Digital Presence Guidelines

Document summary

Effective date	March 2025	**Last updated**	July 2025
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Revision

This is a living document that will be updated as required.

Version	Revision Type	Amendments	Approved by	Signed	Review date

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Purpose

The purpose of these guidelines is to ensure that UCT's Digital Presence is consistent, accessible (both to users and search engines, and across platforms), and understandable.

Please note: This document must be read in conjunction with the Digital Presence Standards.

Vision 2030 alignment

Vision 2030 should guide every facet of the university's operations to strengthen UCT's reputation as a leading institution. The core values of Vision 2030, particularly the three pillars of excellence, transformation, and sustainability, should influence and direct the Digital Content created for engagement with users across UCT's web platforms, as applicable.

Definitions

Term	Definition
UCT Digital Content	Text, audio, or imagery on an official UCT website, blog, intranet, extranet, portal, mobile app, chatbot, social media account, and any other application that displays UCT content via a web interface; excludes published scholarly content
UCT Digital Presence	Comprises websites, social media accounts, web applications, mobile apps, chatbots, internet-enabled products and services, and the content on these sites and applications, etc., whether hosted internally or externally to UCT

Applicable to

The guidelines are applicable to all UCT Digital Content on UCT websites and in all applications that expose UCT content on the web. We recommend that they be followed and implemented by all Digital Content Authors and Digital Content Managers.

Guidelines details

1. **Inclusivity**
   - 1.1. Be mindful of language choices to avoid stereotypes, biases, and discrimination. Use inclusive language that respects diversity and promotes equality.
   - 1.2. Decoloniality
     - 1.2.1. Avoid using images of UCT's Upper Campus or other spots that highlight colonial history. Instead, focus on pictures of people or capture parts of the buildings in a way that shifts or challenges the original colonial context.
   - 1.3. Gender-neutral placeholder image
2. **Content style and formatting**
   - 2.1. Consider using accordions for frequently asked questions (FAQs).
   - 2.2. Text alignment
     - 2.2.1. Rather avoid centring text such as titles.
   - 2.3. Ideally, tables should only be used for comparative and/or tabular data.

2.4. Links should end with a full stop, not an ellipsis.
E.g.
- “Read more.” at the end of a carousel/slide blurb

3. Media

3.1. Images

3.1.1. See Image Optimisation.

3.1.2. See Recommended Image Sizes for Drupal.

3.1.3. See available shweshwe images for Drupal masthead banners.

4. Responsiveness

4.1. Content such as images must be appropriately sized for the area in which it is used.

5. Editorial guidelines (text)

See the CMD Editorial Style Guide for additional guidance and information.

5.1. General

5.1.1. South African English should be used.

5.1.1.1. For guidance, refer to the Oxford South African Concise Dictionary.

5.1.2. Addressing users/readers as “you” makes for a friendlier, approachable tone.

5.1.3. Evaluate whether your choice of words, punctuation, capitalisation, and style enhances clarity and readability for the reader.

5.2. Writing

5.2.1. top loading, heading lengths, summaries, plain English

5.3. Abbreviations

5.3.1. After the first mention of an entity on a page or screen its title’s abbreviation should be added in round brackets. Thereafter the abbreviation can be used to refer to it.
E.g.
- Centre for Innovation in Learning and Teaching (CILT)

5.3.2. Acronyms should not be used as navigation text unless the full title is extremely long. Users/readers may not know what they stand for.

5.3.3. Acronyms should not be used as page titles; rather write out the full title and use the acronym in the body text.

5.3.4. Abbreviated academic and general titles should not have full stops.
E.g.
- Prof, Dr, Mr, Mrs, Mx

5.4. Dates and time

5.4.1. Write out dates instead of using DD/MM/YYYY (South African format), to avoid confusing international users.
E.g.
- 4 April 2016 (**not** 4th April 2024 **or** the 4th of April 2024)

5.4.1.1. For filterable or sortable data, use the ISO standard YYYY-MM-DD.

5.4.2. Use digital 24-hour time, with a colon rather than a full stop or an “h”.
E.g.
- 09:00 (**not** 9 AM **or** 09h00)

5.4.2.1. Where the time provided is relevant to an international audience, it should be indicated that it is South African Standard Time (SAST).

5.5. Numbers

5.5.1. Every third figure in numbers greater than 999 should be separated with a non-breaking space (` ` - added in HTML via the “source” view) rather than a comma.
E.g.
- 1 000 not 1,000

5.6. Spelling

5.6.1. Academic degrees

5.6.1.1. Write levels of study as follows: bachelor’s degree, honours degree, master’s degree, postgraduate degree/diploma, doctoral degree.

5.6.2. The word “email” must be written without a hyphen (“e-mail”).

5.6.3. Both “” and “postgraduate” must be written as one word.

5.6.4. Titles of works

5.6.4.1. Title case (except for articles, conjunctions, and prepositions) and italics should be used for the titles of works of fact, fiction, or art.
E.g. *The Great Wave off Kanagawa* was created by Hokusai.

5.6.4.2. Quotation marks should be used for the titles of lectures, MOOCs, workshops, conferences, book chapters, academic articles, unpublished manuscripts, speeches, and theses.

5.7. Telephone numbers

5.7.1. International codes should be used unless the call is specifically local, such as the emergency services.
E.g.
- +27 (0)21 685 3328

5.7.2. Non-breaking spaces (` ` - added in HTML via the “source” view) should be used to prevent numbers from breaking across multiple lines.
E.g.
- +27` `(0)21` `685` `3328

Related links

- Drupal Demo/Manual site
- Digital Presence Governance Framework (ratification process underway)
- Digital Presence Policy (ratification process underway)
- Digital Presence Standards
- UCT Social Media Policy (ratification process underway)
- UCT Inclusivity Policy for Sexual Orientation
- UCT Disability Policy
- Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0
- CMD Editorial Style Guide