

Science writing checklist

2026 Australian Science Communicators National Conference

Enjoyed The Art and Science of Being Understood? This checklist summarises our advice, covering 3 guidelines for clear science writing from ISO 24495-3-1:2026:

- Provide an informative summary or list of key points.
- Use headings.
- Consider alternatives to technical jargon.

Provide an informative summary or list of key points

- ☐ Use summaries to help readers decide if the content is relevant to them.
- ☐ Add the summary or key points to the start of your document.
- ☐ Tell the reader what the document covers, or what the problem or issue is.
- ☐ Tell them why the document is important, or what your conclusions are and why.
- ☐ Tell the reader what needs to happen now.
- ☐ Go to the Australian Style Guide™ [for more information about summaries](#).

Use headings

- ☐ Use headings to tell the readers where to find the information they're looking for.
- ☐ Add a new heading for each new topic.
- ☐ Make headings grammatically and visually consistent.
- ☐ Include enough information to capture the content below each heading.
- ☐ Keep each heading to one line.
- ☐ Go to the Australian Style Guide™ for [more information about headings](#).

Consider alternatives to technical jargon

- ☐ Use the shortest and simplest word when it doesn't change your meaning.
- ☐ Replace unfamiliar words with familiar ones or define them in context.
- ☐ Use shorter alternatives to multi-syllable words.
- ☐ Choose single words instead of long phrases.
- ☐ Reveal the real action in hidden verbs.
- ☐ Go to the Australian Style Guide™ [for more information about simple words](#).

Ask a communication expert

Our editors work with you to transform any text, develop templates to save staff time, create style, writing or AI guides, and analyse your writing's strengths and areas for improvement.

As well as traditional training for workplace writing, we have AI workshops that help you combine AI tools with professional writing skills.

Email or phone our communication experts to find out more, or [go to our website](#):

- editing@plainenglishfoundation.com or training@plainenglishfoundation.com
- 1300 691 885.