

The Muslim Weekly In-house Style Guide

Revised November 6th 2006

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Abbreviations are not spelt with periods. Example: USA. Limit abbreviations in headlines. Prefer not to abbreviate Professor to Prof, Father to Fr, etc.

Abbreviated negatives (can't, don't, shan't etc, plus similar abbreviations such as I'll, you're) should be discouraged in all text except in direct quotes, though in chatty pieces and some features they are permissible when the full form would sound dull.

CE, BCE, AH note that CE comes before the date, eg, CE35; BC comes after, 350BCE. With *century*, both are used after, eg, 3rd century BCE/CE. After Hijri, AH, comes after the date, 15AH. *Do not use BC or AD.*

Addresses no commas in 1 Oxford Street etc

Adverbs when they are used to qualify adjectives, the joining hyphen is rarely needed, eg, heavily pregnant, classically carved, colourfully decorated. But in some cases, such as well-founded, ill-educated, the compound looks better with the hyphen. The best guidance is to use the hyphen in these phrases as little as possible or when the phrase would otherwise be ambiguous.

Advert prefer to advertisement especially at first mention; but advert is now acceptable (at second mention, in headings etc). Avoid ad.

Affect, effect as a verb, to affect means to produce an effect on, to touch the feelings of, or to pretend to have or feel (as in affectation); to effect is to bring about, to accomplish. If in doubt, always consult the dictionary.

Ages normal style is "Joe Brown, 33, a porter," but occasional variations such as "Andrew Hunt, who is 74," are permissible. Similarly keep children's ages as a figure, so "Emma Watson, 7, who ...", and "children aged 5 to 14" (not "five to 14"); but "the seven-year-old child said ..." (up to and including ten). Other examples where a figure should be used: "At the age of 7, he moved to London"; "The girl, aged 6, attends the village school".

Airports as a general rule for British airports, use the name of the city or town followed by l/c airport, eg, Manchester airport, Leeds/Bradford airport, Nottingham (formerly East Midlands) airport, Luton airport; but see Heathrow, Gatwick, Stansted. Note at Heathrow, Terminal 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 etc.

America(n)/US in general, try to use *American* as in "American cities, American food" etc; but US in headlines and in the context of government institutions, such as US Congress, US Navy, US military operation. Never use *America* when ambiguity could occur with Canada or Latin America.

American spellings normally use the English spelling even with offices or institutions such as Secretary of Defense (change to Defence), American Federation of Labor (change to Labour), or with buildings, eg, the Lincoln Center (change to Centre); but Labor Day (which has no UK equivalent) is an exception.

Animal names call an animal "he" or "she" if the sex is definitely known or if called by a masculine or feminine name (eg, Felix the cat had only himself to blame). But use "it" if sex is unspecified.

Apostrophes with proper names/nouns ending in s that are singular, follow the rule of writing what is voiced, eg, **Keats' poetry, Sobers' batting, The Muslim Weekly's Style**; and with names where the final "s" is soft, use the "s" apostrophe, eg, **Rabelais' writings, Delors' presidency**; plurals follow normal form, as **Lehman Brothers' loss** etc. Note that with Greek names of more than one syllable that end in "s", do not use the apostrophe "s", eg, **Aristophanes' plays, Achilles' heel, Socrates' life, Archimedes' principle**. Beware of organisations that have variations as their house style, eg, **St Thomas' Hospital**, where we must respect their whim. Also, take care with apostrophes with plural nouns, eg, **women's**, not **womens'**; **children's**, not **childrens'**; **people's**, not **peoples'**. Use the apostrophe in expressions such as **two years' time, several hours' delay** etc. An apostrophe should be used to indicate the plural of single letters - **p's and q's**.

Appellations on news pages, though not on features and sport, almost every surname should be granted the courtesy of a title. The exceptions are: convicted offenders, the dead (but not the recently dead, except in obituaries), and - mostly in the arts, sports, books- cases where common usage omits a title. On news pages, similarly, sportsmen, artists, authors, film stars, pop stars, actors etc should now normally **not** be referred to as Mr/Mrs/Ms etc, except in court cases or exceptional occasions where guilt would be implied by omitting the honorific.

General rules:

- a. First mention, Herbert Palfry, Juliette Worth, subsequently Mr Palfry, Mrs/Miss/Ms Worth.
- b. Put the name first, then the age (if relevant), then the description; eg, Jane Fonda, 57, the American actress; avoid the journalese construction "actress Jane Fonda" or the like.
- c. Avoid initials and middle initials (as in American names) unless the person is best-known thereby (eg, W.G. Grace, with full points).
- d. Ms is nowadays fully acceptable when a woman wants to be called thus, or when it is not known for certain if she is Mrs or Miss.
- e. Dr is no longer confined to medical doctors; if a person has a doctorate from a reputable university, Dr is acceptable.
- f. Court proceedings: accused people should be accorded the appropriate title (Mr, Miss etc) - however guilty they may appear - after name and first name have been given at first mention; only convicted persons should be referred to by surname alone. But do be sensitive especially in murder cases, where the accused is given, for example, his "Mr"; the victim (despite the dead not usually being given a title) should here be accorded the courtesy of the title. Otherwise the stark contrast of, say, Mr X being accused of the murder of Dando, can appear gratuitously offensive.

Arabic refers to the language. Use **Arab** in such phrases as "the Arab world"

Arabic names always take care in this difficult area. But remember the basic rule of al-X (l/c al, with hyphen, before name; rarely use the el- form). Spell names such as **Rashid** with an "i" rather than double "e" (Rasheed). Thus **Fedayin** (not Fedayeen) and **Mujahidin**. **Abu** means "father of" so must not be separated from the name that follows, ie, Abu Qatada at first mention remains Abu Qatada ("father of Qatada"), not simply Qatada.

Article Guidelines We do not publish articles that contain subject matter that has controversial issues, including attacking other organisations and individuals, etc. Articles with controversial issues must be shown to the editor for perusal. When publishing a fatwa from an imam, we must make sure that this is a sound fatwa; compare it with other imams if necessary, to make sure it doesn't raise controversial issues.

As beware of sloppy use in sentences such as "They were moved out as the blast tore open the building"; say simply "*after* the blast ..."

Auntie (not aunty) as colloquialism for the BBC.

Awol, absent without leave, not AWOL

Barcode should be present on the back page of the newspaper.

Bullet Points are used, but must be manually inserted into Quark.

Bible (cap and numbers, not italic); biblical references thus - II Corinthians 2, 2; Luke 4, 5.

Bin Laden, Osama note l/c "bin", except where it is the first word of a headline or sentence. Avoid the "Mr" designation, as with Saddam Hussein etc. Bin Laden's organisation is **al-Qa'ida**, not the BBC, etc, version.

Capitalisation in general, the proper names of people and places, formal titles or titles of important offices, and the names of well-known and substantial institutions, all require capitals. As a rule of thumb, cap specifics (eg, the French Foreign Minister), but **l/c non-specifics** (eg, EU foreign ministers). But some terms, eg, **Act, Bill, Cabinet, Civil Service**, always cap.

When identifying faces with *left* and *right* etc, use commas rather than brackets (eg, Fred Smith, left, and his wife leaving the court); make the identification in the caption fit the sequence of faces (left to right) in the photograph.

Celsius, centigrade use either term. In news stories, use centigrade first, then could use, but not necessary, fahrenheit in brackets at first mention, eg, "The temperature rose to 16C (61F)".

Channel 4 (not Four); but the former Channel 5 has been rebranded (Sept 2002) simply as **Five**.

Contributors All writers must submit their full name in the article and give their contact details in order to get in touch with them. Pen names that hide the identity of the writer should not be used, unless we have an exception and agreed with the editor, but we must know their full name and details before letting them use the pen name. No one should write under the by-line “Anonymous”, every writer must submit a full name.

Currencies always convert to sterling on news, sport and features pages - usually at first mention of the foreign currency. On business pages commonly used foreign currencies need not be converted unless to help the flow, and the headline should reflect the article's original currency rather than a sterling equivalent.

Dates Monday, April 18, 1994 (never 18th April); but April 1994. When citing periods of years, say 1992-93 (not 1992-3); for the new millennium, write 1999-2000, then 2000-01, 2003-09 etc; from 1939 to 1941 (not from 1939-41); the **Forties, Eighties, Nineties** (or 1940s, 1980s, 1990s) - (but with people's ages, l/c, as in “she was in her forties, eighties, nineties” etc). Common usage says that the century ended on December 31, 1999.

Proof readers should check that the date on top of each page is correct for that issue.

Days/months should be abbreviated Mon Tues Wed Thur Fri Sat Sun; Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sept Oct Nov Dec

Degrees (educational) a masters, a first, a second, an upper second (a 2:1), a lower second (a 2:2), a third etc. Abbreviations as follows: doctorates of literature (or letters), D Lit, D Litt, LitD etc; Oxford and York have D Phil instead of the more usual PhD. Oxford has DM for the more usual MD. Cambridge has ScD for doctor of science. No full points in degrees.

Degrees (weather) omit degree sign in temperatures.

Dreamt, not dreamed

Eid ul-Fitr, the festival marking the end of the fast of Ramadan

E-mail **The word email is spelled with a hyphen; e-mail. All other words with “e” are spelled with hyphen too; e-publishing, e-government, etc.**

Emphasis When emphasising a word, phrase or sentence, please use *Italics*. We use Italics for foreign words (but not foreign names).

Ellipsis (...) should not be used in texts, especially reports. If they have to be used, then there shouldn't be space between the ellipsis and the words joining them. For example, “He was never late...Well, almost never.” If the piece is a poem or creative writing piece then we will consider the use of ellipsis.

Figures or Words Numbers from zero to ten are written as words and the rest written as figures.

First Paragraph: The first two or three words on the first paragraph of the front page should be in capital. For example, ONE THOUSAND, or: FEELINGS OF SHOCK.

Front Page and Headlines should be in capital (not always in case of space). A sub-heading containing a quote from the article can be placed above or below the headline in a smaller size. Puffs (boxes) of news items, similar to how The Times design it, can be placed on the front page. Colour co-ordination is very important on the front page. Make sure everything matches and does not conflict with each other. Fresh colours should be used. Do not excessively use 'quotes' in headlines in every issue. All quotes in title must be single as opposed to double.

Grammatical Points The word 'but' can be used at the start of a sentence. Comma not necessary after the word but. Do not use the word and at the beginning of sentences.

God caps when referring to just one, in any religion. He, His, Him also take cap. Many gods, eg, in *the Greek gods*.

Headlines avoid the worst clichés and hyperboles such as *bash, crash, shock, slam* etc; but words such as *bid* (for attempt), *crisis, hit* (adversely affect), *row* (clash or dispute) - all of which should appear only sparingly in text - are permissible in headlines, *provided they are not overworked*. Inverted commas must always be single in headlines, straps and display panels on News, Sport and Business pages.

Honours, Qualifications and Titles Periods are not used, i.e. BA not B.A. Titles such as Mr, Dr, Mrs, Ms, when used, should not have a period after them. For example, Dr Abdul, Mrs Elaine, Ms Aura, Mr Haqi. People are **appointed Privy Counsellor, Baronet, KBE, CBE, OBE, MBE** etc; never say they were made, received, were awarded, or got the OBE etc. **Peers** and above (viscounts etc) are **created**, not appointed etc.

Hopefully try to avoid in the sense of *it is hoped that*, even though this usage is so widespread. Unless it is used in a quote or on behalf of someone.

Hour and a half, an no hyphens. Similarly, two and a half years, two thirds, but twenty-three.

However when used in the sense of nevertheless, always needs a comma after it (and before, when in the middle of a sentence, eg, "It was said, however, that the agent ...")

Hyphens The software will break the words and hyphenate them for space reasons. Other than that, follow what Oxford dictionary says.

Internet Words the 'i' is not always capital, unless start of a sentence. Website should only be spelled as one word. Online should only be spelled as one word. Use net for short.

Initials where totally familiar, no need to spell out at first mention (eg, BBC, TUC, Nato etc). Otherwise, usually give name in full followed by initials in parentheses, and the abbreviated form thereafter (though sometimes a word such as "the organisation" or "the group" will be preferable to avoid a mass of initials in the same story). Also, with a body as well known as the UN, it would be absurd to write the United Nations (UN), so use discretion. Where the initials can be spoken as a word, we normally write them as upper and lower case, eg, Nato, Gatt, Unesco, Eta - but there are some important exceptions to this, eg, MORI, IATA, RADA, RIBA, SANE, BUPA and AXA. With people's names, put points between the initials (with thin space between), though omit points in names of companies such as W H Smith, J Sainsbury.

International News should ideally consist of the following: 4 x 500 words, 4 x 300 words, 8 x 50 words.

Jargon Generally speaking, all Arabic words phonologically transcribed (i.e. da'wah, hidayah...) should have an explanation between brackets after the word. Jargon and colloquial words are not supposed to be used unless there is a substantial reason for that.

Movies, although an Americanism, is now so common as to be an acceptable synonym of *films*; but use *films* whenever possible

Muhammad use this spelling for the Prophet, but respect the other spellings of the name according to individuals' preference; if in doubt, use Muhammad. Note also **Muhammad Ali** but **King Mohammed VI of Morocco**.

Names Limit the use of Mr or Mrs unless necessary. State the full names instead. Once the full name is mentioned, use the last name of the person in the rest of the piece. As a general rule, people are entitled to be known as they wish to be known, provided their identities are clear. Thus Cassius Clay became Muhammad Ali; but in such changes, give both names until the new one is widely known.

The Proof reader should make sure that names of authors are spelt correctly, since authors find this a sensitive matter.

9/11 is permissible, but please try to use the full date elsewhere for clarification, eg, "the events of September 11, 2001".

Numbering goes this way:
Positiveness,
Perfection,
And good faith.

Capitalise the first letter, leave a space after the period, and end each item with a comma “,” except the last item. Roman numerals should be avoided.

Numbers write from one to ten in full, 11 upwards as numerals except when they are approximations, eg, “about thirty people turned up”. Keep consistency within a sentence: say “the number injured rose from eight to fourteen”, and do not mix fractions and decimals. At the start of a sentence, write all numbers in full.

Percentages use %. When it comes to ranges leave a space between the numbers or 8% - 9% for example. **Per cent** always takes figures rather than the word, eg, 3 per cent, not three per cent. Usually use decimals rather than fractions (3.25 per cent rather than 3¼ per cent). Use % sign in headlines, never pc, and spell out per cent in text.

Periods always conclude a sentence unless the sentence ends with a website; in this case the period is removed.

Photographs must be good quality. Captions should be used when necessary to describe a photograph and the people (if any) captured on it. Photographers can put their name on the side of the photograph for copyright purposes.

Plagiarism Strongly avoid copying and pasting articles. Preferably written in own words with our own sources. If necessary to copy and paste, change the headline and the first two paragraphs in your own words.

Proof Reading Writers should proof read their article thoroughly before submitting, to make sure it is free from spelling and grammatical errors and that it makes sense. The proof reader should read through The Muslim Weekly’s style guide to ensure that submitted materials conform to its policies.

Proper Nouns are capitalised. With acronyms, the full name should be mentioned once in the text and then the acronym can be used. Note that acronym letters are not separated by periods; SLA.

Quotation and Speech Marks Use double quotes in speech marks, and if there is a speech within a quotation, use single quotations. If you add something to a quote that is not already there in the original text, place it in square brackets [].

Quotations from the Holy Qur’an. After the quote from the Qur’an use this format: (Qur’an 14:20)

Qur’an is never spelt Koran.

References and Bibliographies Numbers should be used and they should be listed at the end of the article. Preferably non-roman numerals. References should all be the same size, font, colour, for the sake of standardisation. For example, it should be in grey, size 9 and italicised.

A: Biographies
It should be in grey, size 9 and italicised.

B: References
When it comes to references and endnotes in general we will have a list such as this:

References:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

At the end of each article.

Footnotes, superscripts, etc, should not be used.

Sentences and Paragraphs One page consists of roughly 1700-750 words without a picture. A double page spread is over 2,500 words with a picture. If there is unnecessary repetition, the article will be clipped. Editors and proof readers are recommended to get back to the writer and inform them of any changes made to their articles, including headlines, before the article is published to avoid unnecessary conflicts.

Spacing There shouldn't be a space before commas, periods, question marks, exclamation marks, quotes, etc.

Spellings The Muslim Weekly uses British English. For example:

<i>British English</i>	<i>American English</i>
Organisation	Organization
Favour	Favor
Criticising	Criticizing
Standardised	Standardized
Per cent	Percent

The Oxford Dictionary can be used as a reference. This can be accessed online.

Symbols When using the word 'and', no symbols can be used to replace this word, i.e. + or &. We do not use the symbol & in the headlines either.

Titles The proof reader should make sure page titles are correct for each section, i.e. the page title of the health section should not be the food section, etc.

Telephone numbers with three groups of figures, hyphenate only the first two (eg, 0151-234 8464; 020-7782 5000). For other national numbers, write as two groups of numbers, eg, 01483 123456. Similarly, for numbers with, eg, 0800, 0845, 0870 codes, and for mobile numbers, write as two groups of unhyphenated numbers, thus: 0870 1234567, 07721 123456.

Television TV is acceptable both in headlines and text. ITN (Independent Television News) is acceptable in its abbreviated form (in the same way as BBC). Write BBC Television, BBC One, BBC Two etc.

Television, book titles, magazines and radio programmes are not italicised or underlined. Can be put in quotes if necessary.

Terrorist take care with this word and the associated *terrorism*; *guerrilla* is a less loaded word in the context of violent political struggle. Never use as a synonym of any dissident group that uses violence, eg, hunt saboteurs, and always try to specify groups as paramilitaries, gangster organisations or whatever. Remember, one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter. Words such as terrorism, guerrilla, etc, use only through quotes, unless it is an obvious terrorist group, universally accepted like al-Qa'ida.

The Muslim Weekly almost always use italics for the name of the newspaper, except in headlines. Must insert italics manually in Quark.

Time is written out in the 12 hour clock format. Never write, eg, 6pm last night, 9am tomorrow morning; say 6 o'clock last night or (if the context allows) 6pm, or 9am tomorrow. Use a point in expressing continental time - 01.55, 14.00 etc.

Vocabulary is important since The Muslim Weekly is a paper for Muslims. Thus we do not use words such as: Islamic extremists/terrorists, Islamists, Muslim fundamentalists, Islamic fundamentalists, Islamic militants, Kaffirs, Kuffar, Muslim militants, Muslim cleric (should be imam/sheikh), etc.

Who, whom which of these to use is determined solely by its function in the relative clause. Remember that *whom* has to be the object of the verb in the relative clause. Thus, "she is the woman whom the police wish to interview" (ie, the police wish to interview HER, not SHE); the other most common use of *whom* is after a preposition such as *by*, *with* or *from*, eg, "the person from whom he bought a ticket".

Beware of traps, however: "Who do you think did it?" is correct (not *whom*, because *who* is the subject of "did it", not the object of "do you think"); and "Give it to whoever wants it" is correct (not *whomever*) because *whoever* is the subject of the verb wants.

Beware too of constructions such as "he squirted ammonia at a van driver who [correct] he believed had cut him up" (where "he believed" is simply an interjection; "who" is not the object of "he believed" but the subject of the subordinate clause, "who ... had cut him up")

xenophobe, xenophobia

-ze in almost all cases use the -ise ending rather than the -ize. Two of the main exceptions are *capsize* and *synthesizer*.

Final notes There should be a print line at the back of the newspaper that shows the publisher of The Muslim Weekly and the editor's name and e-mail address. There should be complete widow (line) at the top of the pages.