

EDUCATION SERVICES AUSTRALIA

# EDITORIAL GUIDE for metadata

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Education  
Services  
Australia

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## Editorial guide for metadata

Education Services Australia editorial style is informed by the *Style manual for authors, editors and printers* (6th edn, Wiley). This *ESA Editorial guide for metadata* provides alternatives to those styles that are affected by the metadata restrictions, such as italics for book titles and the inability to use bullets for lists.

### ACARA style

Although not a metadata issue, ACARA's capitalisation for various curriculum terms is included here as they occur frequently in metadata.

Term	Style	Examples
learning areas	lower case (except languages)	science, the arts
strands	title case	Historical Knowledge and Understanding, Number and Algebra
sub-strands	sentence case	Biological sciences, Real numbers
depth studies	sentence case	Investigating the ancient past
electives	sentence case	The globalising world
cross-curriculum priorities	lower case	sustainability, Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia
general capabilities	lower case	ethical understanding, critical and creative thinking

### Commercial terms

- In descriptions and educational value points, do not include 'Pty Ltd', 'Co Ltd' etc after a company name (although they must be included in the acknowledgements).
- There is no need to include 'registered' or 'trademarked' to show that something is a trademarked brand name – however, a trademarked name should have a capital letter.
- Brand and model names should be capitalised.

### Dates

- For a range of years (in the same century) the style is 1952-57, 1766-88. Otherwise 1945-2006. 'In the 1960s' and 'in the 60s and 70s' are both OK. Note the absence of apostrophes. 'In the 1870-1920 period' and 'during the period 1870 to 1920' are both fine. Note the use of hyphens rather than en dashes, as required for metadata.
- Acceptable styles for decades are: 1890s, 1930s and 1940s, 1930s and 40s, 1950s-60s.
- For centuries, use the ordinal, eg the 18th century – note that the suffix is set in line, not as a superscript.

- If an approximate date is given, use 'c' (as in c1940 – note no space or full stop after the 'c') in the resource title and acknowledgements, but please use 'about 1940' in the description and educational value statement.
- For life spans:
  - only include birth-death dates where the person is directly relevant to the asset and to the educational value point
  - sometimes the dates of a secondary person can illuminate or clarify something about the primary one – it will be a judgement call
  - style birth-only dates as: Peter Jackson (1961-), with no space after the hyphen
  - life spans should not be included in the Description, but in an educational value point.

## Emphasis

It is best not to use bold, italics or underlining in the digital resources, so any emphasis required must be created through the wording.

## Hyperlinks

If you wish to use hyperlinks in a field in your metadata, please contact the metadata specialists at Education Services Australia.

## Illegal (or 'special') characters

Illegal characters are characters that are not recognised by all computers and all software. These characters (sometimes called special characters) usually require the Shift key, but they also include 'smart' (curly) quotation marks, square brackets, backwards and forward slashes, dashes and equal signs. (Note that the underscore is an exception to the Shift key rule.)

## Italics

In normal print text it is convention to use italic font when citing the names of various items, such as books and newspapers. Since it is not advisable to use italic font in metadata, Education Services Australia has developed alternative styles, as set out in this table. Use single dumb (straight) quotation marks.

item	instead of italics, use
newspapers and periodicals (including magazines)	title case, no quotation marks
ships, planes etc	title case, no quotation marks
books, songs, poems, plays, other publications	sentence case, single quotation marks
film titles	sentence case, single quotation marks
newsreel titles	title case, no quotation marks
ballet, opera, musical titles	sentence case, single quotation marks
botanical and zoological taxonomic names	sentence case, single quotation marks

## Personal names

- Names do not take full stops between initials.
- For film resources, when mentioning a character’s name for the first time, provide the full name as given in film credits. After that, use the name by which the character is referred to in the film, for example, ‘Morant’ rather than ‘Breaker’, but ‘Alvin’ rather than ‘Purple’.

## Punctuation

Character	Usually used for	Advice
accents, diacritics	foreign languages	Avoid on all foreign words that have been accepted into general English usage, eg, cafe, crouton.  If you need to use foreign language words with accents, contact ESA for advice.
ampersand (&)	company, institution names	Replace with ‘and’.
apostrophe, quotation marks	used to indicate possession, speech, quotations	Use dumb (straight) quotes. Set your word processing program to use straight quotes.
bold	emphasis	It is generally best to avoid bold text in the metadata. Any emphasis required must be created through the wording.
bullet	used to indicate separate items or points in a list	It is not advisable to create lists in metadata.
character-based alphabets	eg Arabic, Chinese, Greek, Japanese, Korean, Russian, Thai	If you need to use such alphabets contact ESA for advice.
currency	money amounts	Contact ESA for advice.
dash	spaced en dash for textual dash closed en dash to indicate a range – of dates, figures etc	Replace the en dash with a spaced hyphen. See under Dates for examples of use in a range.
degree symbol	geometry – angle size temperature	Spell out ‘degrees’.
ellipsis	to indicate omitted text, for example, at the beginning of a quotation	Use only three full stops ... without spaces between them and with a space on either side; however, omit the space between an ellipsis and a quotation mark. Do not use the shortcut keyboard symbol. If an ellipsis ends a sentence do not add a fourth stop.
italics	publications, songs, poetry, performance titles names of ships etc	It is generally best to avoid italics in the metadata. Use single (dumb) quotation marks on items that would normally be in italics. See also under Capitalisation for styles to use.
mathematical operators	mathematics, science	If you need to use mathematical operators contact ESA for advice.

quotation marks, apostrophe	used to indicate possession, speech, quotations	Smart (curly) quote marks are generally best avoided in metadata. It is OK to use dumb (straight) quotes. Set your word-processing program to use straight quotes for metadata.
slash	used to indicate alternatives used in dates, in science and maths	Best avoided. Spell out.
subscripts	science, maths	Contact ESA for advice.
superscripts	science, maths ordinal numbers	Contact ESA for advice.
underlining	emphasis publication titles when italics are unavailable hyperlinks	Contact ESA for advice.

## Quotations

- Quoted material is enclosed in single quotation marks.
- The style for citing quoted material is to include the source in brackets immediately after the quotation, whether a digital or print publication. See the following example:

... on the Lamington Plateau in southern Queensland, the Richmond birdwing butterflies 'appear at the start of summer rains in November or December' ([www.qmuseum.qld.gov.au/](http://www.qmuseum.qld.gov.au/)).

## Units of measure

- Since subscripts and superscripts cannot be used, it is necessary to use words or abbreviations for measures such as area and volume, for example, 5 sq km, 15 cubic m, a 7.3-sq-m floor area. (It is permissible to abbreviate 'square', but not 'cubic'.)
- Spell out temperature units, for example: 10 degrees Celsius.
- Since a slash cannot be used to indicate, for instance, 'per hour', spell out the unit, eg 30 km per hour; 5 mg per litre.