

The Sinneave Writing Style Guide

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Introduction

Purpose of This Guide

This style guide provides a shared foundation for writing clear content for The Sinneave Family Foundation (Sinneave) and its related initiatives. It ensures consistency across all Sinneave communications, including learning materials, reports, web content, presentations, and internal documents, while allowing flexibility based on audience and context.

Sinneave powers multiple initiatives (e.g., EmploymentWorks, NEUROinclusive Workforce Solutions, Worktopia, and Neuroinclusivity in Housing), each with its own voice. While voice and style may vary slightly across brands or identities, this guide ensures that all materials reflect core principles: clarity, respect, credibility, inclusivity, and accessibility.

Note: This guide is based on content originally provided by Leah Chang Learning in their Writing Style Guide (July 2025) and, with permission, adapted for Sinneave's use.

This document is a living guide, updated as appropriate to reflect evolving best practices in clear and accessible communication.

Who Should Use This Guide

We ask all Sinneave staff, collaborators, and vendors to follow this style guide when creating content for Sinneave or its initiatives.

How to Use this Guide

Use this guide as a reference at all stages of writing:

- Planning content
- Drafting communications or learning modules
- Editing or reviewing material for consistency and clarity

When in doubt, consult this guide before finalizing or publishing any written work. If audience preferences differ from this guide, prioritize those preferences.

Flexibility and Adaptation

Because our audience is broad and varied, we use a formal tone to ensure our messages feel respectful, inclusive, and trustworthy.

At the same time, we also value approachability. In learning or engagement materials, a slightly more relaxed tone is often helpful.

This guide aims to help you find a balance. It supports a consistent, respectful style while giving space for each brand or identity to express its unique voice.

Writing Voice and Style

Voice is the personality behind how we communicate a brand or identity.

Style is the set of writing rules we use to guide our communication on behalf of Sinneave and its initiatives.

Sinneave powers a growing portfolio of initiatives, each with its own audience. While each brand or identity may express itself differently, our overall voice stays consistent. We aim to reflect these key qualities in all communication:

- **Neuro-affirming:** We follow Sinneave's practices to respectfully communicate about autism and neurodivergence, in writing, online, presentations, or in person. See the [Neuro-affirming Language Guide](#).
- **Clear Language:** We use plain, concise, direct language so readers can understand us easily.
- **Respectful and Inclusive:** We write with care and consideration for all readers, including Autistic and neurodivergent people, collaborators, learners, and stakeholders. We focus on clear intent, accessible language, and inclusive framing rather than a specific tone.
- **Credible:** We build trust by avoiding jargon and overly casual language that may confuse readers or weaken reliability. We aim to share information clearly, thoughtfully, and with integrity.
- **Approachable:** We aim to create content that is easy to connect with, even when technical or formal.
- **Reader-Centred:** We structure and present content to meet audience needs and reduce barriers for easier understanding and use.

Using Plain Language

The Sinneave Family Foundation uses plain language whenever we can. That means using easily understandable words. Plain language is extremely important, especially for public-facing content.

Aim for a grade 6 to 8 reading level for most audiences. A higher reading level may be appropriate for some audiences.

You can check the reading level of your writing and identify hard-to-read sentences using a tool like [Hemingway Editor](#).

Why Plain Language Matters

Plain language helps more people understand what we write, including:

- People with sensory processing differences
- People who speak English as a second language
- International audiences
- People reading on their phones
- People in a rush

It also makes website content easier to find in search engines (better for SEO). Plus, it helps avoid confusing or unclear wording.

Tips for Writing in Plain Language

- Put the most important info at the top.
- Keep paragraphs short.
- Use short sentences. Break long sentences into two or more short sentences.
- Use bullet points when it makes sense.
- Avoid jargon, buzzwords, idioms, and industry terms.
- Spell out acronyms the first time you use them.
- Write in active voice (e.g. “She sent the email” not “The email was sent”).
- Use clear headings and subheadings so people can scan the content.
- Stick to one verb tense in each paragraph.
- Avoid Latin abbreviations (like “i.e.” and “etc.”) unless your audience knows them well.
- Avoid complicated lists—use bullet points to break them up if needed.
- Use the Oxford comma to make your sentence easier to understand.

Writing Style and Approach

The focus of this section is how to write in a way that is respectful, clear, reader-centered, and accessible to a diverse audience.

Rule	Examples
Always use active voice over passive voice. Note: Use the base form of verbs instead of “-ing” words, especially in titles, headings, learning outcomes, or instructions.	Yes: We will update the project charter with the new information. No: The project charter will be updated with the new information. Yes: Apply what you learned. No: Applying what you learned.
Write as simply as possible. Avoid jargon. Remember that English may not be everyone’s first language. Note: Ask yourself: Can I say this in an easier way? Always choose simpler words if you can. Consider using this wordiness tool to help you write more simply.	Yes: Finish the self-paced online session before uploading the course to the learning platform. No: Complete the asynchronous VILT before deploying the SCORM in the LMS. Yes: Work with others to develop systems that allow you to act. No: Leverage capacity-building methodologies synergistically to create actionable paradigms.

Rule	Examples
For learning assets, use “we,” “our,” “you,” and “your” to connect warmly with your audience.	Yes: This is the first step in your learning. No: This is the first step in a learner’s journey.
Use a warm, positive tone.	Yes: Once you complete this section, the next one will open for you. No: You cannot move forward until this section is complete.
Avoid unusual words and idioms. An idiom is a phrase that means something different from the literal meaning of the words. Idioms can be confusing for people who are learning English or who do not know the phrase.	Yes: Let’s start right away with this module. No: Let’s hit the ground running with this module.
Use names that reflect a diverse audience.	Yes: Neha, Cosmina, Miguel, Jun, Tsu Yee No: Stephen, John, Richard, Ellen, Mary, Karen

Rule	Examples
Avoid gender bias – use "they" and "their." Use they / them / their when talking about one person if you do not know their gender or pronouns. Change the sentence if it is not clear who "they" refers to.	Yes: Ask if someone wants to present. If they do, invite them to the front of the room. No: Ask if someone wants to present. If he / she does, invite him / her to come to the front of the room.
Do not use contractions. Spelled out words are easier to understand, especially for people who: • Are in a hurry – they may read quickly and miss shortened words. • Are feeling overwhelmed or under pressure – it can be harder to focus or absorb information. • Are multitasking – distractions make it easier to misread things. • Have cognitive processing differences – full words are easier to recognize and less mentally tiring.	Yes: We are happy you are here. No: We're happy you're here.

Grammar and Usage

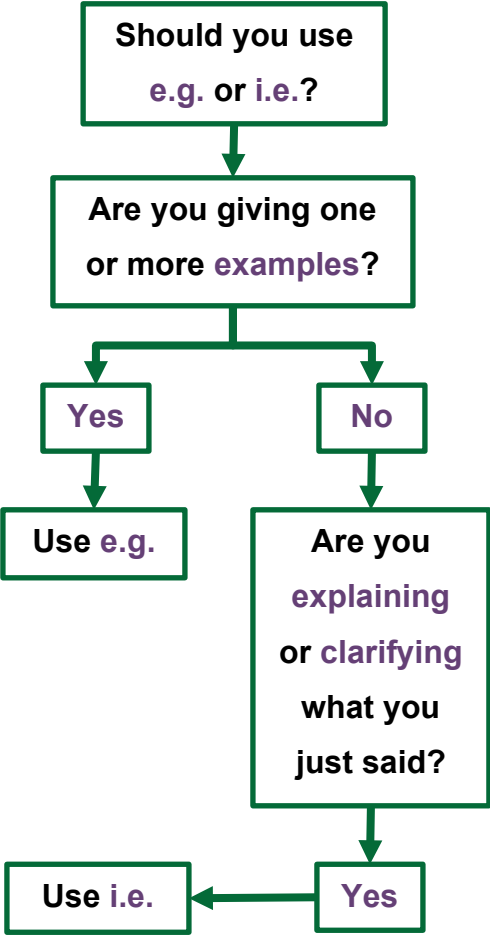
The focus of this section is how to apply consistent grammar, abbreviations, acronyms, and spelling that supports clarity.

Acronyms and Abbreviations

Rule	Examples
Use “Sinneave” as the short form for “The Sinneave Family Foundation.”	Yes: The Sinneave Family Foundation (Sinneave).
Never use “SFF.”	No: The Sinneave Family Foundation (SFF).
Spell out the term before using the acronym. Put the acronym in parentheses after the full term.	Yes: Ask the subject matter expert (SME) for input. No: Ask the SME for input. No: Ask the SME (subject matter expert) for input.
Always reintroduce acronyms at the start of each section in long documents or learning tools.	Yes: The subject matter expert (SME) gave feedback. No (if it’s the first mention in a new section): The SME gave feedback.

Rule	Examples
Do not use periods in acronyms unless the context requires them. The context requires them when: • Referring to countries • Referring to personal initials See examples of when to use periods in acronyms.	Yes: U.K. for United Kingdom No: UK Yes: A.B. Lastname No: AB Lastname Yes: BC for British Columbia No: B.C. for British Columbia
To form a plural of an acronym, add a lowercase s with no apostrophe.	Yes: SMEs, IDs No: SME's, ID's
Do not use spaces in initialisms.	Yes: E.M. Forster No: E. M. Forster
Only skip definitions for widely understood abbreviations. What's "common" for one person might not be for another, especially in diverse learning settings. When in doubt, define the abbreviation the first time you use it.	Yes: "In case of doubt—for example (e.g.), if a client hasn't provided background information—send an email to the team lead."

Rule	Examples
Use capital letters and no periods for provinces and territories.	Yes: BC, SK No: B.C., Sask.
Use periods for country abbreviations.	Yes: U.S., U.K. No: US, UK
Do not use slang acronyms.	Yes: I don't know. Isn't that funny – I'll have to check. I will let you know by end of day, before I am out of office. No: IDK, LOL, EOD, OOO.
Use periods for honorifics (title prefixes to a person's name). "Miss" is an exception and takes no period.	Yes: Mr., Mrs., Ms., Mx., Dr., Miss No: Mr, Mrs, Ms, Mx, Dr, Miss.
Use periods for academic degrees. • B.S. = Bachelor of Science • B.A. = Bachelor of Arts • B.C.R. = Bachelor of Community Rehabilitation • Ph.D. = Doctor of Philosophy (no space in between letters)	Yes: B.S., B.A., B.C.R., Ph.D. No: BS, BA, BCR, PhD

Rule	Examples
Use Latin abbreviations (e.g., i.e., etc.) correctly and define them if needed. • e.g. = for example • i.e. = that is • etc. = and so on	Yes: Participants will need basic supplies, e.g., a notebook, pencil, and an eraser. Yes: Learners need basic supplies such as a notebook, pencil, an eraser, etc. No: Participants will need basic supplies, i.e., a notebook, pencil, and an eraser. You can access your course anytime.  <pre> graph TD A[Should you use e.g. or i.e.?] --> B[Are you giving one or more examples?] B -- Yes --> C[Use e.g.] B -- No --> D[Are you explaining or clarifying what you just said?] D -- Yes --> E[Use i.e.] </pre>

Common Spelling and Word Usage

Rule	Examples
Always spell “eLearning” as one word. Use a lowercase e and capital L.	Yes: eLearning No: e-Learning
Use a hyphen in “non-profit.”	Yes: non-profit No: nonprofit
Do not hyphenate “online.”	Yes: online No: on-line
Do not hyphenate “email.”	Yes: email No: e-mail
Use a hyphen in “non-profit.”	Yes: non-profit No: nonprofit
Use “log in” for a verb. Verbs show actions.	Yes: Please log in to Sinneave Connects. No: Please login to Sinneave Connects.

Rule	Examples
Use “login” for a noun. Nouns name things.	Yes: Enter your login details for Sinneave Connects. No: Enter your log in details for Sinneave Connects.
Use Canadian spellings that end in -re for certain words. Note: there are some exceptions, like “meter” in phrases like “read the meter” or “parameter.”	Yes: Metre, Centre, Centred No: Meter, Center, Centered
Use Canadian spellings, with a letter u.	Yes: Colour, neighbour, honour No: Color, neighbor, honor
Use “licence” for a noun. Nouns name things.	Yes: They applied for a driver’s licence. No: They applied for a driver’s license.
Use “license” for a verb. Verbs show actions.	Yes: The government will license new drivers. No: The government will licence new drivers.

Rule	Examples
Use “practice” for a noun. Nouns name things.	Yes: They have piano practice every afternoon. No: They have piano practise every afternoon.
Use “practise” for a verb. Verbs show actions.	Yes: You need to practise every day. No: You need to practice every day.
Use a double “l” in some past-tense Canadian spellings.	Yes: Cancelled, travelled No: Canceled, traveled
Make sure to use “z” not “s” in words like “organize.” This aligns with Canadian spelling. Be aware of exceptions, like “advertise” or “compromise.”	Yes: Organize, conceptualize, specialize No: Organise, conceptualise, specialise

Formatting and Layout

The focus of this section is structure and visually present content for ease of use, clarity, and accessibility. This section supports consistency in lists and emphasis across documents.

Lists

Rule	Examples
Use a colon after a sentence that introduces a list.	Yes: Pack these items: • Gloves • First aid kit No: Pack these items • Gloves • First aid kit
Use an uppercase letter for the first word in each bullet point.	Yes: The reason we do this is: • For consistency • To make things easier to read No: The reason we do this is: • for consistency • to make things easier to read

Rule	Examples
Use periods only if the bullet point is a complete sentence.	Yes: In case of emergency: • Break the glass. • Yell loudly. No: What to bring: • Gloves. • Snacks.
Keep all bullets in a list of the same type. Use all full sentences or all short phrases. If you must mix them, add a period to every bullet point.	Yes: Emergency items: • PPE. • Chocolate bars (our team likes Cadbury's best). No: Emergency items: • PPE • Chocolate bars (our team likes Cadbury's best).

Rule	Examples
Make bullet points grammatically consistent. Start each bullet the same way (e.g., all with verbs).	Yes: Emergency procedures: • Call 911. • Hand out gloves. • Share water bottles. No: Emergency procedures: • Call 911. • Gloves. • Sharing water bottles.

Visual Emphasis

Rule	Examples
Avoid using italics. Italics can be hard to read for some people. Use other ways to make something stand out, like re-wording the sentence.	Yes: Your Time, Your Way is an activity held at Sinneave 3 times a week. No: An event we hold 3 times a week at Sinneave is <i>Your Time, Your Way</i>.
Use bold minimally (only when needed), mostly for headings or titles. Bold text helps bring attention, but it can be distracting if used too much. Try to use bold only for headings, titles, or the most important part of a message.	Yes: The deadline for submissions is 12:00 p.m. on July 14, 2025. Yes: Module 2: When to Bold. No: Please be sure to submit your quarterly workplan by 12:00 p.m. on July 14, 2025. This is very important!
Use underlining only for links.	Yes: Visit Sinneave's website. No: Please <u>read the examples</u> before you begin.

Punctuation and Symbols

The focus of this section is on how to use punctuation and symbols consistently to improve readability and understanding.

Apostrophes

Rule	Examples
Do not use apostrophes with acronyms or product names.	Yes: This FAQ section answers common questions. No: This FAQ's section answers common questions.
When a word ends with the letter s: - For one person or thing, add an apostrophe and the letter "s" to show possession. - For more than one, add just an apostrophe after the letter s to show possession.	Yes: Charles's jacket is on the chair. Yes: The leaders' blogs were popular. No: Charles' jacket is on the chair. No: The leader's blogs were popular.

Brackets and Parentheses

Rule	Examples
Use parentheses to include related details that do not fit the main sentence or to show an abbreviation or acronym.	Yes: The crew (Kirk, Spock, and McCoy) were late for dinner. No: The crew was late (Kirk, Spock, and McCoy).
Put punctuation inside parentheses only if the content is a full sentence. If the parentheses hold a full sentence that stands alone, put punctuation inside. If it is part of a sentence (a fragment), put punctuation outside.	Yes: The crew was invited to dinner. Only Spock attended. (Kirk and McCoy were busy.) No: The crew was invited to dinner. Only Spock attended. (Kirk and McCoy were busy).
Use square brackets inside parentheses to add more information. Use square brackets inside parentheses when you need to include extra details within that information.	Yes: The basis of the theory (possibly informed by Derrida [pp. 37-38]) is questionable. No: The basis of the theory (possibly informed by Derrida (pp. 37-38)) is questionable.

Commas, Colons, and Semicolons

Rule	Examples
Use the Oxford (serial) comma. The Oxford comma is the comma before “and” in a list of three or more things. It helps avoid confusion.	Yes: We have apples, oranges, and pears. No: We have apples, oranges and pears.
Use an uppercase letter for the first word after a colon if it starts a full sentence.	Yes: The directions were clear: Follow the plan exactly. No: The directions were clear: follow the plan exactly.
Do not capitalize the first word after a colon if it is not a full sentence.	Yes: The kit includes: a flashlight, batteries, and a first-aid guide. No: The kit includes: A flashlight, batteries, and a first-aid guide.

Rule	Examples
Use a semicolon to join full sentences (two complete thoughts) or separate long or detailed items within a list. Semicolons help avoid confusion when list items are long or have commas inside them.	Yes: We asked for Aero; we got Coffee Crisp. Yes: The team had three goals: increase outreach and visibility; build community trust through events; and report results to the city. Yes: The team had three goals: increase outreach and visibility, build community trust through events, and report results to the city. No: We asked for Aero, we got Coffee Crisp.

Dashes and Hyphens

Rule	Examples
Do not use hyphens in terms that are now one word.	Yes: email, eLearning, newsletter No: e-mail, e-learning, e-newsletter
Use an em dash (—) with no spaces before or after it to separate two thoughts.	Yes: That's funny—I thought I heard a mouse. No: That's funny — I thought I heard a mouse.
Use an en dash (–) with no spaces before or after it to show a range of numbers.	Yes: There were 20–25 people per team. No: There were 20 – 25 people per team.
Use a hyphen if leaving it out would change the meaning of the word.	Yes: I'm re-creating a famous painting. Yes: I will re-sort the M&Ms. No: I'm recreating a famous painting. No: I will resort the M&Ms.

Rule	Examples
If two or more words work together to describe something (a compound adjective) before a noun, connect them with a hyphen.	Yes: The SME had high-priority work, so he cancelled the interview. No: The SME had to do some high priority work, so he cancelled the interview.
Hyphenate words with the prefixes: • half- • self- • all-	Yes: half-life, self-talk, all-stars No: half life, self talk, all stars

Ellipses

Rule	Examples
Use an ellipsis (...) to show missing words or an unfinished thought.	Yes: I thought he was going to say something ... but he stayed quiet. No (if there is no pause or unfinished thought): I thought he was going to say something, but he stayed quiet).
Add punctuation after an ellipsis if it ends the sentence.	Yes: I just do not know what to do with an injured raccoon No: I just do not know what to do with an injured raccoon ...
Put a space before and after an ellipsis and the words that precede and follow it. Exception – when the ellipsis is at the end of a sentence, do not include a space between the punctuation and the ellipsis.	Yes: The cats preferred the expensive food ... that's why they were fighting. No: The cats preferred the expensive food...that's why they were fighting. Yes: I have written hundreds of reports: impact reports, white papers, ...! No: I have written hundreds of reports: impact reports, white papers, ... !

Percentages

Rule	Examples
Write percentages using numbers and the percent symbol, not words.	Yes: About 80% of participants completed the survey. No: About 80 percent of participants completed the survey.
Try not to start a sentence with a percentage. If possible, reword the sentence so the percentage is not at the beginning. This can make sentences easier to read. Note: It is okay to use percentages at the start of a sentence with the numerals if it is a data point (e.g., in the Impact Report).	Yes: Only 25% of participants completed the survey. Yes (as a data point in the impact report): 90% of staff said they felt supported in their role. No: 25% of the participants completed the survey.
If you need to use percentages at the beginning of a sentence, spell out the number in words. Avoid using large numbers at the beginning of a sentence, when possible, as it can make the sentence too wordy.	Yes: Seventy-five percent of attendees said they enjoyed the session. No: 75% of attendees said they enjoyed the session.

Quotation Marks and Dialogue

Rule	Examples
Only use quotation marks when someone is speaking or being quoted. Do not use quotation marks to highlight words or terms. Re-word for emphasis.	Yes: Bystander intervention is a common term for speaking up when you see an injustice. No: A common term for speaking up when you see an injustice happening is “bystander intervention”.
Use double quotation marks for quotes, and single quotation marks for quotes inside quotes. In eLearning, we usually avoid quotation marks in narration or transcripts. When it is necessary to include dialogue, use double quotation marks and identify the speaker by name when possible.	Yes: I said to my supervisor, “Let me quote a famous president who said, ‘Ask not what your country can do for you.’” Yes (avoiding quotation marks): Facilitator: Let’s take a 5-minute break. No: I said to my supervisor, “Let me quote a famous president who said, “Ask not what your country can do for you.””

Rule	Examples
If a long quote has more than one paragraph, put opening quotation marks at the start of each paragraph. Close the quote only at the end of the final paragraph.	Yes: To quote the textbook: “This view has confused scholars for years. “The new approach fits better but still has issues.” No: To quote the textbook: “This view has confused scholars for years.” “The new approach fits better but still has issues.”

Rule	Examples
Place punctuation in the correct spot with quotation marks. • Periods and commas go inside the closing quotation mark. • Colons and semicolons go outside. • Question marks or exclamation marks go inside only if they are part of the quoted material.	Yes: Some of the staff said the work was “boring.” The work was simply too “boring”; the staff rebelled. “Do you find that work boring?” asked the manager. I heard you said the work was “boring”! No: Some of the staff said the work was “boring”. The work was simply too “boring;” the staff rebelled. “Do you find that work boring”? asked the manager.

Slashes and Ampersands

Rule	Examples
Do not use a slash to separate words. Rewrite a sentence so it is clear and complete.	Yes: Please bring either your laptop or tablet (or both) to the meeting. No: Please bring your laptop/tablet to the meeting.
Use “and” in writing. Use & only if: • It is part of a company or brand name • Space is tight (like in tables, charts, or headings)	Yes: Finch & Associates Yes (space-limited chart): Programs: Youth & Family, Education & Employment Yes: Finch and her team joined the event. No: Finch & her team joined the event.

Using Uppercase in eLearning Titles

The focus of this section is when to use uppercase versus and letters in course titles, lesson or module titles, and section headings.

Rule	Examples
Use Title Case for: • Course titles • Lesson or module titles In Title Case, the first letter of major words is uppercase, and the first letter of most minor words is lowercase.	Yes: Autism Campus Prep No: Autism campus prep
Use sentence case for section titles. In sentence case, only the first letter of the word in a sentence and proper nouns are in uppercase.	Yes: How to capitalize words in a section title. No: How to Capitalize Words in a Section Title.

Check Your Title Case

If you're working on a course, lesson, or module title, and want to make sure the capitalization is correct, use one of these free tools:

- titlecaseconverter.com
- titlecapitalize.com
- thecapitalizer.com

Just paste your title into the box, and the tool will format it for you.

Numbers, Dates, and Measurements

The focus of this section is how to write numbers, time, dates, and measurements clearly and consistently.

General Numbers

Rule	Examples								
Use numerals instead of spelling out numbers.	Yes: There will be 3 modules. No: There will be three modules.								
Only spell out a number if it begins a sentence or is part of a fractions.	Yes: Almost two-thirds of the learners passed. Yes: Forty-five people are registered, and 23 are on the wait list. No: Almost 2/3 of the learners passed. No: 45 people are registered, and 23 are on the wait list.								
Use numerals in tables and charts.	Yes: <table border="1"> <tr> <td># of Registrants</td><td>Module #</td></tr> <tr> <td>45</td><td>23</td></tr> </table> No: <table border="1"> <tr> <td># of Registrants</td><td>Module #</td></tr> <tr> <td>Forty-five</td><td>Twenty-three</td></tr> </table>	# of Registrants	Module #	45	23	# of Registrants	Module #	Forty-five	Twenty-three
# of Registrants	Module #								
45	23								
# of Registrants	Module #								
Forty-five	Twenty-three								

Rule	Examples
Use commas in numbers with four or more digits. Do not use commas with the following exceptions: • Serial numbers • Page numbers • Binary digits • Acoustic frequencies • Temperatures	Yes: • 1,000 • 8,564 • 1,000,000 • Serial # 832895 • Page 1287 • 10101010111 • 1000 Hz • 2804°C No: • 1000 • 8564 • 1000000 • Serial # 832,895 • Page 1,287 • 10,101,010,111 • 1,000 Hz • 2,804°C

Rule	Examples								
Use the word “number” in content; use the symbol “#” in tables or graphs.	Yes (content block): We reviewed the number of new users each month. Yes (table): <table border="1" data-bbox="824 531 1328 758"> <tr> <th>Type of member</th><th>#</th></tr> <tr> <td>Autistic Self Advocate</td><td>23</td></tr> <tr> <td>Professionals</td><td>87</td></tr> <tr> <td>Other</td><td>1,569</td></tr> </table> No (content block): We reviewed the # of new users each month.	Type of member	#	Autistic Self Advocate	23	Professionals	87	Other	1,569
Type of member	#								
Autistic Self Advocate	23								
Professionals	87								
Other	1,569								
Do not use ordinals (4th, 8th, etc.). Ordinals limit readability.	Yes: July 5, 2021 Yes: Step 1 No: July 5th, 2021 No: 1st step								

Dates, Days, and Times

Rule	Examples
Use full dates in regular content. Only abbreviate if the space is tight. If abbreviated, use the first three letters of the month, followed by a period.	Yes: September 4, 2020 Yes (abbreviated, when space is limited): Sep. 4, 2020 No (abbreviated, when space is limited): Sept. 4, 2020 No (abbreviated, when space is not limited): Sep. 4, 2020
Do not use ordinals (4th, 8th, etc.). Ordinals limit readability.	Yes: September 4, 2020 No: September 4th, 2020
Spell out days of the week. Only abbreviate if space is limited. If abbreviated, use the first three letters with a period.	Yes: Thursday Yes (abbreviated, when space is limited): Thu. No (abbreviated, when space is limited): Thurs. No (abbreviated when space is limited): Thu No (abbreviated when space is not limited): Thu.

Rule	Examples
Follow standard time format with a 12-hour clock. Use periods but no spaces or uppercase letters to indicate a.m. or p.m.	Yes: 8:00 p.m. No: 8:00 P.M. No: 8:00 PM No: 8:00 pm No: 8 pm No: 8 p.m.
In instructions or guides, abbreviate units of time (e.g., min, sec, hr). Use the abbreviations without periods and always use the singular form, even for more than 1.	Yes: 13 min, 6 sec, 8 hr No: 13 mins, 6 secs, 8 hrs No: 13 min., 6 sec., 8 hr. No: 13 minutes, 6 seconds, 8 hours
In content paragraphs, use the full word for units of time (e.g., minutes, seconds, hours).	Yes: It took about 6 seconds to respond. No: It took about 6 seconds to respond. No: It took about 6 sec to respond.

Measurements and Money

Rule	Examples
Do not use periods in units of measurement.	Yes: 7 cm, 4 L, 10 ft No: 7 cm., 4 L., 10 ft.
Use a hyphen when a measurement describes something (adjective). In tables or where space is limited, use abbreviated units of measurement.	Yes: 5,000-kilometre distance, 30-metre dash, 14-litre jug Yes (in a table): 5,000-km distance, 30-m dash, 14-L jug No: 5,000 kilometre distance, 30 metre dash, 14 litre jug
Use the correct currency code (like CAD or USD) in front of the dollar sign.	Yes: CAD \$375,000 No: \$375,000 CAD

Rule	Examples		
Use math symbols (+, −, =) only in tables or graphics. Do not use math symbols in content blocks. If using symbols, there should be a space on both sides of it. Use words in a sentence to describe negative temperatures. Use an en-dash as a minus sign, not a hyphen.	Yes (in tables or graphics): $2 + 1 = 3$ $3 - 1 = 2$ Yes (in tables or graphics): It is −20°C today. Yes (in text blocks or sentences): It is minus 20°C. No (in text): $2 + 1 = 3$ $3 - 1 = 2$		
Use “degrees” in writing; use the ° symbol only in tables or tight spaces.	Yes (in text): It is 20 degrees outside. Yes (in table): <table border="1" data-bbox="824 1234 1390 1293"> <tr> <td>Temperature</td><td>20°C</td></tr> </table> No (in text): It is 20°C outside.	Temperature	20°C
Temperature	20°C		

Preferred Terms

Additional reference: [Sinneave's Neuro-affirming Language Guide](#)

Ok to Use	Avoid Using (Unless Participant Preference)	Never Use
Learning	Talent Development	Studying
Professional Development	Training	Teaching
Coach	Trainer	Instructor
Advisors	Consultants	Experts
Learners	Attendees	Students
Facilitator	Advisor	Teacher
Participants	Attendees	Clients
Sinneave		SFF
Autistic, on the spectrum		Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
Autistic (capital "a")		autistic (lowercase "a")
Non-autistic (lowercase "a")		Non-Autistic (capital "a")
Identity-first language (Autistic)	Person-first language (person with autism)	
Executive functioning		Executive dysfunction
Specific Autistic traits		Autism symptoms or impairments

Ok to Use	Avoid Using (Unless Participant Preference)	Never Use
May be Autistic; Increased likelihood of being Autistic		At risk of autism
Co-occurring		Co-morbidity
Focused interests		Special interests
Nonspeaking		Nonverbal
Specific descriptions of people's needs		Special needs
The specific needs of the specific Autistic person		Functioning labels: "high functioning" and "low functioning" Severity labels: "mild," "moderate," "severe."

Glossary of eLearning Terms

Asynchronous Learning

Learning that happens at different times for different people. Learners use online content on their own schedule.

Blended Learning

A mix of learning activities that happen online and in real time (like live sessions) or in person.

Content Discovery

A time to review existing materials and identify any missing pieces before building new content.

eLearning Authoring Tools

Software that helps you build, design, and share online learning content.

eLearning Specialist

Someone who manages online learning systems and makes sure they are easy to use and accessible.

Facilitated Learning

Learning where the instructor helps guide the student, but the student takes the lead in how and what they learn.

Instructional Designer (ID)

Someone who plans and creates learning experiences (online or in person).

Learning Consultant

Someone who builds training programs, shares best practices, and checks if learning is working.

Learning Strategist

Someone who designs learning materials to meet the needs of a specific audience.

Learning Technologist

Someone who uses technology to support how people teach, learn, and assess learning.

Scoping Contract

A contract that defines the work, and how big the project is before it starts.

Training Needs Analysis

A meeting or interview where a company figures out what the learning goals are and what the other company needs.