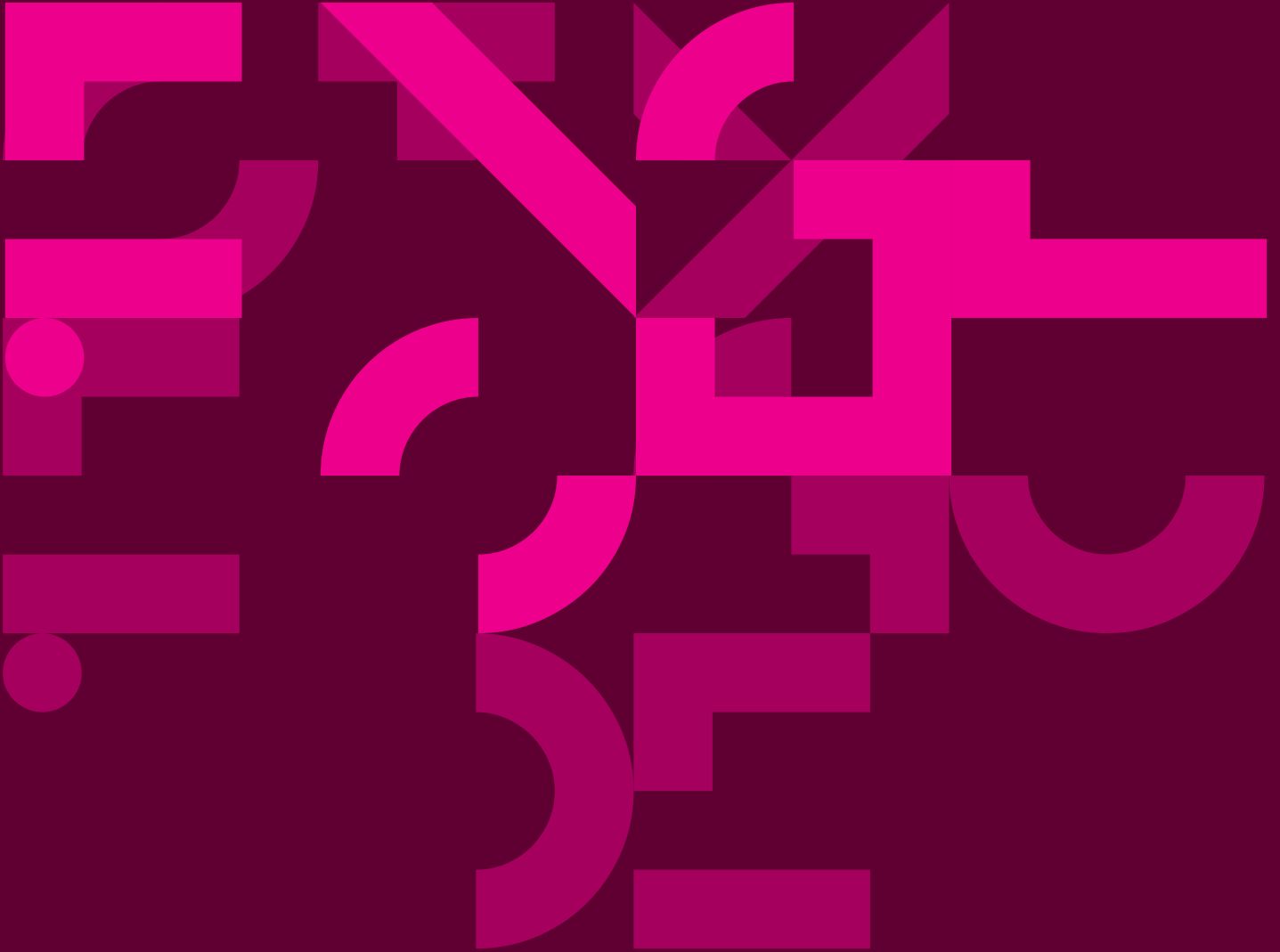




AARHUS UNIVERSITY

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# THE AU ENGLISH STYLE GUIDE

1ST EDITION  
AUTUMN 2014

“ A scrupulous writer in every sentence that he writes will ask himself at least four questions, thus: What am I trying to say? What words will express it? What image or idiom will make it clearer? Is this image fresh enough to have an effect? And he will probably ask himself two more: Could I put it more shortly? Have I said anything that is avoidably ugly?

- George Orwell

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# 1.0 Introduction

## 1.1 Why do we need an English style guide at AU?

As AU language consultants, we translate all kinds of texts from all corners of the university, and we work closely with freelancers and translation agencies. The AU English Style Guide grew out of our own need for a common frame of reference. In writing it, our aim has been to provide each other, our colleagues and our suppliers with a framework for written English communication from emails to profile brochures. This style guide provides guidance on typical pitfalls and problems that Danes experience when they express themselves in English. It also provides guidance to the many translators and editors who write for AU in English in a variety of media and contexts.

### 1.2 How the guide works

The best way to begin using the style guide is to read through it and familiarise yourself with the content. Once you've done that, it will be easy to use the style guide as a reference tool.

The style guide is also available in an online version on [AU's Language Portal](#).

Please remember to check that you are using the latest version of the style guide.

AU employees will find the AU English Style Guide an indispensable tool when working with:

**Web texts and PR material**

**Letters and emails to students and employees**

**Administrative casework and reports**

**Press releases and internal news**

**Conference/ event materials**

**Reports, memos, minutes...**

### 1.3 What's not included in the guide


The style guide can't teach you how to write well or teach you the basics of English grammar and usage. Neither does it pretend to contain the answers to all the finer points of punctuation or usage. It occupies a happy middle ground.

Our standard general reference for English grammar and usage is Michael Swan's [\*Practical English Usage\* \(3rd ed.\)](#). We also refer to a variety of good online sources of help throughout the guide.

The style guide is *not* a guide to academic writing. Individual disciplines and fields are governed by their own style guides, and students and members of academic staff are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the relevant standards for their academic text production in English. This is not to say, however, that the style guide can only be used in non-academic contexts. Many of our recommendations apply to good writing in all situations.

### 1.4 What's included in the guide

Our goals are to:

- ◆ Help AU employees to express themselves **correctly and consistently** in British English in official and formal situations. The  symbol indicates sections that are particularly relevant for non-native speakers of English.<sup>1</sup>
- ◆ Provide external translators and editors with clear **standards and guidelines** for their work for AU.

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<sup>1</sup> In some cases and in some contexts, you may need to express yourself in American English. If this applies to you, consult [the Chicago Manual of Style Online](#).



## 1.5 Questions, comments and suggestions

The style guide is a work in progress that will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis. Please send your input and comments to [Lenore Messick, coordinator for Language Services](#). We hope you find the style guide useful, and we'd like to know what you think about it.

Happy writing!

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## 2.0 The basics

◆ Language settings ◆ Dictionaries ◆ Other resources

### 2.1 Language settings

Use the right proofing tools for the language you're writing in. For AU texts, this means that you should select British English as your proofing language when writing in English.

#### Microsoft Office:

- ◆ [Guide to language settings](#)
- ◆ [Switching between different proofing languages within the same document](#)

#### InDesign:

- ◆ [Hyphenation and spelling dictionaries](#)

#### NOTE

Even though it's an English dictionary that describes itself as "the definitive record of the English language", the OED does not recognise the -ise ending commonly used in British English, but prefers -ize. Both Collins and Merriam Webster recognise both variants. See [4.0. Spelling, vocabulary and usage](#) for a more detailed discussion of when to use -ise.

### 2.2 Dictionaries

AU has a subscription to the [Oxford English Dictionary](#) (OED) that's available to all employees. Use the OED if you need detailed information about the meaning of a word.

[Collins English Dictionary](#) allows you to hear how words are pronounced and provides good sample sentences that show you the word used in context. There is also an excellent thesaurus on the Collins site.

If you need to know how to divide a word into syllables (syllabification), we recommend [Merriam Webster](#).

### 2.3 Other resources

You'll find a variety of external online references at [AU's Language Portal](#).

You'll find thousands of AU-related and general educational terms in the [AU Dictionary](#) (da-en and en-da).

## 3.0 A note on **style**

- ◆ Using contractions ◆ Politeness ◆ Nominalisation
- ◆ Personal pronouns ◆ Active vs passive voice

Even though we work at a university, there really is no reason to express yourself in excessively complex or formal style. So don't be pretentious, because people will not be impressed. Indeed, they may switch off altogether. The main thing is your message – the content of what you say.

Ask yourself:

- ◆ What's the context? (internal/external, formal/informal, specialist/non-specialist etc)
- ◆ What's your main message?
- ◆ What are you trying to achieve (instruct, persuade, explain)?
- ◆ Who is your audience? How good are they at English? What are their needs?

### 3.1 Using contractions

It's often entirely appropriate to use verb contractions in written English in an administrative or semi-formal context (isn't, doesn't etc. – instead of is not, does not etc.), although you should avoid an overly intimate or familiar tone. For example, there's no need for excessive formality in internal communication to students and staff or in internal newsletters – or in a staff style guide, for that matter.

- ✓ Please **don't** forget to register for your exams
  - ✓ If **you're** interested in learning more, please contact...
-

## 3.2 Politeness

Express yourself politely in written communication, especially when asking or directing other people to do something.

### 3.2.1 Imperative forms

Danish phrases such as '*Føltet udfyldes...*' or '*Eksamensbeviset vedhæftes...*' translate to 'Please + imperative':

- ✓ **Please** fill out the form.
- ✓ **Please** attach your diploma.

### 3.2.2 Translating *venligst*

*Venligst* translates to 'Please + imperative' or 'We kindly ask you to...':

- ✓ **We kindly ask you to** attach your resume.
- × **Attach kindly** your resume.

## 3.3 Nominalisation

In non-academic writing, avoid unnecessary nominalisation. When you turn a verb into a noun, you nominalise it (the word 'nominalisation' is actually a good example of a nominalisation!). Like the passive voice, nominalisation shifts the focus of the sentence from the actor to the action, which can make your text sound overly impersonal, formal and/or wordy.

- ✓ The **recession caused** the property market to collapse.
- × The **recession was the cause** of the collapse of the property market.
  
- ✓ The **committee investigated** the case.
- × The **committee undertook an investigation of** the case

### 3.4 Personal pronouns

It's often entirely appropriate to use personal pronouns (I, you, we, he etc.) in administrative/official contexts, although again it would be wise to avoid over-using them.

- ✓ **I would be happy** to send you more information.
- ✓ **You are welcome** to contact us directly at xxxx.
- ✓ **We would like to** emphasise that the deadline is final.

### 3.5 Active vs passive voice

The passive voice often produces an excessively formal style. The active voice is generally preferable unless you really want or need to conceal who the sender of the message is. This is particularly important to keep in mind when translating Danish passives.

*Du bedes venligst vedlægge... :*

- ✓ **We kindly ask you** to attach.
- ✓ **Please** attach...
- × **You are kindly asked** to attach.

## 4.0 Spelling, vocabulary and usage

- ◆ UK vs US spelling
- ◆ Americanisms to avoid
- ◆ Collective nouns
- ◆ Academic titles
- ◆ Additional references

This section provides a very general overview of some of the main differences between UK and US English. It also lists some important differences between American and British educational terminology and points out exceptions to the general 'UK English only at AU' rule.

### 4.1 UK vs US spelling

In administrative and official AU texts, use British spelling unless you have a legitimate reason for following another spelling convention. In academic texts, use UK or US English spelling and punctuation as noted in the style guidelines of the publisher in question. And before you do anything else, remember to adjust your spellcheck language settings!

See [2.1 Language settings](#) for a guide to spellcheck settings in different programs.

#### NOTE

**At AU, we deviate from standard British usage where common sense dictates.** In some cases, we prefer a non-British term on the grounds that it is more comprehensible to an international audience. This applies to 'invigilator' (UK English) vs 'exam supervisor' (international). In other cases, we use non-British terminology because it more accurately describes our institutions and practices. For example, we use the American translation for Danish 'semester' ('semester') rather than 'term', because even though the length of a term varies from school system to school system, there are always two semesters – and two only – in an academic year.

#### Additional references

For a more detailed discussion of differences between British and American English, see:

[Wikipedia](#)

[Oxford Dictionaries](#)

### 4.1.1 Specific spellings

#### -ise, -ize (-isation, -ization)

Use the -ise spellings in AU texts.

✓ **UK English**

categorise  
emphasise  
organise

× **US English**

categorize  
emphasize  
organize

#### -yse, -yze

Use the -yse ending in AU texts.

✓ **UK English**

analyse  
catalyse  
paralyse

× **US English**

analyze  
catalyze  
paralyze

#### -ogue, -og

Use the -ogue ending in AU texts.

✓ **UK English**

analogue  
catalogue  
dialogue

× **US English**

analog  
catalog  
dialog

#### -our, -or

Use the -our ending in AU texts.

✓ **UK English**

colour  
honour  
humour

× **US English**

color  
honor  
humor

---

**-amme, -am**

Use the –amme ending in AU texts (but note exception below).

✓ <b>UK English</b>	× <b>US English</b>
programme	program
program ( <i>data processing</i> )	program

**-re, -er**

Use the –re ending in AU texts.

✓ <b>UK English</b>	× <b>US English</b>
centre	center
theatre	theater

**-ce, -se**

Many words spelled with the –se ending in US English are spelled with the –ce ending in UK English. Follow UK practice in AU texts.

✓ <b>UK English</b>	× <b>US English</b>
advice ( <i>n</i> )	advice ( <i>n</i> )
licence ( <i>n</i> )	license ( <i>n</i> ) ( <i>vb</i> )
license ( <i>vb</i> )	
practice ( <i>n</i> )	practice ( <i>n</i> ) ( <i>vb</i> )
practise ( <i>vb</i> )	
defence ( <i>n</i> )	defense ( <i>n</i> )
offence ( <i>n</i> )	offense ( <i>n</i> )
offensive ( <i>adj</i> )	offensive ( <i>adj</i> )
pretence ( <i>n</i> )	pretense ( <i>n</i> )



**- ae**

Words beginning with ane- are spelt anae- in UK English.

✓ <b>UK English</b>	× <b>US English</b>
anaemia	anemia
anaesthesia	anesthesia
encyclopaedia	encyclopedia

**Double vs single 'l'**

In UK English, the 'l' before a suffix beginning with a vowel is usually doubled ('ll'). Doubling is used before all inflections of verbs (-ed, -ing, -est) and before the noun suffixes -er and -or. In US English, these words are normally spelt with a single 'l'.

✓ <b>UK English</b>	× <b>US English</b>
traveller	traveler
fuelled	fueled
counsellor	counselor
labelled	labeled

Conversely, there are words where British writers prefer a single 'l' and Americans a double 'll'. (But when adding inflections or noun suffixes to these words, the above rule for British doubling applies: *fulfilled, enrolled, skilled, installed* etc.)

✓ <b>UK English</b>	× <b>US English</b>
fulfil/fulfilment	fulfill/fulfillment
enrol/enrolment	enroll/enrollment
skillful	skillful
instalment	installment

**4.2 Americanisms to avoid**

◆ **Major** in the sense “designating a field of study in which a student specializes and receives a degree” ([Collins online](#)):

- ✓ He **read** history at AU.
- ✓ He **studied** history at AU.
- ✓ He **did** history at AU.
  
- × He **majored in** history at AU.

◆ **Fall** (for the season between summer and winter):

- ✓ The programme starts in the **autumn**.
- × The programme starts in the **fall**.

◆ **Faculty** in the sense “all the teachers of a school, college or university or of one of its departments or divisions” ([Collins online](#)):

- ✓ These rules apply to **academic staff (members)** at the Department of Bioscience.
- × These rules apply to **faculty** at the Department of Bioscience.

◆ **Grade** in the sense “a mark or rating on an examination, in a school course etc.” ([Collins online](#)):

- ✓ He received a high **mark** on his exam paper.
- ✓ He has a high **average mark**.
  
- × He received a high **grade** on his exam paper.
- × He has a high **grade average**.

## NOTE

The ministry's translation of the *Karakterskalabekendtgørelse* (**the Grading Scale Order**) uses 'grade', which makes it difficult to insist on 'mark' in many contexts.

### 4.2.1 Exceptions

#### Semester

- ✓ **semester** (US)
- × **term** (UK)

#### Proctor (eksamensvagt)

- ✓ Do not use **invigilator** (UK)
- × Use **exam supervisor** (*universally comprehensible*)

Please refer to **AU Dictionary** for more educational and AU-related terminology.

## 4.3 Collective nouns

### 4.3.1 What are collective nouns?

A collective noun is a noun that describes a group – a number or collection of people or things taken together and spoken of as one whole.

**Examples:** board of studies, group (of people), committee, jury, family, team, orchestra, couple, audience, school, cast, company, press, class, firm, government, the public

### 4.3.2 UK vs US usage

In British English, most collective nouns may be followed by either a singular or plural verb, depending on whether you perceive the group as one unit, in which case it will be singular, or as a number of individuals, in which case it will be plural.

American English, however, normally takes collective nouns to be singular units. A sentence that starts 'The government have...' would be corrected to 'the government has...' by an American English teacher or proofreader.

- ✓ My family **consists** of my two brothers, my mum and me. (*singular*)
- ✓ My wife's family **are** major table tennis fans. (*plural*)
- ✓ The government **have said they** will give more money to hospitals and schools. (*plural*)
- ✓ Before the recession, my wife's family **were** quite well off, but now **they** are hard up. (*plural*)

### 4.3.3 What to do at AU?

In AU texts, we encourage you to follow British conventions: use plural verb forms after collective nouns. However, sticking with singular forms (especially if you normally speak/write American English) is also acceptable. You should be aware that the rules for subject-verb agreement are not set in stone when it comes to collective nouns – and proceed with appropriate caution. Understand your own practice, and most importantly of all, be consistent.

#### Preferred:

The senior management team **have** decided that... (UK)

#### Acceptable:

The senior management team **has** decided that... (US)

#### Preferred:

The board of studies **are** meeting tomorrow. (UK)

#### Acceptable:

The board of studies **is** meeting tomorrow. (US)

### 4.3.4 Additional points

#### Countries and institutions

Use singular verbs for the names of countries and institutions.

- ✓ Aarhus University **is** a world-class university.
- ✓ Scotland **is** having a referendum this autumn.

#### Consistency

Be careful not to mix up singular and plural subjects and verbs in the same sentence, paragraph or text. If you write 'the senior management team **have**' (*plural verb*) in the beginning of a paragraph, don't write 'the senior management team **is**' (*singular verb*) later on.

- × The government **have said it** will give more money to hospitals and schools.
- × The government **has said they** will give more money to hospitals and schools.

## 4.4 Academic titles

Use the titles prescribed in the memorandum [Job Structure for Academic Staff at Universities \(Notat om stillingsstruktur 2013 for videnskabeligt personale ved universiteter\)](#). See [AU Dictionary](#) for titles not listed here.

Danish	English
ph.d.-stipendiat	PhD fellow
videnskabelig assistent	research assistant
undervisningsassistent	assistant lecturer
ekstern lektor	part-time lecturer
adjunkt	assistant professor
forsker	researcher
lektor	associate professor
seniorforsker	senior researcher
professor	professor
professor med særlige opgaver	professor with special responsibilities
seniorrådgiver	senior advisor
studieadjunkt/-lektor	teaching assistant professor/teaching associate professor
klinisk lektor	clinical associate professor
honorarlønnet klinisk professor	part-time clinical professor
klinisk asistent	clinical assistant
klinisk lærer	clinical instructor
afdelingstandlæge	specialist of postgraduate education in odontology/ senior clinical instructor in dentistry
specialtandlæge (videreuddannelsesstilling)	postgraduate fellow in odontology
psykologisk kandidat (videreuddannelsesstilling)	postgraduate fellow in psychology

### Note

The 2013 version of the memo has 'professor with specific responsibilities', while both the Danish and the English versions of the 2007 memorandum have 'professor with special responsibilities', which is the translation in use at AU. We have chosen to retain 'professor with special responsibilities'. At Aarhus University Hospital, the official translation for *specialtandlæge* is 'dental specialist', not 'postgraduate fellow in odontology'.

We have corrected various spelling and usage mistakes in the memo.

## 5.0 Punctuation

- ◆ Commas ◆ Hyphens ◆ Dashes ◆ Quotation marks
- ◆ Additional points on punctuating direct speech
- ◆ Apostrophes ◆ Abbreviations

This section is not intended to teach you how to punctuate English sentences. Instead, it describes some central differences in American and British usage as well as some aspects of English punctuation that Danish speakers tend to find confusing.

Please refer to Michael Swan's *Practical English Usage* (3rd ed.) or the [Oxford Dictionaries guide to punctuation](#) if you need more general guidance on English punctuation.

### 5.1 Commas

Danes shed blood, sweat and tears learning how to apply the grammatical comma. Please try to forget what you have learnt about grammatical commas when writing English. In English, commas generally reflect pauses in speech.

#### 5.1.1 Danish commas to avoid

##### Relative clauses with 'that'

Avoid putting a comma before a clause beginning with 'that'.

- ✓ I told you **that** you should stop putting commas before 'that'.
- × I told you, **that** you should stop putting commas before 'that'.

##### Restrictive relative clauses

Don't put commas around defining (restrictive) relative clauses. A restrictive relative clause provides essential information about the noun it refers to. If you leave it out, the sentence won't make much sense. A non-restrictive relative clause can be removed from the sentence without changing its essential meaning. (If you need an explanation of what a relative clause is, see this [Oxford Dictionaries article on relative clauses](#).)

- ✓ The girl held out the hand **that** was hurt.
- × The girl held out the hand, **that** was hurt.
  
- ✓ It reminded him of the girl (**whom**) he used to know.
- × It reminded him of the girl, (**whom**) he used to know.

### 5.1.2 Commas in lists

Don't place commas before the final 'and' or 'or' in lists unless the meaning is ambiguous.

- ✓ He's interested in chemistry, molecular biology **and** musicology.
- × He's interested in chemistry, molecular biology, **and** musicology.

### 5.1.3 After 'e.g.' and 'i.e.'

Don't place commas after 'e.g.' and 'i.e.' (See [5.6 Abbreviations](#) below for more points on Latin abbreviations.)

- ✓ The exam requires participation in instruction, **i.e. participation** in at least 75 per cent of the course.
- ✓ The field of greatest importance is exegesis, **i.e. interpreting** the biblical scriptures.
- ✓ Handling personal issues (**e.g. work-life** balance)

### 5.1.4 Commas after introductory elements

Use a comma after introductory elements, adverbial clauses, prepositional phrases and participial phrases. As a rule, you should not allow a brief introductory element to merge with something following it in a way that might confuse your reader.

- ✓ **Walking home through the University Park**, Professor Jensen realised how to solve the problem he had long been grappling with.
  - ✓ **Finally**, I want to emphasise the importance of proofreading.
  - ✓ **At the beginning of the autumn semester 2014**, all students should have appropriate housing.
  - × **Until the spring course lists** will not be published.
  - × **Inside the lecture theatre** was brightly lit.
-

## 5.2 Hyphens

Hyphenation is being used less in compound words and is optional in many cases. Whether you choose to hyphenate a word or not, please be consistent (in other words, don't write 'trouble-shooting' in one paragraph and 'troubleshooting' in the next). Also, your spellchecker may have its own ideas about hyphenation.

### Examples:

Coordinate, microeconomic, sociopolitical, subdivide, troubleshooting  
Co-ordinate, micro-economic, socio-political, sub-divide, trouble-shooting

### 5.2.1 Danish hyphens (compound words)

Many (if not most) Danish hyphenated compound word forms do not take a hyphen in English. If you are a native speaker of Danish writing in English, be sure and check your English text for hyphenated forms and look them up to make sure that they actually exist.

- ✓ **PhD student**
- × **PhD-student**

### 5.2.2 Dates

Only hyphenate dates when you're using them as adjectives.

- ✓ **seventeenth-century** England  
(*'seventeenth-century' is an adjective describing 'England'*)
- ✓ in the **seventeenth century**
- × in the **seventeenth-century**

### 5.2.3 Word division

Avoid dividing words at the end of the line wherever possible. You can choose to have Word avoid hyphens at line breaks or hyphenate documents automatically. Choosing 'no hyphenation' is often the best option. If you do choose to hyphenate your document, make sure you've selected the appropriate language settings in whatever program you're using. Find out about hyphenation settings in Microsoft Office.

When using hyphens to divide words at the end of the line:

- ◆ Divide only between syllables. Consult the [Merriam Webster online dictionary](#) when in doubt about syllabification.
- ◆ Do not divide one-syllable words or very short words.



- ◆ Do not divide at the end of the last full line of a paragraph.
- ◆ Do not divide a word that will be continued on the next page or in the next column.
- ◆ Proper names consisting of more than one element (e.g. Aarhus University) should be divided between the elements rather than within any of the elements wherever possible (not Aarhus University or Aarhus Uni-versity).

## 5.3 Dashes

There are two types of dashes worth worrying about:

- ◆ en dashes (*den korte tankestreg*) (–)
- ◆ em dashes (*den lange tankestreg*) (—)

There are broad national differences in dash conventions, and many publications have developed their own house rules. Something about dashes brings out the picky Per Nittengryn in many writers. At AU, we generally just follow the suggestions provided by AutoCorrect in the British English version of Word. When writing for non-AU publications, other conventions may apply. Whatever convention you are following, be consistent.

### 5.3.1 Parenthetical comments

Use spaced en dashes for parenthetical comments. US English uses unspaced em dashes in these situations.

If your language settings are correct, Word automatically converts hyphens to en dashes when you type space – hyphen – space – ‘xxxx’. If for some reason you need to insert an en dash somewhere else in your text, the keyboard shortcut is Ctrl + - (minus key).

- ✓ Spaced en dashes – **not em dashes or hyphens** – should be used for parenthetical comments. (UK)
- × Unspaced em dashes—**not en dashes**—should be used for parenthetical comments. (US)

### 5.3.2 Instead of colons, semi-colons or brackets

Use unspaced en dashes to replace colons, semi-colons or brackets in running text.

- ✓ Aarhus University, as a strong, modern university, is in a strong position to live up to these requirements – in a short space of time, it has achieved a ranking among the top 100 out of the 20,000 universities in the world.

#### NOTE

Dashes are especially common in informal writing in English. In more formal contexts, use parentheses, colons and semi-colons. See Michael Swan's *Practical English Usage* (3rd ed.) on the uses of colons (section 474) and semi-colons (section 475).

### 5.3.3 Ranges of dates, numbers etc.

Use an unspaced dash to separate the two elements in a range of dates or numbers. See section [7.6. Ranges](#) for examples.

## 5.4 Quotation marks (inverted commas)

Single and double inverted commas are not interchangeable. There are rules governing their use, and it's important to apply them consistently.

In AU texts, we use double inverted commas to mark the beginning and end of direct speech. We use single inverted commas to indicate

- ◆ that a term or phrase is being used as an example
- ◆ to indicate that the writer wants to distance himself from the term in some way (scare quotes)
- ◆ to mark off a quotation within a quotation. See [5.4.1 Punctuating speech](#) below.

### 5.4.1 Punctuating speech

Use double inverted commas at the beginning and end of a quotation. Use single inverted commas for quoted words within the main quotation.

- ✓ The language consultant wrote: “**When** in doubt, you should always consult Michael Swan’s *Practical English Usage*, which emphasises that ‘**even very advanced students can make mistakes**’.”

### 5.4.2 Additional points on punctuating direct speech

Many buckets of ink have been spilled on the question of whether commas and full stops should be placed before or after quotation marks. Follow [The Guardian’s rules](#) and you won’t go far wrong. In a nutshell:

◆ If you are quoting a full sentence, place commas and full stops (periods) inside the quotes.

- ✓ The language consultant explained: “Place commas and full stops inside the quotes when quoting full sentences,” and I replied: “I’ll certainly do my best to remember **that**.”
- × The language consultant explained: “Place commas and full stops inside the quotes when quoting full sentences”, and I replied: “I’ll certainly do my best to remember **that**”.

◆ If you are quoting a fragment of a sentence, place commas and full stops outside the quotes.

- ✓ The language consultant went on to explain that updating the Style Guide “was a difficult but deeply satisfying **task**”.
- × The language consultant went on to explain that updating the Style Guide “was a difficult but deeply satisfying **task**.”

◆ In articles and press releases, use colons to introduce quotes, not commas.

- ✓ The AU style guide **says**: “Please don’t use commas, use colons.”
  - × The AU style guide **says**, “Please don’t use commas, use colons.”
-

- ◆ Long quotations (block quotations) should be single-spaced and indented. Do not combine double inverted commas with this formatting, or apply a different font, size or colour from the main body of your text.
  - ◆ Use block quotations for quotes of eight lines or more.
  - ◆ Start on a new line.
  - ◆ Indent entire quote to same position as a new paragraph.
  - ◆ Single-space the block quote.

### 5.4.3 Scare quotes and examples

Use single inverted commas to set off words from the rest of the text in an ironic or distancing way (so-called ‘scare quotes’), or if the phrase or sentence you’re introducing is an example or instance of something you’re trying to explain.

- ✓ The so-called ‘**flexicurity**’ model is long on flexibility but short on security.
- ✓ Most ‘**ordinary**’ people are anything but ordinary.
- ✓ Buzzwords like ‘**self-realisation**’ and ‘**mindfulness**’ are characteristic of New Public Management.
- ✓ The Danish word *økonomisk* can either be translated as ‘**economic**’ or ‘**efficient**’.

## 5.5 Apostrophes

### 5.5.1 ▲ Plural vs possession (the genitive case)

In Danish, we use apostrophes when adding plural endings to an abbreviation or number:  
*flere ph.d.'er, postdoc'er, 1960'erne, PC'er*

In English, no apostrophe should be used before the plural ending of abbreviations, names, numbers, letters and words, even before words that are not normally written in the plural. Use apostrophe -s to indicate possession (*genitive*).

## Plurals

- ✓ There are several **PhDs** in the programme.
- × There are several **PhD's** in the programme.

- ✓ **PCs**
- × **PC's**

- ✓ He got straight **As**
- × He got straight **A's**

- ✓ In the **1960s...**
- × In the **1960's...**

## Genitives

- ✓ **AU's** goal is to
- × **AUs** goal is to

### 5.5.2 Possessives of words ending in -s

If you need to form a possessive (genitive) of a word that already ends in -s or -z, add an apostrophe or rearrange the sentence.

- ✓ **Hobbes'** *Leviathan* is a central work of philosophy.
- ✓ *Leviathan*, a central work of philosophy **by Thomas Hobbes.**
- × **Hobbes's** *Leviathan* is a central work of philosophy.

## 5.6 Abbreviations

### 5.6.1 Contractions

Don't use full stops after contractions (abbreviations in which the first and last letters of the word are present), for example in abbreviations of academic degrees, titles and street names.

#### ◆ Academic degrees and titles

- ✓ **Dr** Forsker Forskersen, PhD
- ✓ **Ms** Ekstern Lektorinde, MA
- ✓ **MD**
- ✓ **BA**, BSc
- ✓ **MA**, MSc

#### ◆ Street names

- ✓ Jasmine **St**
- ✓ Easy **St**

#### ◆ Versus (vs)

Please note that '**vs**' is a contraction, so you don't need a full stop.

### 5.6.2 Initials and Latin abbreviations

Use full stops with people's initials and Latin abbreviations.

#### ◆ People's initials

- ✓ Lauritz **B.** Holm-Nielsen
- ✓ **J.R.R.** Tolkien
- ✓ George **W.** Bush

#### ◆ Latin abbreviations

- ✓ **e.g.**
- ✓ **i.e.**
- ✓ **ibid.**
- ✓ **etc.**
- ✓ et **al.**

## 5.7 Bullet points

◆ Start the first word of each bullet point with a capital letter.

✓ The following criteria will be applied:

- Relevance
- Quality
- Price

◆ Don't put full stops in simple lists of items with bullet points.

✓ Subjects offered by the department:

- English
- Spanish
- French

◆ If each bullet point is a full sentence, end each bullet point with a full stop.

✓ The department's goals are as follows:

- We will increase admissions by 30 per cent.
- We will improve the quality of our study environment by 30 per cent.
- We will strengthen our contacts with potential employers by 30 per cent.

◆ Otherwise, no full stops:

✓ The department's goals are:

- Increased admissions
  - Improved study environment
  - Closer cooperation with potential employers
-

## 6.0 AU places, titles and positions

- ◆ Capitalisation ◆ Abbreviations and acronyms
- ◆ Definite article (the) vs indefinite article (a/an)
- ◆ A note on the names of AU faculties

### 6.1 Capitalisation

The names of institutions, departments, centres, sections etc. should always be capitalised according to the rules of headline-style capitalisation, both in running text and listings.

You should capitalise all major words (nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs) and lowercase minor words (articles, prepositions, conjunctions) as in the examples below.


- ✓ The employees at the **Department of Aesthetics and Communication** are...
- ✓ At the **Interdisciplinary Center for Organizational Architecture**, they design....
- ✓ The AU **Centre for Entrepreneurship and Innovation** is...
- ✓ Staff reductions at the **Faculty of Science and Technology**

See [9.0 Capitalisation](#) for more detailed guidelines.

### 6.2 Definite article (the) vs indefinite article (a/an)

The correct use of articles in English can be tricky. When is a definite article (the) necessary and when is it not? This section offers simple guidelines on when and how to apply articles to positions, titles and places at Aarhus University. See the [Purdue Online Writing Lab \(OWL\)](#) or sections 63-69 of Michael Swan's *Practical English Usage* (3rd ed.) for more help on articles.

#### 6.2.1 Positions

 In Danish, we don't use the indefinite article (*en/et*) when we describe people's professions in a general sense. We do use the indefinite article in these situations in English.

##### Danish

- ✓ *Hun er bibliotekar.*
- ✓ *Han er lektor.*
- ✓ *Børge er ph.d.-studerende.*



## English

- ✓ She is **a** professor.
- ✓ He is **a** librarian.
- ✓ She is **a** PhD student.

But in English, as in Danish, the definite article (the) should be used when referring to a particular person/particular persons identifiable to the listener/reader:

- ✓ **The** PhD students were observed dissecting the sperm whale.
- ✓ **The** rector is head of the university.
- ✓ You should contact **the** new professor of English at the centre.

### 6.2.2 Names of units at AU

#### In running text

When writing the names of departments, sections, centres etc. in a sentence, you should always use the definite article (the).

- ✓ At **the** Department of Aesthetics and Communication, researchers participate in interdisciplinary research programmes.
- × **At Department of Aesthetics and Communication**, researchers participate in interdisciplinary research programmes.
  
- ✓ He is the head of **the** Interdisciplinary Center for Organizational Architecture.
- × He is the head **of Interdisciplinary Center for Organizational Architecture**.
  
- ✓ He is behind **the** Sports Law Research Unit.
- × He is behind **Sports Law Research Unit**.

#### In lists

In lists of departments, centres, sections and so on, you can leave out the definite article (for example on conference programmes and business cards):

- ✓ Department of Psychology and Behavioural Sciences
  - ✓ Michael Christensen, Associate Professor, Centre for XX, Department of Economics and Business, Aarhus University
-

### 6.3 Acronyms and abbreviated names of units

If the unit uses an acronym (a pronounceable name made up of initial letters or parts of words), like EFTA, NATO or UNESCO, the definite article is not necessary.

- ✓ The researchers **at ICOA**
- ✓ **Unicef** does charity work in Uganda.
- ✓ The research centre **CESAU**
- ✓ The research conducted at **iNANO**

But if you write the name of the unit out in full, use a definite article.

- ✓ The research conducted at **the** Interdisciplinary Nanoscience Center

Abbreviated names of units that cannot be pronounced as a word – or where it could be confusing to pronounce them – take the definite article.

- ✓ At **the CSGB** (Centre for Stochastic Geometry and Advanced Bioimaging), the researchers work to....
- ✓ The World Health Organisation is often referred to as **the WHO**.  
(Here 'WHO' is pronounced as a three-syllable word [doubleyou – aitch – oh], not as the word 'who'.)
- ✓ The problem was solved by **the IT department**.  
(Pronounced the [eye-tee] department).

When referring to departments and centres that use abbreviations, always write out the full name of the department or centre the first time you refer to the unit in your text, and then use the abbreviation afterwards.

- ✓ The researchers at **the Centre for Alcohol and Drug Research (CRF)**
- ✓ **The Faculty of Science and Technology (ST)** is one of the four faculties at Aarhus University.

## 6.4 A note on the names of AU faculties

In Danish, the full names of the faculties, for example the Faculty of Arts and the Faculty of Science and Technology, are primarily used on legal documents such as diplomas or contracts. Normally, the short form of the name should be used, in this case 'Arts' and 'Science and Technology'. However, in some situations, it may be necessary to use the full names of the faculties in both Danish and English, especially in situations where familiarity with AU's organisation cannot be assumed. It is particularly important to keep this in mind when communicating in English, as the short forms of the names of the faculties are likely to be perceived as overly informal in many contexts.

### NOTE

When referring to the four faculties, it is not always feasible to simply write 'Arts', 'Health' or 'BSS' in English. In running text, it should first be established that 'Arts' refers to a faculty at an institution of higher education. This is particularly important in texts intended for an external or new audience (potential students, business partners, new employees).

- ✓ **The Faculty of Arts** embraces...  
(And then in subsequent text it is ok to just refer to 'Arts' or 'the faculty'.)
- × **Arts** embraces the humanistic, pedagogical and theological research and educational environments.
- ✓ As a student at **the Faculty of Arts**...  
(Best solution in introductory lines of a text – in subsequent text use solution below.)
- ✓ As a student at **Arts**...  
(Here it's clear that you're referring to a student studying at a specific institution.)
- × As **an Arts student**, you become part of a research and study environment.  
(The reader might think an Arts student is someone studying art.)

## 7.0 Numbers

- ◆ General guidelines ◆ Commas vs full stops
- ◆ Units of measurement ◆ Currency (money) ◆ Symbols
- ◆ Ranges ◆ Fractions ◆ Dates ◆ Time spans ◆ Time

### 7.1 General guidelines

#### 7.1.1 When to write out numbers

As a general rule, you should write low numbers (ten and below) in words and larger numbers (11 and above) in figures. However, round numbers are usually spelt out (twenty, thirty, forty, from one thousand to five million).

- ✓ Only **nine** students applied for the job
- × Only **9** students applied for the job
  
- ✓ There were **eight** students and two lecturers
- × There were **8** students and two lecturers
  
- ✓ There were **85** students in the lecture hall
- × There were **eighty-five** students in the...

#### NOTE

These rules apply unless you are quoting a source that does otherwise. Particular academic fields (for example, statistics) may have their own guidelines.

#### Large numbers

With hundred and thousand you have the choice of using figures or words – but you should aim to be consistent. Million and billion may be combined with figures: 2.5 million, 3 million, 31 billion.

#### Note

The best way to express large numbers is the simplest way.

- ✓ **300** people / **three hundred** people
- ✓ EUR **3,000** / **three thousand** euros
  
- × EUR **10 thousand**
- × **3 hundred** people

### At the beginning of a sentence

Do not start a sentence with a figure followed by a symbol. Either write the number out in full or, if this doesn't work, change the sentence:

- ✓ **Ninety-nine** per cent of the population were...
- × **99%** of the population were...
  
- ✓ The fact is that **99** per cent of the population...
- × The fact is that **ninety-nine** per cent of the...
  
- ✓ **Nine** professors from around the world were...
- × **9** professors from around the world were...

## 7.2 Commas vs full stops

Use commas to separate thousands (4,000,000) and full stops to separate fractions (3,000.50 or 2.5 million).

- ✓ The number pi begins with **3.1415926**
- × The number pi begins with **3,1415926**
  
- ✓ His annual salary is DKK **444,500.59**
- × His annual salary is DKK **444.500,59**

**Note:** Opposite of Danish usage!

### Exceptions:

Numbers that do not take commas:

- ◆ serial numbers
- ◆ page numbers
- ◆ ZIP codes
- ◆ phone numbers

## 7.3 Units of measurement

As a rule, use figures with units of measurement that are denoted by symbols or abbreviations.

- ✓ DKK 50,000
- ✓ 250 kW
- ✓ 205 µg
- ✓ 5°C
- ✓ £500,000

If you choose to spell out the measure, the numbers do not also have to be spelled out but may be written with figures:

- ✓ 250 kilowatts
- ✓ 500 metres
- ✓ fifty/50 euros
- ✓ two hundred and fifty/250 kilowatts
- ✓ five/5 degrees Celsius

### Spacing

With measures denoted by symbols (£ \$ € % °C), there should be no space between the symbol and the number. But with measures denoted by abbreviations (DKK/EUR/mm/kWh/km/h), there should be space between the measure and number.

### Measurement spelling

- ◆ Write gram, kilogram (*not gramme, kilogramme*).
- ◆ However, use tonne not ton (*'ton' refers to the non-metric measure*).
- ◆ Write metre for the unit of length – meter as a noun (*gas meter*).

## 7.4 Currency (money)

### When to use currency codes?

Use the official currency codes in official and academic contexts (press releases about research grants, reports etc.)

✓ **DKK** 700

✓ **EUR** 700

× 700 **kr.**

× 700 **kroner**

× 700 **kroners**

× 700 **crowns**

× 700 **DKK**

In less formal contexts, write 'kroner' or (abbreviated 'kr.') 'euros'. Do not capitalise 'euro' or 'dollars' or any other currency.

✓ 45 **kroner**

✓ She owes me 45 **euros**.

✓ 45 **kr.**

✓ 30 **euros**

× 45 **kroners**

× 45 **crowns**

× 30 **Euros**

### When to convert to another currency?

Consider converting DKK to EUR (or another currency, depending on your audience) in contexts in which your audience can't be assumed to have an accurate sense of the value of our local currency.

## 7.5 Symbols

### Per cent (%)

In texts for a general audience/non-scientific texts, you should write out the percentage symbol as 'per cent' (British spelling).

- ✓ **Fifty-three per cent** of the students were female.
- ✓ The department has managed to reduce costs by **27 per cent**.

In texts that contain a lot of statistics, tables, sums etc. (for example academic articles) it makes more sense to use the symbol (%):

- ✓ Domestic revenue increased **12%** for the year to \$4.6 billion, and domestic operating cash flow grew **11%** to \$1.1 billion.

 **Note:** There should be no space between the symbol and the number.

### Sections (§)

In Danish, the symbol § most often refers to a section in an act of law or ministerial order (*lovparagraf*).

**Note** that *paragraf* is translated 'clause' in treaties, by-laws and collective agreements, and that the symbol § can also refer to a clause in a contract.

Danish: *jf. Universitetslovens § 4, stk. 3...*

English: pursuant to **section 4(3)** of the University Act...



## 7.6 Ranges

### Abbreviated form

Do not repeat the symbol if the unit of measurement does not change.

- ✓ €20–30 million
- × €20–€30 million

- ✓ 10–70°C
- × 10°C–70°C

If the symbol or abbreviation changes, however, leave a blank space on either side of the dash.

- ✓ 100 kW – 40 MW
- × 100kW–40MW

- ✓ 900 KB – 2 MB
- × 900 KB–2 MB

**Note:** Do not leave space between the symbol and the number or the dash and the numbers. Use an en dash to separate the two elements in the range.

### Written out

When a range is written out, you should write 'from ... to' or 'between ... and' instead of inserting a dash. You should repeat symbols and multiples (i.e. thousand, million etc.).

- ✓ from EUR 20 million to EUR 30 million
- × from EUR 20–30 million

- ✓ between 10°C and 70°C
- × between 10–70°C

## 7.7 Fractions

Always spell out simple fractions and hyphenate them.

- ✓ **One-half** of the pies have been eaten.

Insert hyphens in fractions used as adverbs or adjectives. Don't hyphenate noun forms.

- ✓ **two-thirds** completed (*adverb*)
- ✓ a **one-third** increase (*adjective*)
- ✓ an increase of **two thirds** (*noun*)
- ✓ **Two thirds** of the students completed the paper on time. (*noun*)

Write out fractions in combination with words.


- ✓ **two-thirds** completed
- × **2/3** completed

### Decimal marks

In English, the decimal fractions are separated by points – in contrast to Danish decimal commas.

- ✓ **3.5%**
- × **3,5%**

## 7.8 Dates

 Remember that the date comes before the month in British English (dd/mm/yyyy).

- ✓ **16 September 2013**
- ✓ **16/09/2013**
- × **September 16th, 2013**

Always write a simple figure for the day followed by the month (spelt out in official/formal contexts), and do not separate the day, month and year with commas.

- ✓ **23** July 1997
- × **23rd of** July 1997
- ✓ Thursday **24** December 2012
- × Thursday, December **24th**, 2012

- ✓ The semester commences on **Monday 1 September 2014**
- × The semester commences on **Monday the 1st of September, 2014**

Use all four digits when referring to specific years (i.e. 1997 not '97). However, in footnotes, itineraries etc. where space is at a premium, the month can be written as a number (24/12/2012). Please be aware that this format can potentially be very confusing to Americans, who write the month before the date.

### **△** Numbering the weeks of the year

Non-Danish speakers do not normally divide up the year into numbered weeks. Instead of 'week 38', you should write 'the week commencing 16 September' or 'w/c 16 Sept' unless you are absolutely certain your readers are familiar with the Danish convention.

### **Avoiding redundancy**

If the year in question is absolutely clear from the context, the year may be left out:

- ✓ On **23 July 2001**, the department did this ... but subsequently on **2 August**, it did something else.

## 7.9 Time spans

### 7.9.1 Decades and centuries

#### ◆ Decades

When referring to decades, don't include an apostrophe before the final 's' (see [5.5 Apostrophes](#)).

- ✓ **the 1990s, 1970s, 1980s**
- × **the 1990's, 1970's, 1980's**

#### ◆ Centuries

As a rule, you should write centuries out in full.

- ✓ In the **nineteenth century**
- ✓ The **twentieth century**

- × In the **21st century**, cars will run on air.

#### ◆ The beginning of a sentence

Do not start a sentence with a figure. Either write the number out in full or change the word order of the sentence.

- ✓ **Twenty-first century** cars are ugly.
- ✓ Cars of the **twenty-first century** are ugly.

- × **21st century** cars are ugly.

### 7.9.2 Time ranges

Use an unspaced en dash to denote a time range.

✓ 1905–1910

In running text, you should write out date ranges.

✓ From 1990 **to** 1995 he was employed at...

× From 1990–95

✓ **between** 1990 **and** 1995

× between 1990–95

✓ 1990 **to** 1995 inclusive

× 1990–95 inclusive

### 7.9.3 Avoiding redundancy

In lists, resumes etc. it makes sense to use a dash to denote the range instead. For the second figure, you should not repeat the century if it is the same, but you should always include the decade:

✓ 1914–**18**

× 1914–**1918**

## 7.10 Time

The 24-hour clock (military time) is generally easier for non-native speakers of English to understand than the 12-hour clock. For this reason, we recommend that you avoid using pm and am in AU-related texts as a general rule, particularly in conference programmes, schedules and meeting agendas.

Write times with a colon between hours and minutes, without adding hrs, am/pm or o'clock.

✓ The meeting starts at **14:00**.

× The meeting starts at **2 o'clock**.

✓ The lecture starts at **10:00**.

× The lecture starts at **10 am**.

✓ The movie didn't end until **23:00**.

× The movie didn't end until **11 pm**.

## 8.0 Pitfalls for Danes

- ◆ Common vocabulary pitfalls ◆ Adjectives vs adverbs
- ◆ -ing forms

### 8.1 ▲ Common vocabulary pitfalls

The list is arranged alphabetically in Danish. You can either look up particular words or phrases that are causing you trouble (ctrl + F), or you can browse alphabetically. We recommend that you familiarise yourself with the list by reading through it. You're bound to find pits you've fallen into already without even knowing it. Once you've familiarised yourself with the contents of the list, you can return to it to refresh your memory as needed.

Danish expression	Pitfall/false friend	Recommended translation
aktivitetstype	activity type	<b>type of activity</b>
aktuel	actual (e.g. the actual situation)	<b>current, present</b> (e.g. the current situation)
allerede	already	Avoid Danicisms such as 'Already Napoleon believed in European unity.' Instead write 'Napoleon believed in European unity <b>a long time ago</b> ' or something similar.
ansætte; ansættelse	appoint/employ; appointment/employment	<b>'Appointment'</b> refers to the moment at which you are appointed. <b>'Employment'</b> refers to the state of being employed. (e.g. 'I was appointed on 2 October, and my employment lasts until 3 March')
ansøgninger skal godkendes af studienævnet	applications must be approved by the board of studies	<b>applications are subject to the approval of the board of studies</b>
bedømmelsesform	assessment form	<b>form of assessment</b>
betragte som	consider as	<b>regard as/consider to be</b> (e.g. 'This group can be regarded as/considered to be underprivileged')
bidrage med	contribute with	<b>contribute</b> (e.g. 'The researchers contributed their ideas to the conference')

Danish expression	Pitfall/false friend	Recommended translation
censor	censor	<b>external / internal co-examiner</b>
den enkelte (f.eks. 'den enkelte studerende')	the individual student	<b>the student in question</b>
det afhænger af mange ting.	that depends of many things	<b>that depends on many things</b>
det bruges i stadig flere uddannelser	it is used in still more degree programmes	<b>it is used in an increasing number of degree programmes</b>
det enkelte uddannelseselement	the individual subject element	<b>the degree (programme) element in question</b>
det er godt med frugtbar samarbejde	it is good with fruitful cooperation	<b>fruitful cooperation is a good thing</b>
det hjælper på det	it's helping	<b>things are getting better</b>
dispensation	exemption	<b>dispensation</b> (‘exemption’ can also mean <i>fritagelse</i> )
effektiv	effective	<b>efficient</b> (high output in relation to input) <b>effective</b> (having an effect)
egen (e.g. 'De studerende skal tage ansvar for egen læring.')	own	<b>their own</b> (e.g. 'Students must take responsibility for their own learning')
eksamensform	exam form	<b>form of examination</b>
eksamensprog	exam language	<b>language of examination</b>
eksaminationstid	exam duration	<b>duration of examination</b>
emnet skal godkendes af vejlederen	the topic must be approved by the supervisor	<b>the topic is subject to the approval of the supervisor</b>
en større konference	a larger conference	<b>a major conference</b>
erfaring med	experience with	<b>experience of</b> (e.g. 'Stalin already had some experience of the problem')
et halvt år	half a year	<b>six months</b>
eventuelt	eventually	<b>possibly</b>
forskellige ideer	different ideas	<b>different ideas</b> ( <i>anderledes</i> ; different in relation to a group of other ideas) <b>various ideas</b> (different in relation to each other)
et fremmed universitet	a foreign university	<b>a university outside Denmark / a university abroad</b>

Danish expression	Pitfall/false friend	Recommended translation
halvandet år	one and a half year	<b>one and a half years / eighteen months</b>
har du kommentarer til min artikel?	have you got any comments to my article?	<b>have you got any comments on my article?</b>
historisk	historic	<b>historical</b> (to do with history) <b>historic</b> (memorable)
hus	house	<b>building</b> <b>house</b> (a single-family home)
i begyndelsen af det 21. århundrede	in the beginning of the twenty-first century	<b>at the beginning of the twenty-first century</b>
i disse år	in these years	<b>at the current time</b>
i mine øjne	in my eyes	<b>in my view</b>
invitere til	invite to	<b>invite</b> (e.g. 'The idea invites discussion of the whole concept')
jeg er vant til at høre de argumenter.	I am used to hear those arguments.	<b>I am used to hearing those arguments.</b>
jeg oplever, at ...	I experience that ...	<b>I feel that ...</b>
kandidat	candidate	<b>candidate</b> (for people applying for a job) <b>graduate</b> (for people who have completed a Bachelor's or Master's degree)
klassisk	classic	<b>classical</b> (music, for instance) <b>classic</b> (one of a kind) You could have a 'classic' Rolling Stones concert, but they would be extremely unlikely to play classical music.
kommentarer til	comments to	<b>comments on</b> (e.g. 'Have you got any comments on my article?')
kvalificere	qualify	rephrase: <b>'To base a debate on firmer foundations'</b> , for instance
kvalificeret dialog	qualified dialogue	<b>Dialogue on a highly qualified basis</b> (this is because 'qualified' can also mean <i>med forbehold</i> )
mindre	smaller	<b>minor</b> (when no actual comparison is involved – e.g. 'I have a few minor amendments to make')

Danish expression	Pitfall/false friend	Recommended translation
nemlig	namely	just use <b>a colon</b> instead of 'namely'.
noter til artiklen	notes to the article	<b>notes on the article</b>
nuanceret	nuanced	<b>in a suitably varied / detailed fashion</b> (e.g. 'to express yourself in suitably varied/detailed fashion')
nu hjælper det!	now it's helping!	<b>that's better!</b>
på den ene/anden side	on the one/other side	<b>on the one/other hand</b>
realisere	realise	<b>achieve</b> (e.g. 'to achieve your goals'). 'Realise' can be problematic, because you could 'realise' that you had made a mistake, for instance. However, note the correct use of 'realise' in 'to realise your assets'
risikere at	risk to	<b>risk + -ing</b> (e.g. 'If we do that, we risk running into further problems')
sammenlignet med	compared with	<b>compared with</b> (to underline a difference) <b>compared to</b> (to underline a similarity)
selv om	even if/even though	<b>'Even if</b> he comes I won't be happy' (He might or might not come, but I won't be happy whatever happens.) <b>'Even though</b> he came I was not happy' (He came, but I still wasn't happy.)
selvstudium	self-study	<b>autonomous/independent study</b>
stadig flere	still more	<b>an increasing number of</b> (e.g. 'This is used in an increasing number of degree programmes')
studier	studies	Note the following examples: 'I am tired of <b>my studies</b> ' (in general) 'I am tired of <b>my degree programme</b> ' (specifically)
større	larger	<b>major</b> (when no actual comparison is involved). Avoid the use of the Danish 'false comparative'
synlig tilstedeværelse	a visible presence	<b>a high profile.</b> Avoid using 'visible' in a metaphorical sense. It can be used in a literal sense though (e.g. 'The police had a visible presence in Christiania')
synspunkter	point of views	<b>points of view</b>
sympatisk	sympathetic	<b>likeable</b>



Danish expression	Pitfall/false friend	Recommended translation
sådan ser min forskning ud	this is how my research looks	<b>this is what my research looks like</b>
såsom for eksempel	such as for example	<b>such as</b>
tillader	allows for	<b>allows / permits</b>
til trods for beviserne	despite of the evidence	<b>in spite of / despite the evidence</b>
tre typer artikler	three types of articles	<b>three types of article</b> (The same thing applies to 'kinds of', 'categories of' etc.)
uddannelse	education	Note the following examples: <b>'Education</b> is good for you' (education as a general concept) 'I love my <b>degree programme</b> ' (specific reference)
udenlandsk studerende	foreign student	<b>Students from outside Denmark / Students from abroad / international /exchange students</b>
udenlandsk universitet	a foreign university	<b>a university outside Denmark / a university abroad</b>
udlænding	foreigner	<b>non-Dane</b>
udmeldte studerende	withdrawn students	<b>students who have withdrawn from the university.</b> If you need to save space (in a table, for instance), you could just write 'withdrawals'
uhåndgribelig	immaterial	<b>intangible</b>
vil du læse din præsentation op?	will you read your presentation up?	<b>will you read your presentation aloud?</b>
vise sig at være	show to be	<b>prove to be</b> (e.g. 'The current situation has proved to be more serious than we first assumed')
økonomisk	economic	<b>economic</b> (if you are talking about <i>nationaløkonomi</i> ) <b>financial</b> (personal finances, the university's finances) <b>economical</b> (low consumption of resources, 'an economical car with low petrol consumption')

## 8.2 Adjectives vs adverbs

Non-native speakers of English tend to confuse adjectives and adverbs. Both add detail to a sentence by providing additional information about other words.

### 8.2.1 Adjectives

◆ Adjectives modify (describe) nouns.

- ✓ A **pretty house**
- ✓ The department produces **ground-breaking research**.
- ✓ Given the **international focus** of the programme

◆ Adjectives ending in -ly

Some adjectives end in -ly. These cannot be used as adverbs.

- ✓ **costly, cowardly, deadly, friendly, likely, lively, lonely, lovely, silly, ugly, unlikely** (*adjectives*)
- × **costlily, cowardlily, deadlily** (*non-existent adverbs*)

Get around this problem by rephrasing:

- ✓ She smiled in a **friendly** way.
- × She smiled **friendlily**.
  
- ✓ He gave a **silly** laugh.
- × He laughed **sillily**.

### 8.2.2 Adverbs

Adverbs modify verbs, adjectives, other adverbs and sentences. Adverbs are easily recognised because they end in -ly (with a few exceptions). Most adjectives can be turned into adverbs through the addition of the suffix -ly. And generally, if a word answers the question how, it is an adverb.

◆ Adverbs modifying verbs

- ✓ The degree is offered **internationally**. (*How is it offered?*)
- ✓ She was walking **slowly**. (*How was she walking?*)
  
- × She was walking **slow**.

#### ◆ Adverbs modifying adjectives

- ✓ She was **really** happy. (*How happy was she?*)
- × She was **real** happy.
  
- ✓ Given the **increasingly** competitive atmosphere of the programme...
- × Given the **increasing** competitive atmosphere of the programme...

#### ◆ Adverbs modifying other adverbs

- ✓ She spoke very **loudly**. (*How did she speak?*)
- × She spoke real **loud**.
  
- ✓ The dancer leaped **breathtakingly** high.
- × The dancer leaped **breathtaking** high.

#### ◆ Adverbs modifying sentences

- ✓ **Surprisingly**, Stalin failed to annex Belgium before finishing his vodka.
- × **Surprising**, Stalin failed to annex Belgium before finishing his vodka.

### 8.2.3 Adverbs and adjectives that have the same form

Some adjectives and adverbs have the same form.

- ✓ A **fast** car. (*adjective*)
- ✓ The car goes **fast**. (*adverb*)
  
- ✓ This is **hard** work. (*adjective*)
- ✓ You work too **hard**. (*adverb*)

For more help with adverbs and adjectives, please consult Michael Swan's *Practical English Usage* (3rd ed.)

## 8.3 -ing forms (present participles)

-ing forms of verbs can be used as nouns, in which case they are called gerunds. They can also be used as adjectives, in which case they are called participles. Participles are particularly challenging for non-native speakers of English.

Of course, gerunds can be problematic in their own way. To find out more, see the [Purdue Online Writing Lab \(OWL\)](#) article on gerunds, participles and infinitives.

### 8.3.1 What is a participial -ing form?

An -ing form of a verb that is used as an adjective (past participles ending in *-ed*, *-en*, *-d*, *-t*, *-n* or *-ne* can also be used as modifiers, but that's another story).

Being verbal forms, participles express action or a state of being. But grammatically they function as adjectives:

- ✓ the **burning** platform
- ✓ the **purring** cat
- ✓ the **continuing** process

### 8.3.2 Participial phrases

You can use participles to construct more or less complex participial phrases that modify nouns.

- ✓ **Removing his coat**, Nick returned to his seat.
- ✓ **Arriving at the restaurant**, I found that it was closed.
- ✓ **Carrying** a heavy bag of groceries, he caught his foot on a step and tripped.

### 8.3.3 Punctuating participial phrases

Set off the participial phrase with commas and place it close to the subject it modifies. In other words, avoid dangling participles (i.e. participles and participial phrases that describe an action that has no subject or doer). This means that you must make sure that your participial phrase has a clearly identifiable subject close by to modify. Your modifier will dangle if the subject it modifies appears in an earlier sentence or doesn't appear at all – which will confuse your reader.

- ✓ **Coming** down the stairs for dinner, I smelled the cinnamon buns.  
(*'Coming down the stairs for dinner' modifies 'I'*)
- × I smelled the cinnamon buns **coming** down the stairs for dinner.  
(*Here your reader imagines walking pastry...*)
- ✓ After **reading** the original study, I find the article unconvincing.  
(*'After reading the original study' modifies 'I'*)
- × After **reading** the original study, the article remains unconvincing.  
(*Who read the study?*)
- ✓ I was late for work again. **Running** for the bus, I dropped my briefcase in a puddle.  
(*'Running for the bus' modifies 'I'*)
- × I was late for work again. **Running** for the bus, my briefcase fell in a puddle.  
(*Was the briefcase running for the bus?*)

#### More help with dangling participles

[The Purdue Online Writing Lab \(OWL\) on dangling participles](#)

[Oxford Dictionaries article on dangling participles](#)

Swan, Michael, *Practical English Usage*, 3rd edition, section 411(4)

## 9.0 Capitalisation

- ◆ General guidelines
- ◆ Institutions, places, units
- ◆ Titles and job functions
- ◆ Academic subjects and degrees
- ◆ Titles of books, articles etc.
- ◆ Headings
- ◆ Words of wisdom from *The Economist's* style guide

### 9.1 General guidelines

As a general rule, use capitals sparingly. Put titles and job descriptions in lowercase when using them generically or descriptively - and capitalise when titles are used immediately in front of a person's name.

- ✓ **Rector** Brian B. Nielsen (*title*)
- ✓ the **rector** of Aarhus University (*description*)
- ✓ **Centre Director** Jens Jensen (*title*)
- ✓ Jens Jensen, **director** of the Centre for xxx (*description*)

◆ Examples of situations in which you should not capitalise:

- ✓ The **dean** announced a new initiative.
- ✓ The **department** offers a variety of degree programmes.
- ✓ A new **centre** has been established.
  
- ✓ The **university** was founded in 1928.
- ✓ The **head of department** at AU Herning attended the meeting.

◆ Examples of situations in which you should capitalise:

- ✓ After finishing their cinnamon buns, **Rector** Brian Bech Nielsen and Pro-Rector Berit Eika announced a new initiative.
- ✓ Only **Department Head** Johannes Mortensen attended the meeting.

## 9.2 Institutions, places and units

### 9.2.1 Proper names

Capitalise the names of institutions and places, including academic departments and centres.

- ✓ The **Centre for Economic and Business Research** at the **Department of Culture and Society**, Aarhus University
- ✓ There are a variety of degree programmes at the **Department of Aesthetics and Communication**.
- ✓ The recently established **Interdisciplinary Centre for Organisational Architecture**.
- ✓ In 1930, **Aarhus University** was founded.

### 9.2.2 Generic references

Only capitalise words like university, department and centre when used as part of the title of a unit. Do not capitalise them when making generic references or when referring to a unit without using its full name.

- ✓ The **university** has approved several new initiatives.
- × The **University** has approved several new initiatives.
  
- ✓ The Department of Capitalisation is expanding, and three new degree programmes have been established at the **department**.
- × The Department of Capitalisation is expanding. Three new degree programmes have been established at the **Department**.

## 9.3 Titles and job functions

### 9.3.1 When to capitalise

Capitalise people's titles in running text and when displayed on a resume, business card, diploma or alumni directory, or in other official/formal contexts.

- ✓ **Rector** Jens Jensen
  - ✓ **Deputy Director** Signe Signesen
-

### 9.3.2 When not to capitalise

Do not capitalise job descriptions or generic references to job functions in running text or when referring to a person by his/her title only.

- ✓ On Wednesday, the **rector** will visit the employer panel. (*description*)
- × On Wednesday, the **Rector** will visit the employer panel.
  
- ✓ On Wednesday, **Rector** Jens Jensen visited the employer panel. (*title*)
- × On Wednesday, **rector** Jens Jensen visited the employer panel.
  
- ✓ On Wednesday, Jens Jensen, **rector** of Capitalisation University, will visit the employer panel. (*description*)
- × On Wednesday, Jens Jensen, **Rector** of Capitalisation University, will visit the employer panel.
  
- ✓ Today, **Professor** MSO John Smith of the Department of Capitalisation will present his paper (*title*)
- ✓ John Smith is a **professor** with special responsibilities (MSO) at the Department of xx (*description*)

## 9.4 Academic subjects, programmes and degrees

### 9.4.1 Names of degrees

Capitalise the important words in the names of degrees in AU texts.

- ✓ **Master's** degree, **Bachelor's** degree, **PhD** degree
- × **master's** degree, **bachelor's** degree, **ph.d.** degree
  
- ✓ **Master of Arts, Bachelor of Arts, Master of Science, Bachelor of Science**

#### NOTE

The official English names of the degrees awarded to graduates of Danish Master's degree programmes (*candidatus*) are laid down in an appendix to the University Programme Order (*Uddannelsesbekendtgørelsen*), where they are capitalised. So for more information on this, you should consult the **University Programme Order**.

See also AU Studies Administration's page **Sprog, gradsbetegnelser og uddannelsesnavne** (in Danish).

#### Example:

*Kandidatuddannelsen giver ret til betegnelsen cand.comm. (candidatus/candidata communicationis). På engelsk: Master of Arts (MA) in Communication Studies.*



### 9.4.2 Names of degree programmes

Capitalise the names of specific degree programmes, for example when names of degree programmes are displayed on a resume, business card, diploma or alumni directory, or in other official/formal contexts.

- ✓ The Master's Degree Programme in Political Science
- ✓ The Erasmus Mundus Master in Lifelong Learning

Do not capitalise generic references to degree programmes or subjects.

- ✓ Aarhus University offers a Master's degree programme in **political science**.
- × Aarhus University offers a Master's Degree Programme in **Political Science**.

Do not capitalise the names of academic subjects unless (of course) the name of the subject is a language or country.

- ✓ I'm studying **English**.
- ✓ I'm applying to the **Brazilian studies programme**.
- × I'm applying to the **Brazilian Studies Programme**.
  
- ✓ He studied **nanotechnology** at Aarhus University.
- × He studied **Nanotechnology** at Aarhus University.

#### Exceptions:

In internal/informal communication, it is acceptable to use the names of subjects and degree programmes as shorthand proper names.

- ✓ He's a professor at Musicology.

This exception also applies to the names of the four faculties

- ✓ He's a student at Business and Social Sciences.

## 9.5 Titles of books, articles etc.

There are two schools of thought. Either you only capitalise the first letter in the title, as in a newspaper headline (sentence case), or you capitalise all the major words (title case).

When writing for AU, use sentence case for the names of AU publications, brochures, etc. But when referring to books, journals and articles in running text, follow the capitalisation used in the reference itself. This means checking book titles! In English, the names of publication and the titles of books, plays, songs, films etc. are normally written in title case.

### Examples of book titles in title case:

*The Beliefs of Politicians: Ideology, Conflict and Democracy in Britain and Italy*  
*The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman*

### Follow these simple guidelines when using title case capitalisation of book and journal titles:

- ◆ Verbs are always capitalised, even if fewer than five letters.
- ◆ Nouns are always capitalised, even if fewer than five letters.
- ◆ Unless they are the first or last words of a title, these are never capitalised:
  - articles: **a, an, the**
  - conjunctions: **and, but, or, nor, as**
  - prepositions that are fewer than five letters long:  
**at, by, for, from, in, into, of, off, on, onto, out, over, up, with**
  - infinitives: **to**

**Note** that English book titles and the names of journals (*Nature*, *The Lancet*, *The Journal of Early Modern History*) are normally also italicised.

- ✓ *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman* (book title)
- × **The Life And Opinions Of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman**

### 9.5.1 Headings in AU publications and on au.dk

Only capitalise the first word of headlines and headings in texts published on au.dk and in other AU publications (sentence case capitalisation). However, do remember to capitalise any elements in the headline that should be capitalised under any circumstances (people's titles, etc.)

### 9.5.2 Titles of published articles

When capitalising journal articles, follow the format used by the author (the journal or article you are citing).

#### Words of wisdom from *The Economist's style guide*

“A balance has to be struck between so many capitals that the eyes dance and so few that the reader is diverted more by our style than by our substance. The general rule is to dignify with capital letters organisations and institutions, but not people ... If in doubt use lower case unless it looks absurd. And remember that ‘a foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds’ (Ralph Waldo Emerson).”

## 10.0 Handling translations

- ◆ Cultural references
- ◆ Danish/foreign words in English texts
- ◆ Signposting
- ◆ Back translation
- ◆ Retention of original spelling

### 10.1 Cultural references

When translating from Danish to English, be attentive to the needs and frame of reference of your particular audience.

References to Danish brand names, old TV shows, celebrities, businesses etc. should either be contextualised or replaced with more internationally recognisable examples.

Similarly, international audiences cannot be expected to be familiar with – or interested in – the nuances of Danish cultural geography (for example, the difference in mentality between West and East Jutland, or the subtle differences between the cities of the *trekantsområde* in East Jutland).

### 10.2 Danish/foreign words in English texts

#### 10.2.1 Words and phrases

Individual Danish words or phrases should be italicised, and translations or explanations should be provided in parentheses in connection with the first instance of the word in the text. Do not put these explanations in single quotes.

- ✓ The central Danish concept *hygge* (cosiness) is difficult to translate.

If the word or phrase occurs several times in the same text, only italicise the first instance.

**Exception:** In internal communication, references to terms that AU staff/students should be expected to or need to become familiar with do not need to be italicised (e.g. Studenternes Hus, Studenterrådet).

### 10.2.2 Titles of works

When referring to Danish/foreign books, journals, plays etc. in your text, follow your source in capitalising the title of the original work, and include an English translation in parentheses. If the translation is not the official title of an actual translation, capitalise the title sentence-style. If the translation is published, follow the format of the public text, which often means capitalising the title headline-style. And remember that the titles of published works are italicised in English. See section [9.0 Capitalisation](#).

- ✓ Leonardo Fioravanti's *Compendio de i secreti rationali* (**Compendium of rational secrets**) became a best-seller. (Translation not published)
- ✓ Proust's *À la recherche du temps perdu* (**Remembrance of Things Past**) was the subject of her dissertation. (Translation published)

### 10.2.3 Danish institutions, awards etc.

When mentioning Danish institutions, awards, events etc. use official translations where available. Otherwise, present the Danish name according to standard usage (sentence-style caps in many cases) and provide a translation in parentheses. Official names of institutions, awards, events etc. should be capitalised headline-style.

- ✓ The Rigmor and Carl Holst-Knudsen Award for Scientific Research
- ✓ The HM Queen Margrethe II Travel Grant

## 10.3 Signposting

Danish writers often signpost foreign words with single quotes or italics, or by prefacing the word with *såkaldt* (so-called). Do not carry this kind of signposting over into the English version of the text.

Source text: *De såkaldte 'applications'*

- ✓ The applications...
- × The **so-called** 'applications'...

Source text: *Det sker i form af de såkaldte scholarstipendier, som er blevet uddelt hvert år siden 2006.*

- ✓ The grant takes the form of scholar fellowships, which have been awarded every year since 2006.
- × The grant takes the form of scholar fellowships **as they are known**, which have been awarded every year since 2006.

## 10.4 Back translation (re-translation)

We often translate texts that themselves contain translations of quotes or text excerpts from English. A Danish press release about a British researcher's work that contains translated excerpts of an interview conducted in English is a typical example.

- ◆ When producing this kind of source text in Danish, always use the English versions of the translated quotes or excerpts in your translation. If you do not have the original English version of a text that is cited in translation, you must paraphrase. For example, quotations should be rephrased as indirect speech.
- ◆ When translating quotations between Danish and English, take particular care to render quotations accurately. Have your translation approved by the source of the quotation wherever possible.
- ◆ When interviewing non-Danish speakers for Danish-language articles and press releases that may subsequently be translated to English, please remember to save quotations in the original language so that the translator isn't forced to back-translate to English.

## 10.5 Retention of original spelling

Retain the spelling of the original source text when quoting from sources written in non-UK English. For example, when citing texts that include references to American centres in which the names of these centres are spelt according to American usage ('center'), retain US spelling. This rule also applies to centres at AU and other European universities that use American spelling in their names, both in citations and in lists of centres on au.dk and in AU publications.

- ✓ Since the beginning of 2013 she has been head of one of the most recognised and largest **centres** for research in education, the Wilson **Center** for Research in Health Professions Education at the University of Toronto.



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**“ “ We are all apprentices in a craft where no one ever becomes a master.**

- Ernest Hemingway

**“ “ Writing without revising is the literary equivalent of waltzing gaily out of the house in your underwear.**

- Patricia Fuller

**“ “ The road to hell is paved with adverbs.**

- Stephen King

**“ “ Ill-fitting grammar are like ill-fitting shoes. You can get used to it for a bit, but then one day your toes fall off and you can't walk to the bathroom.**

- Jasper Fforde