**Standards**

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# Purpose

This document sets out a number of requirements to be met when preparing and publishing content for display on the University's corporate website. This document is intended for web site owners, content coordinators and content publishers within the University and to be a reference point for external contractors.

Supporting information can be found on the web publishing area of the website (<https://federation.edu.au/staff/business-and-communication/web>)

# Scope

These Standards are applicable to the University's corporate website.

# Legislative Context

* [W3C Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0](http://www.w3.org/WAI/WCAG20/quickref/) (All university websites are obligated to meet AA Success Criteria Levels)
* The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1992. (Requires that universities provide online educational services in an accessible manner)

# Editorial and content issues

## Editorial responsibility for content

Site owners are responsible for the accuracy and currency of all material published within their respective domains. The Web Management Policy outlines the responsibilities of the site owner in full.

## Creation and maintenance of content

Nominated content coordinators across the University are responsible for the creation and maintenance of content within their respective areas. The Digital and eLearning Solutions team provides training and support to content coordinators. The Web Management Policy outlines the responsibilities of content coordinators in full.

Nominated content publishers may have access to edit individual or multiple pages. Publishers should liaise with their respective content coordinator in the first instance with regards to web content issues. The Web Management Policy outlines the responsibilities of content publishers in full.

## Prose style

The corporate website is a key marketing tool for the University as well as being a rich information source for existing staff and students. Content should be written with the intended audience in mind. Our site is an information-rich site and our goal is to enable visitors to complete tasks and find information as effortlessly as possible.

Marketing content should be presented in a positive, optimistic and friendly but not over-stated style. Refer to the [Brand Book (pdf, 1.7mb)](http://federation.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/146541/FedUni_BrandStandards_Nov13.pdf) for more information.

Material for existing staff and students should be presented in short, focused sentences without undue embellishment.

## Naming conventions

[Alias conventions](http://policy.federation.edu.au/information_management_and_infrastructure/web_services/it/ch03.php#Ch1507Se212759)

We require standardisation of web page and file naming. This is primarily to ensure that pages, menu items, browser title and downloadable files have meaningful names for the reader. In particular:

* whole words should be used for pages and downloadable files. Abbreviations will be avoided unless they are universally understood.
* headings entirely in upper case should be avoided.

Examples:

1. ''University Collective Agreement' instead of 'UCA'
2. 'Mt Helen Campus map.doc' instead of 'mth\_camp-2.doc'
3. 'Human resources' instead of 'HUMAN RESOURCES'

The Content Management System (CMS) uses the page or file titles to generate URLs for all pages and files. In doing so, the CMS ensures that:

* Only **lowercase lettering** is used for all pages and files
* **Hyphens** are used to separate words within page and file names, instead of spaces or underscores.

 Examples:

1. A page with the title 'Alumni' in the section called 'Industry and community' will automatically present with a URL http://federation.edu.au/industry-and-community/alumni
2. A PDF document with the filename 'Mt Helen Campus map.pdf' located under 'About FedUni > Our campuses > Mt Helen' will automatically present with the URL http://federation.edu.au/about-feduni/our-campuses/mt-helen-campus-map.pdf

Content coordinators and publishers can help this auto-generated process by naming web pages and downloadable documents in meaningful ways, using whole words and phrases.

### Alias conventions

An alias is a shortened version of the URL - easier to remember and more suitable for print publication. The Digital and eLearning Solutions team can create aliases for URLs at the request of content coordinators.

Requests for an alias should be made to the Digital and eLearning Solutions team via the Service Desk. It is important that confirmation is received before an alias is distributed for print publication or other purposes. This is because the requested alias may not be able to be provided in all circumstances.

*Example:*

The full URL (location) for 'Scholarships' web content may be:

http://federation.edu.au/future-students/study-at-feduni/which-course/scholarships

but the alias could be set as:

federation.edu.au/scholarships

There are conventions that must be followed when creating an alias:

1. Whole words should be used except where abbreviations are universally understood e.g. federation.edu.au/scholarships instead of federation.edu.au/schol
2. Lowercase letters only e.g. federation.edu.au/scholarships instead of www.federation.edu.au/Scholarships
3. Years will not be included in an alias e.g. federation.edu.au/scholarships instead of federation.edu.au/scholarships2010
4. Aliases will not be created for documents (PDFs, Word docs etc)
5. Marketing campaigns are given priority for aliases

As part of the process, the Digital and eLearning Solutions team considers whether the requested alias:

* complies to the conventions listed above
* has been used before
* will conflict with an existing or upcoming marketing campaign
* is specific enough to not cause confusion with other business areas

# Accessibility issues

There are moral and legal imperatives for us to make our pages as accessible as possible.

We take our obligations under the [Disability Discrimination Act 1992](http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/cth/consol_act/dda1992264/) seriously. To this end, we have adopted the [W3C Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0](http://www.w3.org/TR/2008/REC-WCAG20-20081211/) as the benchmark for our website. We aim to achieve 'WCAG 2.0 - AA compliance' across the site. We are working progressively to ensure that the site infrastructure meets these requirements and require content coordinators and publishers to work toward the same goals.

**Content coordinators and publishers must:**

* **Use the University standard templates and Cascading Style Sheets (CSS)**

These have been tested for WCAG 2.0 AA compliance. Using the standard templates and CSS should be as simple as utilising the WYSIWYG editor to set the style, size and colour of content.

* **Use metadata appropriately**

Metadata provides information about the page. Accurate metadata improves search functionality and makes web content easier to find and use. Many of the metadata fields in our new site are auto-generated, such as creation date and creator name. However, content coordinators and publishers are required to provide accurate and relevant **page names**, **keywords**, and **descriptions** manually, and to update this metadata as part of content maintenance.

* **Use appropriate alternative text for all images and graphic elements, including charts and diagrams**

Alternative text needs to accurately reflect the **function** and **purpose** of the image. It is not enough to simply describe it.

Consider this: If someone couldn't see the image, but could read or have read out to them a piece of text instead, what would you want them to read/hear?

Example:

"Students are able to use the IT facilities provided in our new Library information commons areas for group and individual work" instead of

"Info commons" or "Image 4 - students in library"

If the image is also a link, it is important to make that clear in the alternative text:

Example:

"Go to the Mt Helen Campus maps and directions web page" instead of

"image link - mt helen" or "mt helen front entrance"

If the image contains text, this text should form the alternative text:

Example:

"Our Open Day opens doors. Sunday 29th August, 10am-3pm. Click here for more information." instead of

"open day promo" or "Open Day image link"

Graphic elements that contain a lot of information, such as graphs, charts or diagrams need to follow the same principles outlined above.

* **Write meaningful link text**

Descriptive link text gives a link to have meaning independent of the non-linked text that may surround it.

Example:

**Do:**

* Consider using an entire sentence or phrase as the link text. e.g. [Read our Policy Newsletter](http://www.federation.edu.au/staff/policy-central/policy-renewal-strategy/policy-newsletter)or [Go to the Australian Government Directory website](http://www.directory.gov.au/).)
* Consider rewriting a sentence if the link text is not meaningful e.g. ‘[Find out more about our project](http://policy.federation.edu.au/information_technology/it/ch03.php)’ instead of ‘For more information, [click here](http://policy.federation.edu.au/information_technology/it/ch03.php).’

**Do not:**

* Use ‘click here’, ‘here’ or ‘more’ as link text.
* Use URLs as link text (e.g. <http://policy.federation.edu.au/information_technology/it/ch03.php>)
* **Include file type and size information within the link, when linking to a document**

Including this type of information is one step further in creating meaningful link text. It allows the reader to understand before clicking that they are downloading a document. They can then make an informed decision as to whether they want to complete the action.

Note that including the file information in the link itself improves the ability of those using screen reader technology to make the same informed decision as others about whether they want to download a file.

Example:

"[Download a Cover Sheet (pdf, 23kb) here.](http://policy.federation.edu.au/information_technology/it/ch03.php)"

* **Use heading structure appropriately**

In our site, the WYSIWYG editor allows coordinators and publishers to select headings from 1 – 6. Headings provide structure to a web page. So, ‘heading 2’ indicates a subsection of ‘heading 1’, ‘heading 5’ indicates a subsection of ‘heading 4’ and so on.

**Headings should not be used for font or presentation effects.** Misusing headers – for example to make a heading appear a certain size - makes it difficult for users with specialised software to understand how the page is organised and to navigate that page.

# Design and style issues

## Use of corporate templates

All web content hosted on the corporate web server ([www.federation.edu.au](http://federation.edu.au)) is required to use the standard design templates as provided through the CMS. Business areas may request the development of customised templates through the corporate web team.

The templates ensure consistent design, branding and navigation across the site. They also provide for the inclusion of appropriate metadata and have been tested for compliance with WCAG 2.0 accessibility requirements.

## Local (side-bar) navigation

The corporate web team determines the top level navigation and makes recommendations on developing site architecture according to best practice and usability principles. Local navigation is managed jointly by content coordinators and the Digital and eLearning Solutions team.

Content coordinators can create sub-menu items for sections for which they are responsible. The creation of sub-menu items is linked to the creation of new pages. The content coordinator can select where the new page should appear within the section structure, and the CMS will auto-generate a menu item accordingly, based on the page name assigned by the content coordinator. In doing this, coordinators should consider:

* standards outlined in the Naming Conventions section of this document
* Using the opportunity to break up large amounts of text by creating sub-pages.

## Cascading Style Sheet (CSS) and font and text selection

Our site uses cascading style sheets (CSS) to determine the look and feel of our web pages and to force consistency across the site. **Do not specify font faces, colours or sizes** in pages as these will over-ride the corporate standard for the site.

## Background colours

All backgrounds on the site are to be white. This is set by the standard templates and must not be altered. Exceptions may be made where a design style has been developed in conjunction with the corporate web team.

## Use of images and graphic elements

Graphics and photographs are welcome on the site, however images do add to the load time for a page and can push more valuable content out of sight for readers.

Before being brought into the CMS all images should be at the size they will be displayed at, using a resolution of 72ppi (pixels per inch). They should be sharp and of good quality.

As discussed in the Accessibility section of this document, all images that are not decorative **must** have HTML "alt" tags that adequately convey the purpose and function of the image.

As a general guide, individual images should be less than 70kb in size, with the total for any given page less than 300kb.

Please note that information within graphics (such as a diagram or graphically-presented table) is not indexed by the site's search engine and hence will not be found through a site search.

# Implementation

The Web Publishing Standards will be implemented throughout the University via:

* a news item under ‘Staff news’ on the University website and through the University Policy - ‘Recently Approved Documents’ webpage to alert the University-wide community of the approved Standards; and
* inclusion on the University's online Policy Library.