

Queensland Law Society authors' guide 2011

Checklist

Articles and items appearing in Queensland Law Society publications, including those for the website, must meet several essential criteria. It is requested that all authors review the following checklist before submitting material for publication by the QLS.

- Is the article concise and to the point?
- Is it in plain English?
- Is the tense consistent?
- For news items, has the most important element been placed first?
- Does it follow standard QLS style conventions (*see below*)?
- Have you used short words and phrases and reviewed it to delete unnecessary words and phrases?
- Have you reread it to check that it makes sense and proofed it for errors?
- Is all non-original material in the article correctly referenced?
- Are the pictures you are submitting of printing quality (300dpi, full colour in jpg, tif or eps format) and have you submitted captions?

QLS editorial rights

Please note:

- Copy will be subject to editorial review and approval – if content is deemed unsuitable, it will not be published; major edits will be sent back to the contributor for verification.
- Be aware of editorial deadlines. If content is submitted late, it will not appear in the intended edition.
- Unsuitable material includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - advertorial (ie if the copy is promoting the contributor's service or product above others, unless the information is deemed to be of significant value to readers. Contributed articles are usually footnoted with the contributor's name, organisation and, if required, a brief explanation of what the organisation does.)
 - out of date
 - poorly written
 - deemed offensive or inflammatory
 - material that plagiarises the work of others.



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www.qls.com.au.

NB: All contributors should receive, review, sign and return a Proctor contributors' form.

Length

In publications such as Proctor, space is always an issue, so you should say what you have to say in the minimum number of words. Never 'pad out' an item just to make it longer.

When the article is complete, always reread to ensure it makes sense, and go through the whole article with the aim of correcting spelling and grammar, deleting or changing redundant words and phrases, and replacing long words and phrases with shorter variations, as shown below.

Example 1:

*The Practice Management Committee **will hold** a meeting on...*

rather than:

*The Practice Management Committee **has determined that it will convene** a meeting on...*

Example 2:

*For **more** information **on** the new form, see...*

rather than:

*For **any further** information **relating to** the new form, see...*

Style

All material should be written in plain English, avoiding 'legalese' whenever possible. However, all quoted material from a published source should be quoted exactly, without modification. Even mistakes such as misspellings should be left intact – it is permissible to place the Latin word *sic* (meaning "thus") in square brackets after an error to indicate that it is an error in the original material.

As the QLS is an Australian law society addressing an Australian audience, your standard reference for spelling should be the Macquarie Dictionary, so Australian/English spelling is preferred in all instances rather than US variants. For example – 'honour' rather than 'honor', 'surprise' rather than 'surprize'. If desired, you can adjust the spell check in Word: Tools > Language > Set Language > English (Australia).

Here are some common style considerations:

- **Court cases:** Italicised and referenced, for example: *D’Orta-Ekenaike v Victoria Legal Aid* (2005) 223 CLR 1
- **Italics:** Acts, titles of books, films and other published material are italicised, for example: *Legal Profession Act 2007* (Qld), *War of the Worlds* by H.G. Wells
- **Dates:** 11 October 2010
- **Numbers:*** Write out one to nine. Use figures for 10 to 9999, and use a comma from 10,000 on. Exceptions include days of the month (9 February), figures containing decimals (3.4 litres), measures that involve abbreviations (7km, 2°C), numbers that are part of titles (Article 6, section 5), times of day (3pm), fractions (3½, 4¼), etc.
- **Quotations:** Use double quotes for direct quotes but single quotes to highlight words or phrases for example: “The defendant claimed he was ‘out of his mind’ when he shot the police officer,” he said.
- **Capitals:** Research has indicated that overuse of capital letters slows down the reading process and inhibits comprehension. It is generally recommended that capitals be limited to proper nouns while job titles such as managing partner and chief executive officer appear in lower case. Also, while we capitalise the names of QLS sections and committees, such as the Revenue Law Committee, in subsequent references we would refer to ‘the committee’. Ensure your use of capitals is consistent.
- **Abbreviations:** Always spell out the full name or phrase at first reference followed by the abbreviation in brackets, for example: Queensland Law Society (QLS), and use the abbreviation thereafter. This applies to all but the most common abbreviations, such as GST (those which it can be safely assumed everyone would know).

News

For ‘news’ items, as distinct from feature-length articles, the most important element should always be placed first. You don’t need to introduce a news article with background information.

Example:

The Queensland Law Society will launch a new series of practice management workshops aimed at small to medium-sized firms in June.

rather than:

Many practitioners in small to medium-sized firms struggle with practice management issues on a day-to-day basis. They find that the demands of meeting their clients’ needs often overtake the demands that running a practice places upon them. This has been an ongoing issue for many years and the Queensland Law Society Practice Management Committee has put a lot of time into devising strategies that can help practitioners perform both roles. It has therefore been decided that the QLS will start a series of practice management workshops.

News items should be structured so the most important item comes first, followed by details in descending order of importance. In theory, you should be able to remove paragraphs one by one from the end of the item and it should still make sense.

And don’t forget to check that your news story answers who, what, when and where (plus how and why, if appropriate).

Referencing

Your article must be an original work. All non-original content, including ideas, data, quotations or material from other sources, must be appropriately referenced.

Brackets, endnotes and other conventions can be used to reference non-original material. Paraphrasing is permissible, but must also be correctly referenced.

In cases where a substantial amount of material is being referenced from a single source – more than a couple of paragraphs – it is desirable to obtain permission to reproduce the material directly from the author or publisher.

To standardise legal citation, it is recommended that all contributors obtain a copy of *the Australian Guide to Legal Citation* published by the Melbourne University Law Review Association Inc. A free PDF copy can be downloaded mulr.law.unimelb.edu.au/go/aglc or printed copies can be ordered from the association for a small charge. This comprehensive and well-written guide is used by many of Australia's leading law firms as well as most Australian legal journals and publications. It is the official Proctor standard for citation.

If you are uncertain of how much detail to include in the reference, it is better to provide too much rather than too little, as it can then be adjusted by the editor.

Here are some simple examples of appropriate referencing:

1. According to Professor Jason Holloway in his book, 'Business Law in Australia' (Federation Press, 2003, pp23-24), the...
2. The LexisNexis website (lexisnexis.com.au) includes links to...
3. In *D'Orta-Ekenaike v Victoria Legal Aid* (2005) 223 CLR 1, McHugh J observed at page 42 that:

When referencing, try to ensure you are using the original source, rather than a secondary source which has republished the information. You may need to cover both sources, for example: According to the Times Online website, as reported by the Law Institute Journal (December 2009, p47)...

If you have any concerns or questions about material you are referencing, please contact the QLS publications manager.

Writing for the web

Preparing items for online publication requires a different approach to more formal writing. Articles should be structured as a news item (*see above*) and be characterised by short, active sentences using simple words. Some of these tips may help:

- Avoid the use of conjunctions, for example: 'and', 'but' or 'however, to keep your sentences short.
- Keep sentence structure simple (subject – verb – object) and use active rather than passive voice, for example, "The police officer shot the defendant", not "The defendant was shot by the police officer".
- Use short paragraphs.

- Ideally, all copy will fit on the web page without the need for scrolling.
- If it helps, consider that you are writing your article so that it can be readily understood by a Grade 8 student.

More suggestions

- Before submitting an article for publication, ask a colleague to read it and provide feedback.
- Referring to specific pages in websites can be awkward. Please supply both simple and direct forms of reference, so that the editor can use one for printed material and the other for a hyperlink. For example:

See the website page to learn more about the Society's past Presidents (qls.com.au > About QLS > Our History > Past Presidents

or

<http://www.qls.com.au/content/lwp/wcm/connect/QLS/About+QLS/Our+History/Past+Presidents>).

- Often the simplest way is to learn from example. Examine Proctor and other QLS publications to obtain feel for house style and tone, and note appropriate ways of referencing.

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