

# Writing for the Geographical Association

## Manuscript presentation and GA house style

### Text

Please supply your manuscript electronically as a Word document. Where necessary, you should include a contents page and any front matter (introduction, preface, acknowledgements, etc.) and end matter (bibliography, appendices, etc.).

Our publications usually call for active text written in reasonably short sentences and paragraphs and a clear, friendly approach. Please also ensure that all text and illustrations provided are non-racist and non-sexist. Our house style is detailed below.

Different weights of heading should be clearly distinguished, using the highest weight (Ch) for a chapter heading and a maximum of three weights (A to C) for headings and sub-headings.

### Illustrations

All illustrations should be supplied as high-resolution files in useable format (jpeg, tiff, eps or pdf) with captions and all relevant credits. Please indicate where you wish them to appear in the text. If it has been agreed that you should supply roughs for a graphic artist to produce finished artwork, these should be as clear as possible. All maps should carry a scale and north point.

### Photographs

Photographs should be sharp with high contrast, and supplied as high-resolution jpeg files (file size should be a minimum of 1MB). You must supply each source to be credited. For any non-agency photographs featuring school students, you must have written permission from a parent/carer for each child. For any photograph for which you are not the copyright holder, written permission must be sought. Any permission occurring a charge must be arranged by a member of the GA Editorial Team.

Please note that photographs found online or elsewhere in the public domain are **not** copyright free – please check conditions of use before supplying them, and provide the source url.

For any images not meeting the required standard of clarity, quality and resolution, or for which permission is not possible, the GA editor will source adequate replacements. If you are in doubt about the quality of photographs, check with the GA editor.

### Copyright

The GA cannot publish any material for which someone else holds the copyright without their express permission. When you are selecting material for use (written or illustrative), make a careful note of the following information to enable permission to be sought:

- title of publication
- date of publication
- ISBN
- author
- publisher including address
- details of page, chapter, length of section to be used.

As a general rule quotes up to 100 words can be used without permission (excluding poems, headlines and words that sum up the essence of the piece). All photographs, maps, diagrams and newspaper extracts (including headlines) will need copyright permission. If a fee is payable for a permission, this must be agreed with and arranged through the GA.

### House style

The GA has specific house style standards which are applied to all publications. If you are uncertain about any aspect, which is not covered below, consistency is always best.

### **Referring to young people**

Please ensure that, if your text refers to children in a school or education-based setting, you use pupils for those in primary education and students for those in secondary or further education. Outside the educational setting, use children (primary aged and under) and young people (secondary or post-16 aged).

### **Spelling**

Please use English, rather than American, spelling:

- 'ise' not 'ize' (e.g. specialise)
- among, while (not amongst, whilst)
- acknowledgement, judgement (not acknowledgment, judgment)
- connection (not connexion)
- despatch, enquiry (not dispatch, inquiry)

Please mark any unusual spellings that you want to retain, and do not alter spellings in quoted matter.

### **Punctuation**

The most important things about punctuation are (a) to make the sense clear to the reader, and (b) to be consistent.

Use **full points** after abbreviations but not after contractions (a contraction is where the final letter of the shortened form is the final letter of the original word). Some common contractions are Mr, Mrs, Dr, St, Ltd; some common abbreviations are e.g., etc., Co. Exceptions to this rule include CE, BCE (see also Measurements below) and abbreviations such as BBC, NATO, MP.

No **apostrophe** in plane, phone. Watch out for wrong use of apostrophes: Its own, not It's. Avoid familiar contractions - shan't, won't, she's - except as part of dialogue.

Use **single quotation marks** for a first quotation, **double quotation marks** for a quotation within a quotation.

When **listing** items within a sentence, omit the final comma that would be placed before the 'and' in lists of three or more items: 'red, white and blue'.

**Bulleted lists** are commonly used to indicate points with no clear rank order. A simple list where the clause completes the sentence introducing the list should be punctuated as below.

If what you send us is not consistent, our house style is to:

- introduce the list with a colon
- start each point with a lower case letter
- use no punctuation at the end of a point
- use a full stop after the last point.

Where the list is made of complete sentences or standalone statements, each bullet starts with a capital and ends with a full point.

The conditions of attending were clearly stated:

- Entry would be by ticket only.
- Each ticket would be stamped with the date, time and event.
- Each person could only have one ticket and these were not transferable to another person.
- The event might be subject to cancellation at the last minute.

Use **hyphens** sparingly, and be consistent in their use. Watch out for:

- England in the nineteenth century (but nineteenth-century England)
- A man who is well known (but a well-known man)
- In the long term, the causes (long-term causes)

Keep **initial capitals**, which break up the flow of the reading, to a minimum, and use them consistently. Use initial capitals for:

- the National Curriculum
- the Government (to indicate the current Government), Prime Minister
- Parliament, Commons, Lords and House to avoid ambiguity

- names of religions
- Church (when referring to religion rather than the building)
- names of periods - Carboniferous, Iron Age etc.
- North/South etc. when part of a title of an area/political division, e.g. South Africa, Western Australia

Do not use initial capitals for:

- non-specifics, e.g. capitalism, general election, the government (in general terms), a school curriculum, heads of department, northwest, geography

Use **italic** for:

- titles of books except the Bible, books of the Bible and the Quran
- titles of plays, films, radio and television programmes, computer programs, paintings and sculptures
- names of ships, but not the prefix 'HMS', e.g. HMS *Victory*
- foreign words and phrases, e.g. *et al* or *ad infinitum* but not those which are accepted into the English language, e.g. etcetera.
- Titles of newspapers, but not the definite article, e.g. the *Sun*. The only exceptions to this are *The Times* and *The Sunday Times*.

Do not use italic for:

- names of theatres, pubs etc.
- titles of chapters, articles or poems (use single quotation marks)
- the possessive 's' following an italicised word, e.g. *Discovery's* port.

### **Numbers, dates and measurements**

Use numeric figures for:

- a sequence of quantities when using units of measurement.

Do not use numeric figures for:

- separate objects which are not units of measurement, e.g. animals.
- numbers under 10 in descriptive matter.

Use:

- CE and BCE not BC and AD
- minimum numbering for eras, e.g. 1961–7, 2009–12
- First World War, not World War 1
- standard measurement abbreviations, with no full point

Do not:

- use punctuation in dates, e.g. 21 April 1995
- use an apostrophe in decades, e.g. 1920s
- pluralise measurement abbreviations, e.g. 10cm, not 10cms

Use:

- en dashes not hyphens in number and year ranges, e.g. 1912–15 not 1912-15

### **Other usage**

- Awarding bodies or awarding organisations – not exam boards
- EBacc – not Ebacc or EBACC
- Ofsted – not OfSTED or OFSTED
- A level – not A Level, A-Level, GCE
- Independent investigation not NEA
- KS3 not ks3
- key stage 3 not Key Stage 3
- and – not &
- When talking about 0° latitude – the Equator, capital E
- Moment Magnitude should be used for measuring the impact of earthquakes not the Richter Scale
- Climate change and global warming are preferred as umbrella terms when used repeatedly within a document, rather than climate emergency, climate crisis and global heating. However, the context, use for emphasis, intended audience and author preference should also be taken into consideration.

- Referring to people in terms of nationality or region – Chinese, Asian, Australian, British. Lower case for black and white unless the author has requested otherwise. The following is from the Guardian (Sept 2020):

'black should be used only as an adjective when referring to race, i.e. not "blacks" but "black people" or whatever noun is appropriate. There is ongoing debate about the capitalisation of black, with some using it as a physical descriptor, others to describe a specific cultural group, therefore while generally lower case, if a writer, editor or subject of a story prefers to use Black then that choice should be respected.'

### **Units**

- Metric/ SI units should be used. This includes km rather than miles
- Do not mix metric and imperial
- Metric tonnes are different in quantity to tons – check and convert tons to tonnes
- km<sup>2</sup> not sq. km
- % not per cent

### **References**

All references should be listed at the end of the manuscript, using the Harvard system.

#### **For books:**

- author(s)/Editor(s) surname, initial(s).
- if Editor(s), follow with (ed)/(eds)
- year of publication, enclosed in parentheses
- title of book in italic followed by full point
- town where publisher is based followed by colon
- publisher followed by full point

Example: Weldon, M. (1997) *Studying Distant Places*. Sheffield: Geographical Association.

#### **For part of an edited book:**

- author(s) of part
- year of publication, as above
- title of part, in single quotation marks, followed by 'in'
- name of editor(s), followed by (ed)/(eds)
- title of book
- town where publisher based followed by colon and publisher.

Example: Gunn, J. (1985) 'Pennine karst areas and their Quaternary history' in Johnson, R.H. (ed) *The Geomorphology of North West England*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

#### **For articles from journals or magazines:**

- author(s)
- year of publication as above
- title of article in single quotation marks followed by a comma
- name of journal in italic
- volume number and issue number followed by page number(s), using 'p.' for single page and 'pp.' for multiple pages.

Example: Broadway, M. (1997) 'Alberta Bound: Canada's Beef Industry', *Geography*, 82(4), pp. 377-9.

For references within the text, where the author's name is included in the sentence, use the surname only, followed by the date of the publication in parentheses: Example: Cook (1983) suggests an alternative.

Where the text is attributed to, or quoted from a reference, enclose the surname followed by a comma and the date in parentheses: Example: 'ICT can be a... stimulus for question raising', (Pickford, 1999).

#### **For references to an item online:**

- author(s)
- year of publication as above
- title of online item italics followed by a full point
- available at:
- unitalicised URL followed by no punctuation

- (last accessed [date as dd/mm/yyyy]).

If you have an extensive list of online references, delete (last accessed from all same-date entries and use a sentence at the end stating:

Unless otherwise specified, all URLs last accessed dd/mm/yyyy.