

# HAMAD BIN KHALIFA UNIVERSITY

## Editorial Style Guide

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For questions or comments, contact HBKU Communications at [inquiry@hbku.edu.qa](mailto:inquiry@hbku.edu.qa)

## Introduction

The HBKU Editorial Style Guide is a point of reference for stakeholders seeking to produce written material for external and internal use.

The aim of the editorial style guide is to cover topics that may not be adequately addressed in standard stylebooks, such as the AP Style Guide or the Chicago Manual of Style. It will also summarize topics that often present as points of debate, and address frequently raised questions of style.

Unlike grammar or spelling, questions of style do not have a “right” or “wrong” answer, but are largely a matter of preference. HBKU’s Editorial Style Guide will seek to standardize and establish a preferred style for relevant HBKU constituents to follow, such that a consistent and clear presentation may be maintained across a variety of material produced by different individuals at the university.

The HBKU Editorial Style Guide is largely based on the AP Style Guide, with some deviations, to align with common practice at HBKU.

### Abbreviations and Acronyms

- Before a name: Abbreviations are allowed before a name.  
Mr. John Baker  
Mrs. Dalia Mahmoud
- After a name: Abbreviate *junior* or *senior* after an individual's name. Abbreviate *company*, *corporation*, *incorporated* and *limited* when used after the name of a corporate entity.  
Adam Smith Jr.  
Amazon.com, Inc.
- Academic degrees: May be abbreviated after an individual's name.  
Maryam Al-Saadi, PhD
- Dates and numerals: **Use** the abbreviations **AD**, **BC**, **am**, **pm**, and **No.** in tabular format.  
**Do:** Early this morning, he asked for the number of your room.  
**Do not:** Early this am he asked for the No. of your room.
- Organizations: Some organizations and government agencies are widely recognized by their initials.  
CIA  
FBI  
QNA  
**Do:** Spell out on first reference, abbreviate elsewhere.  
**Do not:** Use periods in two-letter abbreviations.  
Use abbreviations or acronyms that the reader would not quickly recognize.  
Use abbreviations and acronyms in headlines.

## Academic Degrees

In running text:

**Avoid** abbreviations and use phrases instead.  
**Do not** capitalize unless using the official name of the degree.  
[John Jones, who has a doctorate in psychology.](#)

In tabular format:

Use abbreviations without periods.  
[BS](#)  
[EMER](#)  
[JD](#)  
[MA](#)  
[MS](#)  
[PhD](#)

General rule:

**Use** an apostrophe in *bachelor's* degree, a *master's*, etc., but there is no possessive in *Bachelor of Arts* or *Master of Science*.

## Academic Departments, Institutes, Colleges and Centers

Not part of an official name:

**Lowercase** *department, institute, college and center*  
[The English department](#)  
[The college held an information session](#)

Part of an official name:

**Capitalize** *Department, Institute, College and Center*  
[The Department of English](#)  
[The College of Islamic Studies](#)

## Academic Specializations

General rule:

**Lowercase** all references to academic specializations, but **capitalize** official names of degrees.  
[She has a Master of Science in Islamic finance](#)

### Academic Titles

Preceding a name:

**Capitalize** when they precede a name.

**Lowercase** elsewhere.

Dean Mohamed Sharif

### Ages

General rule:

**Always use** figures. **Hyphenate** when used as an adjective before a noun, or a substitute for a noun.

A 5-year-old boy

The boy is 5 years old

### Al Jazeera

General rule:

**Do not** hyphenate.

### Ampersand

In running text:

**Replace** with *and*, unless part of an entity's official name or title.

Johnson & Johnson

I was accompanied by my brother and sister.

In tabular format:

**Retain** (&) if necessary.

## Arabic Names

General rule:

Always *Sheikh* and *Sheikha* ('e,' not 'a').

**Capitalize** before a name.

*Sheikh Mohamed attended the ceremony.*

**For men, capitalize *B* in *Bin* and *A* in *Al***, with no hyphens unless specifically requested by the person so named.

**For Arab women, lowercase *b* in *bint***, and use first names in subsequent references.

*Abu* means *father of* and must not be separated from the name that follows

*(Abu Qatada at first mention remains Abu Qatada, not Qatada).*

## Board of Trustees

General rule:

Always **lowercase**, unless it forms part of a headline or title.

## Capitalization

General rule:

**Avoid** unnecessary capitalization.

Proper nouns:

**Capitalize** nouns that constitute the unique identification for a specific person, place, or thing.

*Shamma*

*Mohamed*

*Qatar*

*Al-Rayyan*

Proper names: **Capitalize** common nouns such as *party*, *river*, *street* and *west* when they are an integral part of the full name for a person, place or thing.  
[Democratic Party](#)  
[Mississippi River](#)

Compositions: **Capitalize** the principal words in the names of books, movies, plays, poems, operas, songs, radio and television programs, works of art, etc.

Headlines: **Capitalize** words that are of more than four letters.

### Chair

General rule: **Do not** use chairwoman or chairman.  
**Capitalize** before a name, lowercase elsewhere.

### Composition Titles

Capitalize: Principle words, including propositions and conjunction, of four or more letters.  
**Capitalize** articles (i.e. a, an) of fewer than four letters if they are the first words in a title.  
**Capitalize** titles of courses, forms, reports, workshops, lectures, conferences, seminars, forums, panel discussions, symposiums, movements, websites and blogs.  
[She took part in the Professional Interpreting workshop.](#)

Italics: Titles of newspapers, magazines, journals, books (excluding reference works, the Bible and the Quran), volumes, movies, documentaries, TV programs, plays, poems, concerts, operas, music albums, paintings and exhibitions.

Quotation marks: Titles of articles, episodes, chapters, theses dissertations, conference papers, essays, short stories, songs and speeches.  
[She wrote a conference paper titled "Science Ethics in a Globalized World."](#)

Translation: As a general rule, **translate** titles into Arabic.

### **Contractions**

General rule: **Avoid** *don't, won't, isn't*

### **Course Numbers**

General rule: **Capitalize** when used with Arabic numerals, **lowercase** elsewhere.  
[Audiovisual Translation 301](#)  
[An audiovisual translation course](#)

### **Dates**

General rule: Always use Arabic figures, without *st, nd, rd* or *th*.  
**Do:** [May 30, 2017](#)  
**Do not:** May 30th, 2017

### **Days of the Week**

General rule: **Capitalize** and **don't abbreviate**, except when needed in tabular format.

### **Dean**

General rule: **Capitalize** when used before a name, **lowercase** elsewhere.  
[Dean Ahmed Essam attended the graduation ceremony.](#)  
[Ahmed Essam, dean of the College of Science and Engineering, attended the ceremony.](#)



### **Directions and Regions**

General rule: **Lowercase** when they indicate compass directions, **capitalize** when referring to regions.  
[We drove south.](#)  
[His writings are influenced by Western literature.](#)

### **Doctor**

General rule: **Use** in reference to medical practitioners and individuals with a doctoral degree in any specialty. This is the preferred title for HBKU faculty. Abbreviate before a name.  
[Dr. Rasheed Nimr](#)

### **Eid Al-Adha, Eid Al-Fitr**

General rule: **Hyphenate** on both occasions.

### **Email**

General rule: **Do not** hyphenate.

### **Embassy**

General rule: **Capitalize** with the name of a nation, **lowercase** without it and when used collectively.  
[The Spanish Embassy](#)  
[The embassies of Spain and Portugal](#)

### **Emeritus**

General rule:

**Add to** formal titles and **capitalize** before a name, **lowercase** elsewhere.

[Professor Emeritus Shigeru Kamada](#)

[Shigeru Kamada, professor emeritus at The University of Tokyo](#)

### **Emir**

General rule:

Always **use** *Emir* when referring to His Highness the Emir of Qatar, never *Amir*

### **Facebook**

General rule:

Always **capitalize**.

### **Flier, Flyer**

General rule:

*Flyer* is the preferred term.

### **Google**

General rule:

Always **capitalize**.

[I conducted an online search using Google.](#)

### **Government**

General rule:

**Lowercase**, unless in reference to a specific country's ruling body.

[The Qatari Government](#)

[The governments of the GCC](#)

### ***Hajj***

General rule: **Lowercase**, unless at the beginning of a sentence, and **italicize**.

### **Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU)**

General rule: **Spell out** on first reference, **use** the abbreviation for every mention thereafter.

### ***Hijab***

General rule: **Lowercase**, unless at the beginning of a sentence, and **italicize**.

### **Holidays**

General rule: **Capitalize** them.  
New Year's Day  
Eid Al-Fitr

### **Imam**

General rule: **Lowercase** and **italicize** when describing the leader of a prayer in a Muslim mosque.  
**Capitalize** and **don't italicize** before a name.

### **Inquire, Inquiry**

General rule: **Avoid** using *enquiry*.

## Internet

General rule: **Lowercase**, except at the beginning of a sentence.

## Jihad

General rule: **Lowercase**, except at the beginning of a sentence, and **italicize**.

## -ly

General rule: **Do not** put hyphens between adverbs ending in –ly and adjectives they modify.

**Do:** A fully informed woman

**Don't:** A fully-informed woman

## Master's

General rule: The above spelling is acceptable in any reference. **Capitalize** only when part of the official title of a degree, **lowercase** elsewhere.

He earned a master's in Islamic studies.

He is pursuing a Master of Arts in Islamic studies.

## Months

In running text: Always **capitalize**. **Don't abbreviate**.

**Do:** They first met in January of 2017.

**Don't:** They first met in Jan. of 2017.

In tabular format: **Capitalize** and **abbreviate** if necessary.

Feb. 2, 2017

### **Mohammed**

General rule: **Spell** as above unless otherwise is preferred by a specific person for the spelling of his own name, or in the title or name of an organization.

### **Names**

General rule: **Use** only last names on second reference.

### **Newspaper Names**

General rule: **Capitalize** *the* before a newspaper's name if it is part of the official newspaper's name. **Do not** put in quotes. **Italicize**.

### **NGO**

General rule: Nongovernmental organization. **Use** *NGO* on second reference.

### ***Niqab***

General rule: **Do not** capitalize. **Italicize**.

### **Numbers**

In running text: **Spell out** numbers from zero to nine.

In tabular format: It is acceptable to use digits for all numbers.

## Office

General rule: **Capitalize** if part of the official name of an office, **lowercase** otherwise.  
[Office of Communications](#)  
[The communications office](#)

## Organizations and Institutions

Capitalize: Full names of organizations and institutions, **lowercase** otherwise.

## Parkinson's disease

General rule: **Capitalize** *Parkinson's*, **lowercase** *disease*.  
**Do:** [Parkinson's disease is a degenerative disease.](#)  
**Do not:** Parkinson's Disease is a degenerative disease.

## Percent

In running text: Following a figure, one word.  
[The project is 60 percent complete.](#)

In tabular format: Acceptable to use the percentage sign %

## Prefixes

General rule: **Do not** hyphenate if used with a word that starts with a consonant.  
**Use** a hyphen if the prefix ends in a vowel and the word that follows starts with a vowel.  
[It is a multidisciplinary program.](#)

### President (of a country)

General rule: **Capitalize** *President* as a formal title before one or more names.  
*President Jimmy Carter*

### President/Provost (of a university)

General rule: **Capitalize** when used before a name, **lowercase** elsewhere.  
*President Mohamed Ihsan gave a speech*  
*Mohamed Ihsan, president of the university, gave a speech*

### Professor

General rule: **Acceptable** to use in reference to HBKU faculty, but is not the preferred term (see Doctor).  
**Capitalize** before a name, **lowercase** elsewhere.

### SAT

General rule: **Use** only the initials when referring to the tests.  
*The students scored above average on the SAT.*

### Time of the Day

General rule: **Use** figures except for *noon* and *midnight*. The terms *pm* and *am* should be **lowercase** and should be preceded by a space.  
**Do:** *I woke up at 10 am*  
**Do not:** *I woke up at 10 am this morning*

### **Trustee**

General rule: **Do not** capitalize if used before a name.

### **United States**

General rule: **Use** periods in the abbreviation in text. In headlines, it's *US* (without periods).

### **University**

General rule: **Capitalize** University when in reference to HBKU. **Use** small caps for all other references.  
*The University achieved its enrollment target*  
*The university, in Michigan, collaborated with HBKU*

### **Woman, Women**

General rule: **Use** *female* as an adjective, **not** *woman*.  
*She is the first female governor of North Carolina.*



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