

This Ontario Principals' Council (OPC) *Style Guide* acts as a working reference document outlining common terms, spelling and formatting for participants looking to write articles, research reports and written documents. Broken into key sections, the guide focuses on the areas of formatting, punctuation, capitalization and other grammatical elements, as well as additional style guidance.

Resources

We use these following sources as a guide

- *Canadian Oxford Dictionary, 2nd Edition*
- *Canadian Oxford Thesaurus, 2nd Edition*
- *The Canadian Press Style Guide 18th Edition*
- *The Canadian Press Caps and Spelling 22nd Edition*
- *The Chicago Manual of Style*

Fonts

- **Times New Roman, 12 point for all internal or formal documents**
- **Arial, 12 point on the OPC website copy.**

Headings

- Headings should be bolded and in 14 point
- Do not add a colon at the end of a heading unless it is a complete clause.
- Headings with following subheadings should be all uppercase on first letters, followed by colon, then uppercase first letter followed by all lowercase (*Alternative Dispute Resolution: Mediation skills*)

Acronyms

- Always spell out the full formal name the first time, then use the acronym without periods between letters.
(*The Principal's Development Course (PDC) is a new offering. Many people who have taken the PDC will tell you that....*)

Commonly Used Names/Titles

- Additional Qualification (usually written as AQ)
- l'Association des directions et des directions adjointes des écoles franco-ontariennes (ADFO)
- Catholic Principals' Council | Ontario (CPCO)
- Education Law Additional Qualification (ELQP)
- Education Leadership Canada® (ELC)
- Principal's Development Course (PDC)

- Honorary Life Member
- International Confederation of Principals (ICP)
- International School Leadership (ISL)
- Mentoring Qualification Program (MQP)
- MentoringCoaching Program
- MentorCoaches
- Mentor-Coaching or Mentor-Coaching Institute (Kate & Jeannie programs)
- Ministry of Education (MOE) – often referred to as simply Ministry
- Policy and Program Memorandum (PPM)
- Protective Services Team (PST)
- Principal Association Projects (PAP)
- Principal’s Qualification Program (PQP)
- Provincial Council
- Ontario Leadership Framework (OLF)
- Supervisory Officer’s Qualification Program (SOQP)
- Special Education Additional Qualification Program (SEAQP)
- Teaching and Learning through e-Learning (TLTE)
- The Ontario Principals’ Council
- *The Register* (OPC magazine)
- Effective Intelligence®, Emotional Power®, Emotional-Intentions® (all registered terms as it relates to the specific program)
- PhD, BA, BSc, etc.

Numbers

- Numbers are spelt out from one to nine and numerals are used from 10 on.
- If a number is the first word of a sentence, it should be spelt out.
- For four digit numbers, use a comma after the first number (*3,600*).
- For units, percentages and measurement, numerals are used (*2 L jug, 80 per cent, \$2 million, 3:30 p.m.*).
- February 23, 2005
- March 2005
- March 9th
- 21st century (*lowercase “c”*)
- Currency (*US\$500, C\$800*)
- 1930s, ’30s
- 1920-21 but 1999-2003 (*small dash no spaces*)
- Page 23 or p.23

Commas, Colons and Semi-Colons

- When there is a running list in a sentence, there is no **comma** before the “and. (*She registered for the PQP, SOQP, Odyssey Conference and a legal issues workshop.*)
- **Semi-colons** are used to separate two complete ideas. (*The Minister will be making a statement tomorrow; we are looking forward to hearing about the new bill.*)
- **Semi colons** are used to separate items in a list if some of the items include commas. (*Three people attended the workshop; the new principal; the teacher; the vice-principal, along with her daughter; and the trustee.*)
- **Colons** are used to connect ideas when the second part is not an independent clause. (*You should never come to a workshop without the following items: your College of Teachers’ number, your OPC number and your business cards.*)

Punctuation Marks

- **Periods** and commas always go inside quotation marks, even inside single quotes. (*She said, “I want to join the OPC.”*)
- **Periods and commas** should always go outside of brackets. (*It appeared in the Style Guide section of the document (page 4, paragraph 2).*)
- The placement of **question marks, exclamation points and dashes with quotes** follow logic. If a question is in quotation marks, the question mark should be placed inside the quotation marks. (*She asked, “Can I join the OPC?”*) (*Are you sure she said, “The OPC workshop was excellent?”*)
- **Dashes*** (can be used to highlight mid-sentence lists punctuated by commas or when commas would create confusion (*The ladies will discuss common interests – clothing, museums, tourism and hotels – before planning their trip.*) (*The pies – meat and fruit – were cheap.*)
- **Dashes*** can also be used to mark a sharp break in a word or sentence. (*“I’ve been laughed at, ignored – but I’m boring you.”*) (*“Really Madam Speaker, I must – “*)

**dashes – I/N dash size is always used with a space before and after.*

- Use **quotation marks** around a term or word you are defining. (*Why is the word “communities” at the heart of many discussions about education today?*)
- **Ellipsis** are three periods (...) used to indicate an omission from a text or quote. They also require a space before and after they appear. (*The decision ... rests solely with your elected representatives.*)
- There is only **one** space after a period. (*First, you must register. Then, you...*)

Italics

Use italics when you list book titles, document titles, website titles, Acts (eg. *Education Act*) or report names.

No italics are needed on policy documents or program names.

Lists

When the list is in a chart format, capitalize as you would a sentence. ***The following list is viewed as one sentence.*** Do not use a colon at the end of the intro statement, or periods at the end of each point. No commas on a list of items, only use a period at the end, as well as “and” before the last point.

You will need to bring

- *a pen*
- *a pencil*
- *a ruler and*
- *a pad of paper.*

The following list is viewed as separate sentences. Use a colon at the end of the intro statement and periods after each sentence.

We recommend that the government move quickly to solve this problem:

- *The bill needs to be revised.*
- *Vice-principals will need to provide input.*
- *The OPC will seek Council support.*
- *All administrators will be provided with a copy of the new Bill.*

Title Capitalization

- In a title, capitalize all words except articles (the, a, an), conjunctions (and, but, if) and prepositions (on, for, after). Capitalize short verb forms (Is, Are and Be).
- Do not capitalize the second word of a hyphenated compound.
- Capitalize only the first word of a subtitle.
- (*Financial Management for Principals and Vice-principals: An OPC online learning program*)

Reference Formatting

Within **the text** at the end of the reference

- (Smith & Scott, 2009, p. 23)

On a **footnote or reference page** at the end of the document

- Smith, S., & Jones, C. (2014). *Style Guide Test: Caps and spelling*. Toronto, ON: OPC Group.

Referencing a **website** on a footnotes or reference page

- Smith, T. (2013). *The OPC Reference Guide*. As of November 7, 2013
<http://www.web.ca>

Commonly Used Words, Spelling and Capitalization

- a Member of the OPC (*OPC Member always with uppercase “M”*)
- an Associate of the OPC
- Aboriginal and Indigenous are uppercase in all uses
- Bill 163
- board (*lowercase unless part of a formal title*)
- bussing
- candidate (*references AQ programs*) and participants (*for workshops and smaller programs*)
- co-operate, co-operation, co-ordinate, co-worker
- coordination, coordinator
- Councillor or Provincial Councillor (representative on OPC Provincial Council)
- decision-making
- eight days
- eight-year-old
- email or online (*no dash is used*)
- enrolment, enrol, enrolled
- full-day kindergarden, full-day learning (*Ministry spelling uses the dash*)
- full-day or half-day workshop (*with dashes*)
- good standing
- grade 9 (*no caps on grade*) or ninth grade
- internet
- job-embedded
- Long-term disability (LTD)
- Master’s degree or Master of Education
- mentee & mentor (*lowercase when not a title*)
- MentoringCoaching Program (*OPC’s program*) or as part of MentoringCoaching
- MentorCoach (*when referring to the OPC or Lois Zachary program*)
- Mentor-Mentee relationship (*when referring to Lois Zachary’s program*)
- mentor-mentee relationship (*when referring to OPC’s program*)
- Mentor-Coaching or Mentor-Coaching Institute (*trademark term for Kate & Jeannie programs*)
- Members (*when speaking of OPC Members*), all other members lowercase
- Minister Liz Sandals, or The Honourable Liz Sandals, Minister of Education (*formal title in writing*)
- Liz Sandals, education minister ... (*informal title style*)
- North, South, East, West (*capitalize geographic regions but not derivatives and lowercase mere direction or position*) the North (region of Canada) ..., northern Ontario, the Canadian North ...
- not-for-profit, non-profit (*noun and adjective*)
- one-day, two-day, three-day, full-day, half-day workshops (*with dashes*)
- one-time (*adjective*)

- online learning or e-learning (*commonly used to describe web based learning*)
- one year
- per cent, percentage, six per cent increase (*no hyphens*)
- postgraduate, post-secondary
- post-retirement
- play-based learning
- practising principal (*verb*), practice (*noun or adjective*)
- problem solving (*no dash*)
- “... principal and vice-principal of the school ...” (*lowercase unless part of a formal title*)
- Principal Mary Brown (*formal title in writing*), Mary Brown, principal (*informal title style*)
- Provincial Council
- PQP I and II (*roman numerals always*)
- short-term and long-term (*with dashes*)
- s/he (*when used in body copy*)
- deputy Speaker John Smith, Speaker John Smith ... (*always with caps*)
- supervisory officer, director of education, trustee (*all lowercases unless part of a formal title*) Supervisory Officer John Smith (SO), Director of Education John Smith, Trustee John Smith
- The board’s policy (*lowercase b for board*)
- the ministry (*adjective, staff & programs*)
- The Ministry (*formal title, the Ministry of Education*)
- UK, US (*commonly used with no periods*)
- voice mail
- website, web page, web conferences, webcast