe and the last two digits, (eg '90s). When describing a span of years, write as: 1990–99.
- degree class – First, 2:1, 2:2, 3rd. Use First, never 1st. Use a capital when referring to a First on its own, but lower case for first-class degree. Never use first degree, as this can be confused with an undergraduate degree.
- deliver – we use this word a lot so try to use alternatives where possible
- Department – refer to the Department (caps) about a named Department, but one of the departments (lower case) when it's general eg the Department of Law is one of the best Law departments in the UK.
- Department W – use this in the first instance in internal communications. You can use Dept W thereafter.
- dependant is a noun, dependent is an adjective eg 'She had three dependants, who were dependent on her'.
- detail – don't use this as a verb
- different from not different than
- Disability and Dyslexia Service (Mile End campus)
- discreet means to be circumspect or inconspicuous, discrete means separate.
- disinterested means objective or impartial, uninterested means not interested in something.
- Doctoral student – lower case 'd'
- Dr – not Dr. or Doctor

- dos and don'ts – note the apostrophes.
- Down's syndrome (rather than Down syndrome)
- Drapers Bar & Kitchen (previously Drapers' Bar) – note there is no apostrophe.
- Drapers' Lecture Theatre – note there is an apostrophe.

E

- Earth – capitalise when talking about the planet, but drop to lowercase when referring to the earth in terms of soil. Avoid idiomatic phrases such as 'down to earth' etc.
- East London (caps) and East End – Both are acceptable depending on the context: eg, 'At Queen Mary, we are lucky to be able to call the East End our home' or 'The 2012 Olympics contributed to the regeneration of East London'.
- eastern Europe
- e-book
- e-Bulletin
- e-cigarette
- e-commerce
- effect as a noun means a result or outcome, effect as a verb means to bring about change, affect means to influence something eg 'We have effected changes that will affect our students'.
- eg (not e.g.) – but be wary of screen readers interpreting this as egg.
- e-journal
- e-learning
- email – one word, no hyphen. It remains in lowercase when used in someone's contact details, even though 'Tel' is capitalised.
- e-marketing
- embarrass, embarrassment
- emoji, plural emojis
- engage/engaging with – try other terms from time to time eg working alongside, supporting etc.
- Engineering Building (Mile End campus)
- enquire/enquiry mean to ask or the process of asking. Only use inquire for formal investigations such as Iraq War Inquiry.
- enrolment (rather than enrollment)
- ensuite is one word
- especially means particularly, specially means for a special reason eg 'The initiative benefits our students, especially those living at home'.

- EU – European Union, no need to spell out
- euro is lower case
- every day means daily, everyday means something is usual eg ‘an everyday occurrence’.
- extracurricular (one word)

F

- Faculty – write out the name in full the first time eg ‘Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences’ and then use ‘the Faculty’. When writing about general faculties, it should be lower case.
- farther relates to distance eg ‘the farthest point east’, further broadly means more, eg ‘we need further sessions’.
- feed through into – don’t use this
- Feilden House (Mile End campus) – note that it is ei rather than ie.
- figures – see numbers
- filmmaking (one word / no hyphen)
- fit-for-purpose – avoid using this
- Floyer House (Whitechapel campus)
- Foetus (rather than fetus)
- focus, focused, focusing (rather than focussing) – we use this word a lot so try to use alternatives where possible.
- following – after is simpler
- foreign words – use italics for foreign words, eg ‘The Institute moved into the larger building overlooking the *Esplanade des Invalides* thanks to a generous grant’.
- foreign place names – don’t use this as a verb.
- forever means continually, eg ‘we are forever improving our curriculum’. For ever means for always eg ‘We are committed to our alumni for ever’.
- forward slashes – do not include a space between and after forward slashes (eg MSc/Postgraduate Diploma).
- fractions – use words and hyphenate rather than using forward slashes: eg two-thirds, half, three-quarters.
- France House (Mile End campus)
- Freshers’ Fair – use only when referring to the Fair itself, as the entire first week of term is referred to as Welcome Week.
- full-time or full time – this should be hyphenated when it modifies the noun eg ‘a full-time course’ but two words when it follows a verb eg ‘study full time’.

G

- gain should only be used in relation to mass.
- Garrod Building (Whitechapel campus) – formerly the Old Medical College.
- Generation X is used to describe people born between the early 1960s and the late 1970s.
- Generation Y is used to describe people born between the early 1980s and mid-2000s – see also millennials
- Generation Z is used to describe people born after the mid-2000s.
- Google – capitalise even when used as a verb.
- Government – use an upper case G to talk about a specific Government: eg ‘the Government’ but lowercase to talk about ‘governments’ or ‘government departments’.
- G.O. Jones Building (Mile End campus)
- graduates (rather than ‘former students’)
- The Great Hall (West Smithfield campus)
- Great Britain is England, Wales and Scotland, the UK includes Northern Ireland.
- green – use lowercase when talking about the environment but uppercase for the Green party.

- The Griff (Whitechapel campus) – formerly The Griff Inn.
- groundbreaking – one word, and often overused.
- Ground Café (Mile End campus) – note the accent.

H

- Hatton House (Mile End campus)
- healthcare (rather than health care)
- higher education (no caps when written out in full) – try to avoid the HE abbreviation, especially in external communications.
- Higher Education Funding Council (HEFCE) – spell out in full in the first instance and include the acronym in brackets. Use the acronym for further mentions.
- Higher Education Institutes (HEI) – the acronym HEI can be used in internal communications. In external communications, use universities or higher education institutes.
- The Hive (Mile End campus)
- homepage – one word
- Honours degree – note no apostrophe
- Housing Hub (Mile End campus)

- human, humankind not man, mankind
- hyphens – see the House Style for when to use hyphens.

I

- iconic – can be overused
- Ifor Evans Place (Mile End campus)
- impact – a noun not a verb
- in-course
- Ind – gender neutral title
- index, indexes
- infer – to work something out from evidence.
- Informatics Teaching Laboratories (Mile End campus)
- Infusion (Mile End campus)
- initials – there should be no spaces between initials eg WH Auden.
- innovative – often overused
- inquiry – see enquiry
- international students (rather than Foreign students)
- internet – note lower case
- Internet of Things, also know as IoT but best to spell out first time.
- insessional – no hyphen
- Institute – if you are talking about a particular Institute then it should have an initial uppercase I. If you are talking about institutes in general, it should be lowercase. See our House Style for more on capitalisation.
- into – go into a room, look into something but listen in to a conversation, go in to see someone.
- *In vitro* (use italics)
- *In vivo* (use italics)
- iPad
- iPhone
- iPod
- ‘ised’ – Use ‘ise’ not ‘ize’ eg organise
- italics – see House Style for when to italicise words.
- its is used to show possession eg ‘the cat loved its ball’; it’s means it is.

J

- job titles should be capitalised eg Vice-Principal. See the House Style for when to use capitals.

- John Vane Science Centre (Charterhouse Square campus)
- Joseph Priestley Building (Mile End campus) – formerly known as the Walter Besant Building.
- Joseph Rotblat Building (Charterhouse Square campus)
- journals – always italicise the names of journals, eg *Lancet*. See our House Style for more on when to italicise.

K

- key can be overused
- keywords – one word
- kick-start is hyphenated and can be overused
- knowledgeable

L

- laptop – one word
- Law (building) (Mile End campus)
- less – use less when writing about something that can't be counted or doesn't have a plural eg 'less money', 'less time'. Use fewer when writing about something that can be counted eg 'fewer students'.
- LGBTQA+ – most common acronym used to describe sexuality and gender-based communities. It stands for

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and the + represents other categories such as Questioning, Asexual, Intersex and Pansexual. Please see our chapter on writing inclusively for more information.

- liaison
- licence is the noun, license the verb eg 'Driver's Licence', 'licensed to kill'.
- Lindop House (Mile End campus)
- lifelong – one word
- Lincoln's Inn Fields
- lists – lists of items should always run alphabetically.
- live blog – two words when you are talking about a live blog (a noun), one word if you are using it as a verb, ie to liveblog
- live stream – two words when you are talking about a live stream, one word if you are using it as a verb, ie to livestream
- log in, log on, log out, log off – use two words
- login (noun) – one word
- London City Institute of Technology
- LLB – this acronym can be used for law degrees, there is no need to spell out
- LLM – this acronym can be used for postgraduate law degrees, there is no need to spell out

- Lock-keeper's Graduate Centre (Mile End campus)
- Lodge House (Mile End campus)
- Lynden House (Mile End campus)

M

- MA – this acronym can be used for Master of Arts programmes, there is no need to spell out
- major – can be overused
- man, mankind – use human, humankind
- masters (no caps or apostrophe)
- massive can be overused
- Mathematical Sciences Building (Mile End campus)
- Maynard House (Mile End campus)
- MBA – this acronym can be used for Master of Business Administration, there is no need to spell out
- MBBS – this acronym can be used for medical degrees, there is no need to spell out
- meanwhile should be avoided
- media – this is a plural and should use a plural verb eg 'the media have not responded to reports'
- medieval – this is the preferred spelling used by the Department of History (rather than mediaeval)
- midterm – one word, no hyphens
- midweek – one word, no hyphens
- Mile End campus – please don't describe this as our main campus
- millennium
- millennials – this should be used for people born between the early 1980s and mid-2000s – see also Generation Y.
- million – use m for numbers in millions eg £145m.
- Mixed Mode Education (MME) rather than blended learning. Note that MME doesn't refer to our entire education approach which is "blended", in line with the ACE approach.
- module titles – these are usually written using capitals: eg 'Explaining the Universe', 'Introduction to Mathematical Finance'
- MPhil
- multicultural
- multimedia
- multimillion
- Multi-Faith Centre (Mile End campus)

- Mr, Mrs – please note the lack of punctuation
- Mx – gender-neutral title

N

- national curriculum
- National Student Survey (NSS) – spell out in full in the first instance and include the acronym in brackets. Use the acronym for further mentions.
- nearby – note this is one word
- Neuron Pod (Whitechapel campus, note no ‘the’)
- north (no caps)
- Nucleus (Whitechapel campus)
- numbers – spell numbers one to nine in words, and 10 and above in digits: eg eight and 87. Use commas in numbers over a thousand: eg 1,000. Use m for numbers in millions: eg £5m and 145m.

O

- Occupational Health Service (Mile End campus)
- Octagon (Mile End campus)
- Office for Fair Access (OFFA) – spell out in full in the first instance and include the acronym in brackets. Use the

acronym for further mentions.

- Office for Students (OfS) – spell out in full in the first instance and include the acronym in brackets. Use the acronym for further mentions.
- Old Anatomy Building (Charterhouse Square campus)
- Olympics, Olympic Games, Olympic site
- ongoing – this word is overused
- online (no hyphen)
- on to not onto
- Open Days – these should have an initial capital when talking about a particular event eg ‘Come to our June Open Day’ but not when we talk about open days in general.
- organise, organisation (rather than organize, organization)

P

- page numbers – these should be bracketed, lower case and unabbreviated: eg ‘(see page 10)’
- part-time – see ‘full-time’ above for when to hyphenate
- Pathology and Museum Block (West Smithfield campus)
- Pathology and Pharmacy Building (Whitechapel campus)

- Pay Per Click (PPC) advertising, use of company name: PPC advertising at times requires you to put in a company name and this section usually has a limit of 31 characters or less. For this 'QMUL' in its abbreviated form can be used and is consistent with our approach to QMUL for domain names, hashtags and social media handles. However, in order to increase our brand awareness 'Queen Mary University of London' should be used or incorporated in the title or main body copy of the advert.
 - Peer Assisted Study Support (PASS)
 - The People's Palace/Great Hall (Mile End campus)
 - per cent – two words should be used rather than % or percent, although % can be used in tables or when a document has a lot of statistics.
 - Peter Landin Building (Mile End campus)
 - phone numbers – these should be written in the following format externally (internally, extensions alone can be used): +44 (0)20 XXXX XXXX or +44 (0)7XXX XXX XXX for mobiles.
 - pioneering should only be used if something really is
 - Pooley House
 - practice is the noun, practise is the verb. She practised penalties before football practice
 - presently – this word is overused
 - pre-sessional
 - President and Principal Professor Colin Bailey (external first reference to Professor Bailey)
 - prior to – use before
 - Principal - internal first reference: Principal Professor Colin Bailey, internal and external second reference: Professor Colin Bailey.
 - Professional Services
 - Professor (rather than Prof)
 - programme (program – only use for computers) – always use instead of 'course'
- ### Q
- Qmotion (Mile End campus)
 - QMplus – please note the lower case p.
 - QS World University Rankings®
 - qualifications – A-Level, AS-level, BA, BSc, BEng, BMus, MA, MSc, MBA, MBBS, PhD, MRes, MPhil, BTEC, IB, PgCert, PgDip, MBBS, LLM - Note upper and lower cases and hyphens. Note: the qualification type should appear following the degree title. Eg: 'History MA' etc. However: with PhDs, you do a 'PhD in history'.
 - Queen – Use a capital 'Q' to talk about a specific queen, the Queen, and lower-case for plural queens.

- Queens' Building (Mile End campus) – ensure the apostrophe is placed after the s.
- Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park – all words within this phrase should be capitalised.
- Queen Mary Innovation Centre (Whitechapel campus)
- Queen Mary presents – note the lower case 'p'
- Queen Mary Students' Union (QMSU)
- Externally: First use Queen Mary University of London and subsequently use Queen Mary, the University, us, we, our, etc.
- Internally: First use Queen Mary and subsequently use the University, us, we, our, etc.
- Make sure you have read the House Style for more guidance on how we talk about ourselves.

R

- Regent's Canal
- Research Excellence Framework 2014 (REF 2014) – spell out in full during the first instance and include the acronym and date in brackets. Use the acronym and date for further mentions.
- Robin Brook Centre (West Smithfield campus)
- The Royal London Dental Hospital (Whitechapel campus)

- The Royal London Hospital (Whitechapel campus)
- Russell Group (RG) – this can be abbreviated in internal communications but should be written out in external communications.

S

- School – write out the name in full the first time eg 'School of Biological and Chemical Sciences' and then use 'the School'. When writing about general schools, it should be lowercase.
- Selincourt House (Mile End campus)
- The Shield (Charterhouse Square campus)
- Single Honours
- south (lower case)
- spring (lower case)
- state-of-the-art – this is hyphenated when it appears before a noun eg 'state-of-the-art laboratories' but not when you say 'the laboratories are state of the art'. This word can be overused so only use it when it is really true.
- St Benet's Chaplaincy (Mile End campus)
- Student Enquiry Centre (Mile End campus)
- Student Health Service (Mile End campus)

- Students' Union – our Students' Union is called: Queen Mary Students' Union (QMSU).
- Students' Union Hub (Mile End campus)
- Sunday Times Good University Guide
- summer (no caps)
- supervisor

T

- take-up is a noun and one word, take up is a verb and two words.
- Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) – spell out in full in the first instance and include the acronym in brackets.
- Tech City
- Telephone numbers – include the country code: eg Tel: +44 (0)20 7882 7882 or +44 (0)7749 XXX XXX.
- term-time
- *The Guardian* – all newspaper and journal names should be italicised.
- times – see our House Style for how we describe times.
- Times Higher Education World University Rankings
- Transgender or trans

- Tube – this term should be used rather than Underground; the Underground is the network run by TfL, while the transport itself is the Tube. Tube should always be capitalised.

U

- UK is England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Great Britain is England, Scotland and Wales only.
- ultimate – try not to use this
- Undergraduate, postgraduate (in full and lower case)
- Underground – see Tube
- unit – in most cases 'Module' has replaced Unit.
- Universities UK (UUK) – spell out in full in the first instance and include the acronym in brackets. Use the acronym for further mentions.
- university – capitalise 'University' when we are talking about Queen Mary but not when we talk about universities in general.
- University league tables or guides – when referencing quotes, statistics or rankings, include a reference in italics to the league table or guide used with the date of publication. Always use the most recent and up-to-date information – ask us for our Facts and Figures.

- University of London (UoL) – note the lowercase ‘o’. Spell out in full in the first instance and include the acronym in brackets. Use the acronym for further mentions.
- upper second class Honours Degree
- urls – when writing a url in a printed publication don’t include https://, www or the final / – eg qmul.ac.uk is how we write the Queen Mary website url. Try to avoid ending a sentence with a url. Shorten long urls by asking the IT department to create a re-direct or use bitly.com or similar websites. In print publications, urls should be in colour and not underlined.
- utilise – use is fine

V

- Varden Street (Whitechapel campus)
- Varey House (Mile End campus)
- Vice-Chancellor (capped and hyphenated)
- Vice-Principal (capped and hyphenated)
- Village Shop (Mile End campus)
- Virtual learning environment - this refers to tools such as QMplus
- *Viva Voce* – use italics

W

- webpage (one word)
- website (one word)
- Welcome Week – ensure this is in uppercase.
- wellbeing – one word rather than two
- west (no caps)
- Westfield Nursery (Mile End campus)
- while not whilst
- Whitechapel
- Wingate Building (Whitechapel campus)
- winter (no caps)
- Wi-Fi – hyphenated and capped.
- William Harvey Heart Centre (Charterhouse Square campus)
- Wolfson Institute of Population Health (Charterhouse Square campus)
- Word counts – use a hyphen and comma: eg 5,000-word essay
- WWI (not WW1 or World War One)
- WWII (not WW2 or World War Two)

Y

- Year of study - express this numerically for brief mentions eg '5th-year dental student', but use the word in full when writing a longer description: 'Mari, a second-year student on the BEng Design, Innovation and Creative Engineering degree'.
- Yvonne Carter Building (Whitechapel campus)
- YouTube – one word and note the capital 'T'

Z

- ze/hir/hirs – gender-neutral pronouns
- ze/zem/xyrs – gender-neutral pronouns