



SAAD Digest style guide

Please use in conjunction with the SAAD guidelines for authors

The following guidelines are designed to complement the existing 'Guidelines for Authors' to be found on the SAAD website. This document should also be consulted where indicated in this text.

1. General guidelines for all SAAD Digest editorial copy

- a) The Digest uses British spelling throughout, with a preference for 's' rather than 'z', ie 'specialised' not 'specialized', 'recognise' not 'recognize', 'sterilisation' not 'sterilization'. When adapting copy from US sources, for example from US press releases or a paper by US authors, all words in the text with American spellings must be changed to British, eg 'behavior' should be changed to 'behaviour', except where these form part of the referenced title of a publication
- b) There should be one space only after full stops, not two
- c) Quotation marks should always be single, not double, even when quoting speech
- d) Numbered or bulleted lists should be followed by a line space
- e) There should be no full stops at the end of the numbers/bullets except after the last point.
- f) As a general rule, terms such as 'general dental practitioners', 'primary care trusts' and other terms that are commonly abbreviated should not take capital letters when spelled out in full, unless in an official name. Paper authors in particular have a habit of adding capital first letters to terms that do not need them. Check that they are necessary when proofing and if in doubt, remove them!
- g) For News articles where references are quoted, these should be in the form 'Journal abbreviation year; volume: page range'. ALL news articles featuring research from other journals should contain the full reference of the work in question. For more information on references, see the SAAD Digest 'Guidelines for Authors'.

2. Headlines:

- a) The first word in all titles, headlines and subheads should begin with a capital letter but the words following should all be in lower case, except where official names or abbreviations are used, eg NHS, *Staphylococcus aureus*
- b) Headlines should not have full stops after them
- c) Where titles contain colons or dashes, the first word after the colon or dash should also be all lower case. The only punctuation mark within a headline or title that requires a capital letter after it is a full stop
- d) Subheading 1 must be one line in length only.

3. Abbreviations:

- a) The abbreviations 'eg', 'ie' and 'etc' are written without dots
- b) Et al. is written in italics followed by a dot, even if another punctuation mark follows (eg 'as discussed in the paper by Smith *et al.*, periodontal disease has been found...')
- c) Capital letter abbreviations are acceptable if the term is given in full when first mentioned, but should be restricted to generally recognised forms only
- d) Plurals should not contain apostrophes unless they are possessive, eg 'the study analysed the opinions of 165 GDPs'; 'the GDPs' opinions were as follows...'
- e) Contractions (shortened forms which retain the final letter, eg Mr, Dr, Ltd) should be written without dots.

4. Italics:

- a) Italics should be used for Latin and foreign words and phrases such as *et al.*, *in vivo*, *in vitro*, *en masse*. (NB: 'via' should not be italic)
- b) Use italics for the names of publications including books and reports, eg *British Dental Journal*, *The Times*, *The first five years*
- c) Italics should also be used for Latin names of organisms (generic and specific names), eg *Streptococcus mutans*, *Staphylococcus aureus*, *Homo sapiens*. These names should be spelled out in full at the first mention; subsequently the generic name can be abbreviated to the first capital followed by a full stop, eg *S. mutans*, *S. aureus*. If there could be ambiguity about the generic name, for example if these two microorganisms were mentioned in the same paper multiple times and the 'S.' could mean either *Streptococcus* or *Staphylococcus* to those unfamiliar with them, the names should be written in full or a longer abbreviation used, eg *Staph. aureus*, *Strep. mutans*
- d) Italics should be used for direct quotations from publications and from interviewees.

5. Numbers:

- a) In general text, numbers should be spelled out up to and including ten and then numerals used for 11 onwards
- b) All numbers should be spelled out at the opening of a sentence unless they contain a decimal point.
- c) If a series of numbers are mentioned in a sentence, only one form should be used, ie either numerals or words, with a preference for numerals (eg '...aged 3, 7, 11 and 15 years')
- d) Numerals should not be used for rounded numbers, eg '...over a thousand examples'; 'a million denture wearers could gain relief'
- e) Millions should be written as 'two million' or '2 million', not 2m
- f) Numerals should be used for quantities with units (eg 7 kg, 5 mA) and in reporting statistics (eg 7% of respondents). There should be a space between the number and the unit, except for percentages and molarity (eg 7%, 0.1M sodium chloride)
- g) Spaces should be included on either side of mathematical signs such as =, +, - etc EXCEPT for the symbols >, <, ≥ and ≤, which should have no space before the number, eg 'p <0.05'
- h) Whole numbers greater than four digits should be grouped with commas, eg 1,000 10,000 100,000. No commas should appear after a decimal point, eg 0.0011 0.00011 0.000011.

6. Times and dates:

- a) Dates should be written in the form 'Friday, 20 April 2007' and 'Monday to Thursday, 23 to 26 April 2007'
- b) Decades should be written as eg 1920s, not 1920's or the twenties
- c) Centuries should be written as 'the nineteenth century' not the 19th century
- d) Years only may be written as 1976-9, 1979-81, 1909-18 when a range of years is mentioned. This only applies to years, and ranges such as 1897-1903 etc must be written in full
- e) Times should be written in the form 7 am, 7.30 pm.

7. Hyphenation:

- a) Compound words may be hyphenated to aid understanding and avoid ambiguity
- b) Compound adjectives (eg size-dependent, caries-free, motor-assisted) should be hyphenated, especially when magnitude or degree is implied (eg full-time, long-term, high-density, low-fluoride)
- c) Care should be taken with dental terms such as maxillofacial, which should be written like this and not as maxillo-facial. If in doubt, check Dorland's Medical Dictionary
- d) Consider particularly the use of hyphens when giving ages. The following forms should be used: 7 years old; 7-year-old children (children aged 7 years); 7 year-old children (7 children aged 1 year); 7-year-olds (children aged 7 years).

8. Figures, tables and boxes:

- a) Figure, box table captions should be given as 'Fig. 1' with one space before the number and two following it (eg Fig. 1 Ulcerous lesions; Table 3 Demographic information, Box 1 List of questions)
- b) Captions and legends should not have full stops at the end of them. This applies also to figure captions in News and other articles
- c) Within the body text, figures should be referred to as 'Figure 1'. When cited in the body text but in brackets, figures should be referred to as Fig. 1. For example: 'As can be seen in Figure 1, the lesions appear black and mottled. After growth they become red (Fig. 2).'
- d) Tables should be referred to as Table 1 etc whether in brackets or not
- e) Boxes should be referred to as Box 2 etc whether in brackets or not
- f) Boxes should be used when a table or figures, consists of on 'column' of text, eg a list.

9. References:

The most important thing to note about references is that they should be as exact as possible. Readers should be able to find the work referred to easily by looking at the reference given. Many authors are not as precise and conscientious as they should be when compiling their reference lists. Ensure that references are correct, and please do try as far as possible to make sure that all the references in a list comply with our Guidelines for Authors. This may involve searching around on the internet for example to find the publisher name, location or year for a book, the correct publisher and date for a government report, or to verify that a reference to a paper is correct. Authors are advised not to submit items for consideration until this has been done! Items so submitted will be returned for correction, without a decision being indicated on possible

publication. Copy accepted for publication in the Digest must be in a ready-to-publish state.

- a) Reference numbers in text always FOLLOW punctuation, like this.¹ Also like this,² this;³ but not (like this)⁴
- b) Please follow the full description of the Digest reference styles given in the Guidelines for Authors. Particular points to note:
- c) For references with up to AND INCLUDING six authors, all author names should be given. References with more than six authors should give the first three authors followed by *et al.* NB: Paper authors sometimes just give one author followed by *et al.* This is incorrect and the additional names must be added
- d) For edited books, editors should be indicated by the term (ed) or (eds) after their name(s) [**note** no capital E!]. Second or third (or fifth etc) editions of books should be indicated by the phrase 2nd ed., 5th ed. etc, **NOT** eg 3rd edn.
- e) For references to websites or online documents, the URL provided should be checked to make sure it still works. For websites, the name of the site should be given followed by the URL and if provided by the authors, the date the site was accessed. For online documents and reports, make sure that the authors are still listed if any are given; in this case the format should be much like that for a book or report: Authors. Title. Date. URL. Access date (if available)
- f) Please note that Digest style uses the official abbreviations of journal titles and these are not always correctly given by authors. When checking reference lists, please double-check that the journal abbreviations are correct. They may be checked using PubMed, available at <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sites/entrez?db=pubmed>. To do this, you can type the full journal name into the search box. This will bring up a listing of the articles for this journal; the correct abbreviation is given at the bottom of the reference. Alternatively, on the PubMed homepage you can click the 'Journals in NCBI Databases' link under the More Resources list. This will take you through to the NLM Catalog journals search page, by typing the full name into the search box, PubMed will search its journals database and bring up the listing for this journal and any similar ones. The official abbreviation is given in the 'NLM Title Abbreviation' field of the journal of interest.

10. Author details

- a) Beneath the article head, authors should be given like this:
H. Devlin*¹ and P.Giannini²
- b) NB: as shown in the example above, an asterisk should be used in the author listing beneath the article head to indicate the corresponding author. This should appear before the author affiliation number

- c) If there are more than two authors, they should be given like this: H. Devlin,¹ P. Giannini² and B. Smith³ (assuming the authors are from different institutions)
- d) If the authors come from the same institution, this should be indicated in the author listing beneath the article head as follows: H. Devlin,¹ P. Giannini¹ and B. Smith¹
- e) If an author comes from more than one institution, this should be indicated in the author listing beneath the article head as follows:
H. Devlin,^{1,2} P. Giannini^{1,3} and B. Smith²
- f) The author biog should be given like this:

¹Senior Lecturer in Restorative Dentistry, The School of Dentistry, University of Manchester, Higher Cambridge Street, Manchester, M15 6FH;

²Assistant Professor, University of Nebraska Medical Center College of Dentistry

*Correspondence to: Dr Hugh Devlin

Email: hugh.devlin@man.ac.uk