Style Guide

December 2001
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Section 1
Stationery

TechnoLearn has two types of official stationery. These are:

- Letterhead To be used for official letters and memorandums.
- With Compliments Slips To be used for short notes – usually handwritten.

All official correspondence should be printed on TechnoLearn stationery.

Style and Format

Official TechnoLearn correspondence should be typed using open punctuation in full block style. This means that all lines begin at the left-hand margin and punctuation signs are omitted at the end of the line for the date, inside address, salutation and closing salutation. (For the sake of clarity, a comma may sometimes be used within the inside address.) Full stops are also omitted from abbreviations, except at the end of a sentence. For example:

Ms G Anna
Managing Director
GO Anna Industries Pty Ltd
PO Box 111
BRISBANE QLD 4001 3 returns

Dear Ms Anna 2 returns

The preferred font for official correspondence is Times New Roman in 12 point for the body of your text and 9 point for reference details.

Correspondence should be printed in single line spacing with two spaces after each full stop and two returns after each paragraph. It is also good practice to have plenty of white space around your text. Your document should not be cramped as this makes it difficult for the reader to comprehend.

Justifying your text will also give your document a neat and orderly appearance.

Your Reference

If the author is replying to incoming correspondence that has a reference, this should be quoted in the reply. As a mark of courtesy, “Your Reference” should appear before “Our Reference” and should be printed in 9 point, at the top left corner of all memorandums and letters.
Our Reference

“Our Reference” is used to track a document back to the author and also provides a trial to where the document has been filed. “Our Reference” should appear directly under “Your Reference” and is also printed in 9 point. It should include the location of the author (eg Townsville), the document number or code (refer to section on Document Register), the author’s initials and/or the typist’s initials. For example:

Your Reference: 3829/95/dde
Our Reference: TOWNSVILLE/R323.DOC/PC/rgf

Wherever possible, details of the contact officer and telephone number should be included in the closing paragraph of correspondence, particularly when that officer is not the signing officer. For example:

If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact Ms Jane Doe at Pimlico on (&) 47 505 211.

Date

The date should be typed as day, month, and year with no commas. For example:

14 September 1999

Addresses

If replying to a business/partnership, ensure the full, correct business name and type of business (if applicable) is used. For example:

Address

Use the name and title of the person whenever possible – make the effort to find out both – as well as the post office box address.

Salutation and Closure

All letters should include a ‘salutation’ and closure’, however, memorandums do not usually contain either. Where possible, the salutation should refer to the addressee’s name as well as their title or position.

When you know the name and title of the person such as Dear Mr Reebok or Dear Ms Nike, end your correspondence with Yours sincerely.

When you know both the first and last name of the person but not their gender use both names for example Dear Dallas Star and end your correspondence with Yours
**sincerely.** When you only know the last name use **Dear Mr/Ms Star** and end your correspondence with **Yours faithfully.**

If you know the professional title of the person this should be used rather than Mr, Ms or Mrs for example **Dear Dr Little** or **Dear Professor More** and end the correspondence with **Yours sincerely.**

**Signature Block**

The name of the person signing the letter should be typed in all capitals followed by the person’s title typed in bold in upper and lower case. For example:

**Adele Christianson**  
**Director**

**Enclosures**

The abbreviations **ENC** (enclosure) or **ATT** (attachment) should appear at the bottom of correspondence when documents are enclosed. Although it is not common, the abbreviations **USC** (under separate cover) can be used when documents are forwarded separately.

If there is more than one enclosure it is good practice to indicate this by typing the number of enclosures in brackets, for example **ENC (2)**. Alternatively, you may wish to list out the enclosures, for example:

- **ENC (1)**  
  Letter from Director dated 11 June 1998
- **ENC (2)**  
  Memo from Director dated 15 July 1997

**bc and cc’s**

A **bc** (blind copy) is used when a copy of a letter or memorandum is being sent to a person other than the addressee. Only the sender and the receiver of the blind copy are aware that the correspondence has been forwarded to another person. The person to whom the original correspondence was sent will not be aware that anyone else has a copy.

The bc notation should be printed on the copy being forwarded to the other person and on the file copy – not on the original document.

**bc**’s are prepared on letterhead and normally show the recipient’s title and the Section/Division in which they work with a comment and space for the signing officer to sign. This notation should be located below the signature block.
Where there is more than one blind copy, each has its own notation on its own copy – only the file copy has a record of all the recipients. For example:

bc Director, Corporate Services 2 returns
For your information 5 returns

CARMEN BIRD
Manager, Personnel Services

A cc (carbon copy) is similar to a blind copy, however, the person receiving the original letter is made aware that someone else has received a copy. A cc is also typed on letterhead with the notation cc typed on the original as well as all other copies including the file copy. The cc is also located directly under the signature block but does not contain a comment or a second signature block. For example:

cc Director, Corporate Services

Important Points When Typing bc’s and cc’s

- cc’s only have the name and address with no comment or signature.
- If a bc or cc is going outside the Department, letterhead and full title/position should be included in the bc/cc address.
- Where there is more than one bc, each has its own notation on its own copy. The file copy is the only copy that has a list of all bc recipients.

Multiple Page Documents

Try to organise page endings to coincide with paragraphs. Avoid widow and orphan lines (one or two lines of a paragraph) appearing at either the top or bottom of the page.

Ensure that the last page of a letter has some of the body of the letter, as well as the closing salutation and signature.

Because pages of a document can easily become separated, it is important to acknowledge that more pages are following. At the bottom right corner of each continuing page type 3 dots followed by a forward slash and then the page number of the following page. For example:

…/5

Pages should also be numbered (except the first page) and this is normally printed at the centre top of each page with a dash on either side of the number.
It is also useful to print the document reference number and typist’s initials on each page. After the first page the document reference number can be printed at the bottom left corner of the document in 9 point. For example:

Our Reference: TOWNSVILLE/R340.DOC/rgf

**Envelopes**

TechnoLearn has its own pre-paid envelopes printed with the logo. It is important to remember that these envelopes must be processed through the Administration Unit and not posted by individuals. If you wish to forward a “Reply Paid” envelope to a client, TechnoLearn has specially printed envelopes for this purpose. Please check with the Administration Unit.

When addressing envelopes, Australia Post prefers the following points to be observed:

- Use block style;
- Use open punctuation;
- A flat or unit number should be shown before the street number, for example 1/94 Pimlico Street;
- If the mail is being sent to an address outside Australia, the word “Flat” or “Apartment” should precede the number;
- Special notations such as “Confidential” or “Personal” should not interfere with the address; and
- An overseas destination should appear in capitals on the last line.

**File Copies**

Authors should retain a copy of all outwards correspondence.

**Document Register**

As a general practice all documents should be recorded in a register. This register should be maintained by the author/typist and would normally include the document reference, subject, date, and name of the person to whom the document is addressed.

You can be quite adventurous when naming your documents, however, as your library of documents increases it is sometimes difficult to keep track of these names. It is therefore suggested you use a numeric system and also include the author/typist’s initials so that the computer copy can be traced. For example the reference code R324.DOC/rgf indicates the document was written by R (for Rhonda), it is the 324th document listed in the document register, it was typed in Word for Windows Version 6 (DOC) and it was typed by rgf (Rhonda G Flynn).
This is an excellent resource when trying to locate previous correspondence especially if the author no longer works in that area. Always take the time to ensure your document register is regularly updated. Refer to Section 2 for an example of a document register.

Fax Cover Sheets

Fax cover sheets have been prepared. Master copies are available on the intranet. Please contact TechnoLearn’s Administration Unit if you need assistance to access these documents.

Meeting Agenda

Agendas are used to tell meeting participants of the time and location of a meeting as well as the items that will be discussed.

The first line of the heading should be typed in 24 point, all capitals, centred and bold and give the name of the company. This is followed by three returns and then the title of the meeting is typed in 18 point and another three returns. Then in 12 point type the date, time and location of the meeting in upper and lower case and bold. This is followed by another three returns and then the word agenda is typed in uppercase and bold.

Follow this heading with three returns and then begin numbering the agenda items on the left margin. Tab across (normally 2cms) and type the agenda item. The name of the person delivering the agenda item should also be shown in italics.

The first agenda item is normally “Review of Previous Minutes/Action Items”, the second last agenda item is normally General Business, and the last agenda item is normally “Date of Next Meeting”. Refer to Section 2 for an example of this format.

Minutes of Meeting

A formal record of meetings (Minutes) should be kept as a reference to what was discussed at the meeting and also to keep a record of action items or outcomes.

Two styles of minutes are generally accepted.

STYLE 1

This document is typed using landscape. The name of the organisation is centred across the page and typed in bold using 12 point. This is followed by two returns and then the title of the meeting typed in bold and 12 point followed by another two returns. Then in 10 point, bold, upper and lower case, type the meeting details including date, time and location. This is followed by another two returns and then on the left hand margin, list the meeting participants and those that have given their apologies. The remainder of the document is also typed in 10 point.
Insert a table across the page with five columns. Column headings should be typed in bold and read Agenda Item, Discussion, Action Officer, Action and Action Timeline. It is useful to insert these headings as a header and also to include a footer with the file name and page number. Refer Section 2 for an example of this format.

**STYLE 2**

The first line of the heading should be typed in 24 point (or extra large), all capitals, centred and bold and give the name of the organisation. This is followed by three returns and then the title of the meeting typed in 18 point (or very large) and another three returns. Then in 12 point type the meeting details – date, time and location – in bold and upper and lower case. This is followed by another three returns and then on the left hand margin, list the meeting participants and those that have given their apologies.

**Recording of minutes**

The first item dealt with at the meeting is numbered 1 (irrespective of its agenda item number), and given the same title as the agenda with the agenda item number in brackets immediately following. For example:

1. **PREVIOUS MINUTES/ACTION ITEMS (Agenda Item 1)**

Sub items are numbered 1.1, 1.2, 1.3 etc and printed in normal type. For example:

1.1 Chris Gilson to advise winners of staff election.

1.2 Julie Twigg to follow-up arrangements for co-operative programs.

**NOTE:** Referencing of minutes by numbers is important to create the action list and for auditing and reference purposes.

Agenda items can be broken into two categories **information only** and **requiring action**.

**Information only**

Some items are on the agenda to be brought to the attention of those attending the meeting but no action is required. The minute should indicate this, for example:

2. **NEW STAFF MEMBERS (Agenda item 4)**

2.1 Welcome to our 2 new staff members.
Requiring action

Some items are on the agenda because they require action – that is a decision to be made or someone to do something by a specific time etc. An action listing should be written below the minute which will then be transferred to an Action List for follow up at the appropriate meeting.

Minuting of these agenda items should form two parts. The first paragraph should be a brief description of the agenda item and why it has been put on the agenda. Second and following items should define the action. For example:

3. MASTER KEYING (Agenda item 5)

3.1 John Wensley advised that a new keying system was being introduced and restricted access only would be available to some areas.

3.2 John Wensley and Facilities Manager to determine which areas should be security keyed and who should have keys to these areas. All keying arrangements should be completed within four weeks.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action:</th>
<th>John Wensley/Facilities Manager</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Timeline:</td>
<td>26 September 1999</td>
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3.3 New keying arrangements to be highlighted in next Courier so that all staff are aware of the new system. Public Relations Officer to arrange.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action:</th>
<th>Public Relations Officer</th>
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<tr>
<td>Timeline:</td>
<td>1 October 1997</td>
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Action List

An Action List from the previous meeting should be prepared and distributed with the agenda. The Action List is a collation of all actions determined at previous meetings and is used as a follow-up to monitor that actions are completed.

Each action minuted should be added to the bottom of the Action List.

At the beginning of each meeting the Action List is reviewed and those items which have been completed will be deleted. Those that have not been actioned will be given a new timeline.
Only those items with a timeline for “today’s meeting” should be highlighted. Other items need not be referred to when reviewing the action list. Refer Section 2 for an example of this format.

NOTES FOR TAKING MINUTES

Unless it is required for a specific purpose, it is not necessary to record general discussion which takes place. Minutes should record outcomes and not general discussion. Remember you are looking for actions.

If discussion on one agenda item has finished and the outcome is not clear or action has not been decided, bring this to the attention of the Chairperson before they proceed to the next agenda item.

Electronic Communication

Correspondence forwarded by email is often treated casually and does not conform to the requirements of the Style Guide. However, these messages should be considered the same as any other form of official correspondence, particularly as they are often forwarded to second and third parties or printed and kept as a formal record. It is therefore recommended that the spell check facility be used prior to forwarding electronic mail and that care be taken over grammar and sentence construction.

Memorandums and Letters

Please refer to Section 2 for information regarding the layout of memorandums and letters.
Section 2
## DOCUMENT REGISTER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>DOCUMENT FILENAME</th>
<th>SUBJECT</th>
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</table>
**Format for Letters**

- **Top Margin**: 2 cm
- **Bottom Margin**: 2 cm
- **Left Margin**: 2.5 cm
- **Right Margin**: 2.5 cm

- **Font**: Times New Roman
  - 12 point

- **Format**: Full block style
  - Open punctuation

- **Reference Details**: 9 point
  - Followed by 3 returns

- **Date**: Followed by 3 returns

- **Address**: Followed by 3 returns

- **Salutation**: Followed by 2 returns

- **Body of Text**: Followed by 2 returns

- **Closure**: Followed by 5 returns

- **Signature Block**: Type name in upper case followed by the position typed in bold, upper and lower case.

- **bc**: 2 returns after the Signature Block

- **cc**: 2 returns after the Signature Block