

This snapshot provides some common phrases and terms to use when writing. This is not an exhaustive list, merely addresses some of the most common misconceptions.

For a fuller list see our [full Tone of voice document](#) or email editor@cssc.co.uk for guidance.

General phrases

- Use contractions wherever possible – you’ll, we’re, I’m, we’ve, won’t but don’t use double contractions such as ‘Shouldn’t’ve’ or ‘couldn’t’ve’.
- Use the time format – 9am or 9–10am or 9:30am.
- Use the date format – 3 March 2023 or 03/03/23. NB don’t use the ordinal suffixes of rd th st nd after the number.
- English spelling and phrasing of all words such as: organise, colour, mobile phone. (not cell phone)
- A ‘Logon/Login’ is the noun such as a login screen. Whereas the ‘Log on/Log in’ is the verb or the act of logging on to the website. So, you can log in to your login.
- Use ‘an’ before a silent H: an heir, an hour. Use ‘a’ before an aspirated H: a hero, a hotel, a historian.
- Use accents on French, German, Portuguese, Spanish and Irish Gaelic words including anglicised words in popular use such as résumé, as well as people’s names.
- Check if single words are appropriate which may be missed on spellcheck ie teammate, teabag, teapot, textbook, website.
- Use ‘Ltd’ for Limited companies.
- Use ‘until’ not ‘till’.
- Capital ‘AF’ in Armed Forces.
- Hyphenate **10-years-old**.
- No apostrophe for **1920s or 80s**.
- Use a possessive apostrophe when describing something which happened in a particular year ie: **This year’s award winners**.

Using ‘that’ or ‘which’

- Use ‘that’ to define, identify or specify a particular object. For example: The CSSC event that I took part in was very popular. This helps to identify which event out of several I’m referring to.
- Use ‘which’ to inform or provide more superfluous information. For example: ‘The CSSC event which I took part in was very popular. This is just providing more information, not essential to the story. Only use ‘Civil Service Sports Council Ltd’ when referring to our

CSSC specific phrases

- Use lower case CS for 'civil service' & PS for 'public sector' unless used in a job title such as: 'Simon Case – Cabinet Secretary and Head of the Civil Service'.
- Only use 'CSSC' not 'The CSSC'.
- Only use 'Civil Service Sports Council Ltd' when referring to our legal entity.
- Use uppercase A for 'Area' or R for 'Region' for specific 'CSSC Areas' ie 'The Bristol Area'. But use lowercase 'area' and 'region' when discussing more generally, ie 'CSSC areas and regions'.
- CSSC and other companies or institutions are always singular entities, so use: 'CSSC is 100 years old' not 'CSSC are 100 years old'.

When referring to Royalty use:

- His Majesty King Charles III or HM King Charles or HM The King. (Capital 'H' for His).
- The Prince of Wales, His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, William, Prince of Wales, or The Duke of Cambridge. (Capital 'T' for The)
- The Duchess of Gloucester GCVO or Her Royal Highness The Duchess of Gloucester. (Capital 'T' for The)
- Use a capital 'R' for 'Royal' & capital 'R&F' for Royal Family.
- If in doubt check the [Royal.uk website](https://royal.uk).

Check carefully for trademarks that may not be immediately obvious. Such as:

- Airfix
- Aspirin
- Band-Aid (although we should use 'plaster' anyway)
- Bubble Wrap
- Cashpoint
- Chessington World of Adventures Resort (where appropriate use the full name of partners)
- Direct Debit not direct debit
- Escalator
- Frisbee
- LEGO (all capitals)
- Ping Pong
- Tannoy
- Trampoline
- WiFi not Wi-Fi