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HOUSE-STYLE NOTES FOR AUTHORS AND EDITORS

In producing our authors' books we aim to publish text that is: (a) well written according to generally accepted rules of English grammar;* and (b) well presented according to generally accepted typographical practice.* If authors can share in observing these principles they can significantly contribute to the smooth progress of their books through the production process.

We hope that by the time the text reaches us the wording is in its final, grammatical form. Authors will know how to handle basic grammar; they may not be so aware of typographical conventions. Our house style is a collection of conventions which we prefer to follow;* it is focused on quite common small points which are not commonly recognised outside the publishing industry. They are presented here under alphabetically-ordered topic headings. Sometimes house-style rules offer an element of choice. It is important to make the choice and then apply it consistently throughout the book. Consistent presentation is important: it makes for tidy, unobtrusive typographical presentation and thus strengthens the force of the text. Bibliographic references need particular care in this respect.

* IN PRACTICE our approach to style is fairly flexible. If we receive text that is prepared to a different style from ours, we will accept it as it is, provided that it is (a) used consistently, (b) functional, (c) appropriate for the intended market, and that it (d) doesn't present us with production problems. We are particularly ready to recognise standard American variations from our preferred style. However, the editor of a collection of articles may decide to impose consistent style across all articles, particularly to bibliographic references.

ABBREVIATIONS

Avoid using abbreviations, especially in the main body of text, unless they really seem to be necessary. Abbreviations are more commonly used in bibliographical references, in notes, and in tables.

Distinguish between contractions and truncated abbreviations.

Contractions

A contraction starts with the first letter of the full word and ends with its last letter.

Do not use a full point after a contraction (unless it falls at the end of a sentence):

Dr, Mr, Mrs, St (Saint – plural SS), Ltd, edn and so on
(exception: numero – no., avoids possible ambiguity)

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Truncated abbreviations

These generally close with a full point:

vol., ed., c. (*circa*), trans., fig. etc.

They are commonly used in references:

vol. I, fig. 13, p. 77, fol. 2r (folio 2 recto)

However, use line 3, lines 3–5 (not l. 3, ll. 3–5) to avoid possible confusion with number 1 or number 11.

Plurals

Opinion differs on whether all plural abbreviations should be treated as contractions. We prefer not to use a point after a plural abbreviation which ends in s:

Drs, edns, vols, eds and so on

Some plural abbreviations do not end in s and they usually take a closing point:

pp., edd. (or eds), nn.

Please note:

fols 3r–4v, pp. 35ff

where distinction is made between fol., fols (for folio and folios) and f, ff (no closing point unless falling at the end of a sentence) for following pages (f for one following page, ff for more than one following page; in both cases reference is being made to more than one page, therefore pp. must be used, rather than p.: pp. 12f).

Abbreviated units of measurement

Do not close with a point; keep singular form for plural expressions; close-up to the measurement; don't use italics:

65lb, 4km, £5 3s 8d, 220mm and so on

(exception: 6in., to avoid any possible ambiguity)

Sets of initials

Close up; do not use points:

NATO, HMSO, BL, BN, OE, ME, MS (plural MSS)

but:

i.e., e.g., cf., Ph.D.

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BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See also the section on italics.

In typesetting context ‘roman’ means normal printing style, as opposed to italics or bold.

Be aware of the distinction between a series and a multi-volume work. A series is designed to contain an undetermined number of volumes which are added to the series as the occasion arises. A multi-volume work is designed to contain a predetermined number of volumes which are planned to comprise an entire work.

Style for parts of references

Author’s name

Invert the name in bibliographies, lists of works cited etc. where precedence of the surname facilitates use of the alphabetical ordering (where a work has several authors, only the first author’s name need be inverted). Do not invert authors’ names in footnotes, endnotes, etc.

The title of a volume

If it is a published volume, the title should be in italics. A published volume may be a single-volume work, a multi-volume work, a volume in a series, a volume of a periodical; any volume number should normally be in roman (but in arabic numbering). The title of an unpublished thesis should be in roman, enclosed in single quotation marks.

The title of an article published as part of a volume

should be in roman, enclosed in single quotation marks.

The title of a series

(within which variously titled volumes are published) should be in roman and not enclosed by quotation marks.

The title of a multi-volume work

will probably form the first element of the title of the volume, in which case it should be treated as the title of a volume (in italics).

Examples

See also the section on abbreviations, and the section on numbers for elision of numbers.

Note that a comma should not be used before an opening bracket.

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David C. Douglas, *The Norman Conquest and British Historians* (Glasgow, 1946), pp. 12–14

F. M. Stenton, *The First Century of English Feudalism 1066–1166*, 2nd edn (Oxford, 1961), p. 156 n. 30, pp. 178ff

L. White Jnr, 'The Crusades and the Technological Thrust of the West', *War, Technology and Society in the Middle East*, ed. V. J. Parry and M. E. Yapp (London, 1975), pp. 239–56

C. J. Turner, 'William the Conqueror's March to London', *EHR* 106 (1912), 209–25

Katharine Simms, *From Kings to Warlords: The Changing Political Structure of Gaelic Ireland in the Later Middle Ages*, *Studies in Celtic History* 7 (Woodbridge, 1987), Conclusion

Renée L. Curtis, ed., *Le Roman de Tristan en prose, III* (Cambridge, 1985), p. 135, lines 26–7

MS BL Cotton Galba E. IV, fol. 139v

(We prefer that superscript not be used for r and v, recto and verso.)

Points arising:

Numbers to be added after submission of typescript

If numbers (e.g. page references) are not known when the typescript is submitted, please use 000 instead of the missing numbers, the number of 0s to match the (estimated) number of digits to be substituted later. This device will be necessary for cross references to page numbers which cannot be known until page-proof stage. Use of this device (i) enables the typesetter to leave the appropriate amount of space, and (ii) looks incomplete at proof stage, thus reminding the author/editor to complete. Because this introduces corrections, cross references to page numbers should be kept to the absolute minimum.

Use of abbreviations in bibliographical references

Ibid., *idem*, *op. cit.* and *loc. cit.* may be in roman or italics, provided that the choice is made consistently. Use of *ibid.* is acceptable. Avoid use of *idem*, *op. cit.* and *loc. cit.*; it is difficult for the reader to use *op. cit.* and *loc. cit.* if the original citation is not on the same page.

Abbreviated titles

are a useful way of avoiding cumbersome repetition of full bibliographic references (give author's name too), provided that the full version has previously been given or, preferably, is listed in a list of abbreviations. The form of an abbreviated title must be consistent throughout the book. If there is no list of abbreviations the full citation must be easy to trace, e.g. in a bibliography.

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CAPITALS

A consistent scheme of capitalisation should be applied throughout.

Examples:

the Bible/the bible; but biblical
the King of France/the king of France; the King/the king; a king; all kings
St Mary's church; the church (building); the Church/the
church (the institution); the Roman Catholic Church/church
the Continent/the continent; the continental shelf
Liberal/liberal; Conservative/conservative (different senses
involved here)
the Dark Ages, the Middle Ages, the Renaissance
South-West Africa, the North-West Highlands (political/ administrative units);
the West (cultural entity); eastern England, the north of England, the south-east (merely
descriptive usage)
see Plate 1/see plate 1 (be consistent)

Book titles and chapter headings

If these are in English, capitalise the first letter of the first word and of all subsequent important words (i.e. not the definite or indefinite article, conjunctions or most prepositions, not parts of some verb constructions). For example:

Early Welsh Saga Poetry: A Study and Edition of the Englynion

Note the use of a capital for the first word of the sub-title.

Capitalisation conventions differ for foreign-language titles.

ITALICS

In typesetting context roman means normal printing style, as opposed to italics or bold.

If you use underlining to signify italics please use continuous underlining, not word-by-word underlining.

Italics are used for:

Titles of published books (except for: the Bible, the Koran and books of the Bible – all roman unquoted. Titles of chapters, articles, short stories and unpublished theses should all be roman in quotes; other parts of a book, such as Preface, Introduction should be roman unquoted)

Titles of periodicals (articles published in a periodical – roman in quotes)

Titles of poems, plays and films

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Titles of paintings and sculptures (but these may equally be roman in quotes: be consistent)

Foreign phrases, not yet anglicised, in an English sentence:

in situ [sic] sub judice de facto ad hoc

‘Not yet anglicised’ permits a grey area: the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* may help; be consistent.

Note that this does not apply to proper names, such as names of institutions and streets (which should be roman); neither does it apply to foreign quotations (which should either be roman in quotes, or roman displayed – see the section on quotations).

Directions to the reader in some special cases. For example,

see also in an index, stage directions in plays

Identification of letters or words referred to. For example,

‘the letter *h*’

Emphasis (but this should be used very sparingly)

Italics are not used for

Names of Acts of Parliament

Apostrophe, possessive s or plural s following an italic word

e.g. the *chanson de geste*’s style

We do not italicise c. (abbreviation for *circa*)

See also the exceptions given in the previous list.

NUMBERS

When to spell out and when to leave as figures

Spell out numbers up to one hundred and round numbers higher than one hundred:

two, fifteen, twenty-five, three thousand

(note the use of a hyphen)

Exceptions:

Before

abbreviated units of measurement (5kg, 10ft)

percentages (7%, 27 per cent)

page references etc. (p. 2 n. 16)

When listing a series of quantities. E.g. A had 10 horses, B had 23 horses and C had 8 horses.

Where two series of quantities are being listed together it is best to treat each series differently:

ten of them had 12 books, eight of them had 15 books and two had 20

Use figures to avoid an extra hyphen in an already hyphenated compound (a 45-year-old man)

Avoid starting a sentence with a figure.

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Figures with four or more digits

Use a comma to break up the thousands in figures with four or, alternatively, five or more digits (be consistent):

3193/3,193; 29,501

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Elision

Elide to the shortest form that conveys the correct meaning (except for ‘teens’, to match how they would be spoken):

21–4, 130–5, 149–50, 200–1, 201–2 (317–19, 211–15)

For elision of dates see the section on expressions of time.

Do not elide:

Ranges of measurements unless there is no scope for ambiguity, as could occur with a descending scale

Figures interspersed with letters, e.g. fols 22v–24r

Roman numerals

Numbered items

Use, e.g., 2. 2 or (2)

Never use, e.g., 2)

PUNCTUATION

Paragraphs and section breaks

Give indentation at the start of each new paragraph. This should make the start of each new paragraph clear to the typesetter.

If you want section breaks in your text (which we would print as a line space), please give a 4-line space; it would also be helpful if you would mark the 4-line space ‘NEW SECTION’.

Commas

Be consistent in either omitting or using a comma after the penultimate item in a simple listing within a sentence:

EITHER chickens, dogs, cats and horses (English style)

OR chickens, dogs, cats, and horses (American style)

We prefer English style.

If a comma is used to open a parenthetical phrase or clause, remember to close the phrase or clause with a comma:

the ten parcels, sent on different dates, arrived intact – CORRECT

the ten parcels, sent on different dates arrived intact – INCORRECT

After i.e. or e.g. be consistent in the use or non-use of a comma:

EITHER i.e., six altogether

OR i.e. six altogether

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Hyphenation

When in doubt about whether to use one word, a hyphenated word or two words, see the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* or similar authority.

e.g. granddaughter, water-mill, thank you

On occasions it may be necessary to introduce a hyphen to avoid ambiguity.

e.g. the deep blue sea: the deep-blue sea or the deep, blue sea

Punctuation adjacent to a closing quotation mark

See under QUOTATIONS, below.

Punctuation around parentheses ()

A comma before an opening parenthesis is almost always superfluous; it should not be used.

Position of the full point at a closing parenthesis: the full point should come before the closing parenthesis if a whole sentence, beginning with a capital letter, is enclosed within the parentheses; otherwise the full point should follow the closing parenthesis. E.g.

The book sold well. (It was well publicised.)

The book sold well (it was well publicised).

Full stops (points)

No point should be used at the end of:

Displayed headings

Items in a list, e.g. in a bibliography, contents list, illustrations list, abbreviations list

Do use a full point to close the last sentence of a footnote.

Do not double punctuate at the end of a sentence. E.g.

She said, 'I shall have to go shopping again.'

He was editor of *Which?*

He was known as the mad Prof.

But do double punctuate if a closing parenthesis intervenes:

He edited a magazine (*Which?*).

QUOTATIONS

To display or not to display?

A quotation may be displayed as a separate block of text spaced from the main text, or it may be run on in the body of the main text, distinguished from the main text by the use of quotation marks. (The layout of direct speech is a special case, not dealt with here because it rarely occurs in our books.)

The decision may be based solely on the length of a quotation, or it may take account of the quotation's importance in the train of argument. Bear in mind that it is usual (i) to display two or

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more lines of verse, (ii) not to display short prose quotations that make two or less lines on the printed page.

Quotations run on in the main text

should be enclosed in single quotation marks. Only use double quotation marks for quotations within quotations:

‘I can’t say “Go away” to her’, she said.

Verse quotations run on in text will probably require indication of where line breaks occur, e.g.

‘Who would true valour see,/ Let him come hither;/ One
here will constant be,/ Come wind, come weather.’

Foreign-language quotations should be enclosed in quotation marks and set in normal type; here italics are not needed since the text is already distinguished by quotation marks.

Displayed quotations

Typographic style will be specified by the publisher, generally with extra space inserted above and below the quotation, and with some indentation from both the left and right margin.

Do not use quotation marks at the beginning and end of the quotation, unless they mark the beginning or end of a quotation within the quotation.

Please ensure that the typesetter can tell whether a displayed quotation is to be set as prose or as verse (maintaining your line breaks). Misunderstanding on this point can lead to costly corrections.

If a displayed verse quotation starts with a broken line, the first word should be indented to approximately its true position in the complete line.

Punctuation adjacent to a closing quotation mark

This seems to cause particular difficulty, partly because American and English usages differ. English usage. The position of a full point relative to a closing quotation mark depends on whether the quotation is – or appears to be – a full sentence, in which case the point belongs to the quotation and should be placed inside the closing quotation mark. Otherwise the point goes outside the closing quotation mark, to mark the end of the sentence within which the quotation is placed. Current typographical convention holds that double punctuation should not be used at the end of a quotation.

His son said, ‘I want to be a doctor.’

We watched as ‘darkness passed over the face of the earth’.

He asked, ‘How far are you going?’

[NOT: He asked, ‘How far are you going?’.]

The same logic applies to other punctuation adjacent to a closing quotation mark.

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Use of ellipsis ...

Use three points for the ellipsis and separate the ellipsis from preceding and following text with single spaces (but close-up to a quotation mark or a parenthesis/bracket).

If ellipsis follows the end of a sentence, the three ellipsis-points may be preceded by the full point at the end of the preceding sentence. ('It went well. ... then it was broken') If you do this, do so consistently. Ellipsis should not be *followed* by a full point.

Usually ellipsis should not be used at the beginning and end of a quotation. The fact that it is a quotation indicates that it is extracted from a context of preceding and following text.

Style within a quotation

Follow the original text for capitalisation, italics, punctuation and spelling.

Use square brackets around anything you add to the original text:

... [*sic*] ... ; ... [but see Smith, p. 213] ...

If you italicise certain words for emphasis, add [*my italics*] at the end of the quotation.

SPELLING

Retain original spellings in: book and article titles; proper names of institutions, places etc.; quotations.

Use English, or American, spelling consistently.

Be consistent in using -ise or -ize spelling in words where the alternative spellings are permissible, e.g.

authorise/authorize, organise/organize, realise/realize

Be aware that some words should always end in -ise, e.g.

advertise, advise, arise, braise, chastise, circumcise, comprise, compromise, concise, demise, despise, devise, disguise, enterprise, excise, exercise, expertise, franchise, improvise, incise, merchandise, precise, premise, prise (open), reprise, revise, supervise, surmise, surprise, televise, treatise

Some words have alternative acceptable spellings. Be aware of such words and spell them consistently. Common examples:

acknowledgement/acknowledgment; ageing/aging; appendixes/appendices; biased/biassed; by-law/bye-law; connection/connexion; dispatch/despatch; focused/focussed; gipsy/gypsy; guerrilla/guerilla; inflection/inflexion; inquiry/enquiry; -ise/-ize (see preceding paragraph); judgement/judgment; medieval/mediaeval (we prefer medieval)

In some cases use of a slightly different spelling signifies a different meaning, e.g.

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dependant (noun), dependent (adjective); forbear (abstain), forebear (ancestor); forward (onward), foreword (introductory remarks); principal (chief), principle (rule)

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Anglicised foreign words that have become so accepted in general English usage that they need not be italicised in English text may or may not retain accents used in the donor language, e.g.

élite/elite; régime/regime; façade/facade

Make your choice and be consistent.

Some commonly misspelt words:

accommodate, battalion, desiccation, homogeneous, millennium, sacrilegious

TIME

Note the following examples of expressions of time:

2.00a.m.

17 May 1985

the 1930s, the thirties (the '30s)

c.1410, d.1525, fl.1334

(AD and BC need only be used where there is any likelihood of confusion.)

345 BC

AD 450, the fifth century AD

the fourteenth century (noun)

a fourteenth-century bishop (adjectival usage)

the early fourteenth century

an early-fourteenth-century bishop

the mid fourteenth century

a mid-fourteenth-century bishop

thirteenth- and fourteenth-century manuscripts

If dates are elided, repeat the tens:

1971–74, 1920–25, 1914–18, 1798–1810

BC dates cannot usually be elided

Do not mix styles of expression:

from 1924 to 1928 OR 1924–28 NOT from 1924–28

between 1914 and 1918 NOT between 1914–18

A single year not coincident with a calendar year (e.g. a financial year):

1972/3

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