

**THE STUDENTS'
UNION**
AT UWE

TONE OF VOICE

February 2024 v.1.1

Introduction

Introduction	3
Our brand.....	4

Behaviours

Supportive	5
Empowering.....	6
Agile	7
Accountable.....	8
Creative and Fun	9

The writing process

The writing process.....	10
--------------------------	----

Our name

The Students' Union at UWE.....	11
The SU at UWE	11

Editorial guidelines

Abbreviations	12
Acronyms	12
Address.....	12

Ampersand – &	12
Apostrophe.....	13
Bullet points	13
Capitalisation	13
Dates.....	13
Email	14
Fonts	14
Italics.....	14
Numbers	14
Percentages	15
Phone numbers	15
Punctuation	15
Times	15
Websites	16

Resources

Contact us.....	17
Available assets.....	17

Introduction

“Tone in writing is the attitude your words employ. Just like tone of voice, tone in writing gives much more context beyond the words used. It can reveal intention or conceal it. As memoirist and writing coach Adair Lara says, “Tone is what the dog hears.”

- *Grammarly*

Just as important as a visual brand, a clear and consistent tone of voice is another way to establish our identity as an organisation. It can shape the way we come across to our students and stakeholders.

No matter what you're writing for or who you're writing to, this guide is here to help. You can use this to understand our brand and how that shapes your writing. We don't want to all sound the same – you should find your voice within our brand whilst delivering a consistent tone of voice for the organisation as a whole.

Our brand

VISION

We are a critical part of students' lives. We empower our members to shape their university experience.

What we mean:

Our vision is aspirational, it is where we want to be, and generally it is a long term goal that doesn't have a set deadline. It is something we should be constantly striving for.

MISSION

To proactively represent the voice of the full diversity of the student community, providing independent advice, advocacy, life changing activities and opportunities in order to positively impact the student experience at UWE Bristol.

What we mean:

Our mission is a declaration of our core purpose and will remain unchanged. It shapes what is important, centres the students in our reason for being and states our direction. If our mission is the cause then our vision is an effect.

VALUES

- We put students first
- We drive change
- We are inclusive and diverse
- We are committed to sustainability

What we mean:

Values are important beliefs shared by the organisation on what is good and desirable. Just like a person, The Students' Union's values shape our behaviour and serve as guidelines in all situations (not just how we write).

BEHAVIOURS

- Supportive
- Empowering
- Agile
- Accountable
- Creative and Fun

What we mean:

Behaviours are actions. Behaviours are the practical application of our values – translating them into day-to-day actions. Behaviours are the detail of what we expect our people to do.

Behaviours

SUPPORTIVE

Friendly

Encouraging

Helpful

More

- Celebrate student achievements
- Helpful information
- Think about your audience

Less

- Doing work for students
- Constant promotion
- Being unresponsive

Good example

If you're looking for accommodation for next year – Thursday 28 November should be in your diary.

There will be a whole host of accommodation providers and lots of accommodation experts on hand, ready, willing and able to answer all of your housing queries – from contracts to tenants' rights, gas safety and funds available.

Bad example

Don't miss out on finding somewhere to live next year. You'll need to come to the Accommodation Fair. The Advice Centre will be here to help you every step of the way.

Behaviours

EMPOWERING

Confident

Courageous

Bold

More

- Promoting opportunities with students
- Sharing Presidents' achievements
- Encouraging students to get involved

Less

- Doubt. Avoid words like "could", "should" and "want"
- Mollycoddling
- Doing things for students

Good example

The Students' Union is run by students for students. We're here to represent your views and make your time at university the very best it can be.

Welcome to uni life beyond studying! Of course, your studies are important, but that's not all there is to life at UWE Bristol, and that's where we come in. We will be here encouraging you to get involved in all the things that you enjoy, meet new friends, represent your peers and campaign for the causes you care about the most.

Keep an eye on our website and socials to find lots of events and activities to get involved in.

Bad example

We would like to support you while you're here. We want to show you some of the things we do and you might like to get involved in.

You could maybe join a sports team or a society, we have special interest, academic, national faith and identity societies, you can volunteer with the green team or do fundraising with UWE RAG, you can also become a student rep, sign up to JobShop, visit our Advice Centre and come to our events.

Behaviours

AGILE

Responsive

Adaptable

Open to change

More

- Welcoming feedback
- Communicating change
- Quick reactions

Less

- Fixed mindset
- Doing things that are proven not to work

Good example

With the worsening cost of living crisis and the start of term imminent, The Students' Union at UWE have created a range of support options across all campuses for both staff and students. These cover food, clothing, transport and period products.

We are acutely aware that this will not provide support for all students, however, we hope it will give us an opportunity to understand the largest areas of need, which will inform more targeted work as we move through the year.

Bad example

We are aware of the cost of living crisis and how it might be affecting our students. Rest assured The Students' Union is here for you, providing all the services you know us for.

Behaviours

ACCOUNTABLE

Consistent

Responsible

Receptive

More

- Focussed on students' priorities
- Challenge constructively
- Open to being questioned ourselves

Less

- Trying to hide our mistakes
- Ignorance to students' priorities

Good example

Hey! Thanks for your feedback. Have you considered submitting an Idea? You can get your fellow students to vote and if it passes we will make it happen! <https://www.thestudentsunion.co.uk/getinvolved/studentideas/>

If you want to learn more about the process, come and chat to our Reps team.

Bad example

Hey! Thanks for your feedback but this isn't something we can help with, sorry.

Personality

CREATIVE AND FUN

Optimistic

Exciting

Fun

More

- Focus on positive aspects of what you're saying
- Use positive vocabulary
- Creative communication

Less

- Negative or indifferent
- Avoid words like “no” and “don't”

Good example

We are super excited about the Official UWE Summer Festival this year. It's going to be bigger and better than ever with awesome acts, fancy food and of course, you!

Buy your tickets here:
[inserturlhere.co.uk](#)

Bad example

The Summer Festival. Don't miss out. Tickets:
[inserturlhere.co.uk](#)

The writing process

Once you have written your text, you can fill out a proofreading request form. You can upload the text, create an unapproved news item, or link to the document on S: Drive.

Your text must always be proofread.

1. Planning

Think about who you are writing for, what you need to tell them, and what you want them to do. Planning can help focussing your content and mind maps are a great way to organise your thoughts.

Make sure you put the important information first, don't bury it three paragraphs in.

2. Writing

Use your plan to guide you and don't worry about getting it right first time. A first draft doesn't have to be perfect but it has got to be written. Don't overload on words, large blocks of text are unattractive to readers – keep it simple and succinct.

3. Editing

The editor's job is to make sure the content is fit for purpose, ensuring the message is clear, with the audience in mind. If necessary, you can do this step yourself – just think about how your writing can demonstrate our personality traits and values.

4. Proofreading

Grammatical errors make us look unprofessional. You can submit your content to be proofread using the [ticketing system](#).

5. Repeat

These editing and proofreading steps can be repeated until you are happy with the content.

6. Reviewing, publishing and issuing

Once you have the final draft it can be published online or sent to design.

Our name

THE STUDENTS' UNION AT UWE

This is our full name. The “The” should always be included and capitalised. The apostrophe should always come after the “s” because it is the plural possessive (There are many students and the union belongs to them). The “at UWE” is only necessary when speaking outside the context of the university or when also speaking about other student unions.

THE SU AT UWE

This is only acceptable to use on X (Twitter) or where there is a character limit. In all other cases use our full name.

Editorial guidelines

Please note: This document is about our house style so that we can write consistently; it is not a grammar dictionary.

We use standard English grammar and spellings. If you are unsure about any grammar feel free to ask.

ABBREVIATIONS

Please use abbreviations in the following formats:

UWE – not U.W.E

Mrs

Ltd

etc.

PhD

Dr

MSc

BA(Hons) – no space between BA and Bracket, capitalise H

ext

Do not abbreviate weekdays or months:

January – not Jan

Monday – not Mon

ACRONYMS

Only use acronyms that are widely understood by people outside the context of The Students' Union.

However, in longer text use the full name followed by brackets in the first instance, then the acronym from then on – for example Part Time Officer (PTO).

ADDRESS

Our address is:

The Students' Union at UWE
Frenchay Campus
Coldharbour Lane
Bristol
BS34 8QZ

It should always be written like this. However, if you need to save space you can write it all on one or more lines with the parts of the address separated by a comma.

AMPERSAND – &

Use “and” instead of the ampersand in most cases unless it is part of a company name or in the titles and for design purposes.

Editorial guidelines

APOSTROPHE

An apostrophe is used to show a missing letter or a possessive. You don't need an apostrophe for plurals of abbreviations.

CDs – not CD's

2010s – not 2010's

BULLET POINTS

Start with a capital letter, do not end with a full stop

– This is a bullet point

CAPITALISATION

Apart from at the start of sentences only use capitals for proper nouns – when naming a person, place or organisation; course names and job titles are included too.

DATES

Write in the format of day (in full), date (number without st, rd, or th), month (in full), then the four-digit year.

Thursday 15 February 2024

Editorial guidelines

EMAIL

Use email not e-mail. When writing email addresses don't capitalise them.

tim.benford@uwe.ac.uk

FONTS

Headings and Titles

Always capitalised and either Alternate Gothic No. 2 or Arial Narrow Bold if not available.

General Text

News Gothic BT Roman, or Arial Regular if not available

ITALICS

Only use italics for the titles of publications, plays or films.

NUMBERS

Write numbers one to ten in full, and numbers 11 and over in figures. If the number is at the start of a sentence it needs to be written in full.

Use a comma to separate numbers over 1,000.

ALTERNATE GOTHIC NO. 2

ARIAL NARROW BOLD

News Gothic BT Roman

Arial Regular

Editorial guidelines

PERCENTAGES

Always use % rather than writing per cent in full.

PHONE NUMBERS

Write The Students' Union phone numbers as: 0117 32 82577.

PUNCTUATION

Exclamation marks

Exclamation marks are unnecessary - let your content speak for itself.

Quotation marks

Use double quotation marks, if the quote goes beyond the end of a paragraph don't close the quote at the end of the first paragraph.

TIMES

Use the 24-hour clock and don't use am or pm.

18:00 – not 6:00 pm

Editorial guidelines

WEBSITES

When referencing a web address, avoid using the www. at the beginning.

thestudentsunion.co.uk

Resources

CONTACT US

If you have any questions, please contact Marketing:

– +44 (0)117 32 82577

– sumarketing@uwe.ac.uk

AVAILABLE ASSETS

You can access a range of brand assets including logos, stationery and templates by visiting:

thestudentsunion.co.uk/brand