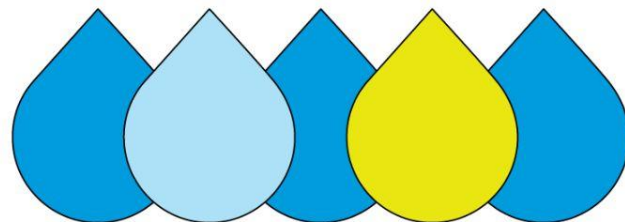


Writing for Australian Government websites



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Amber Henry

Project Manager, Morph



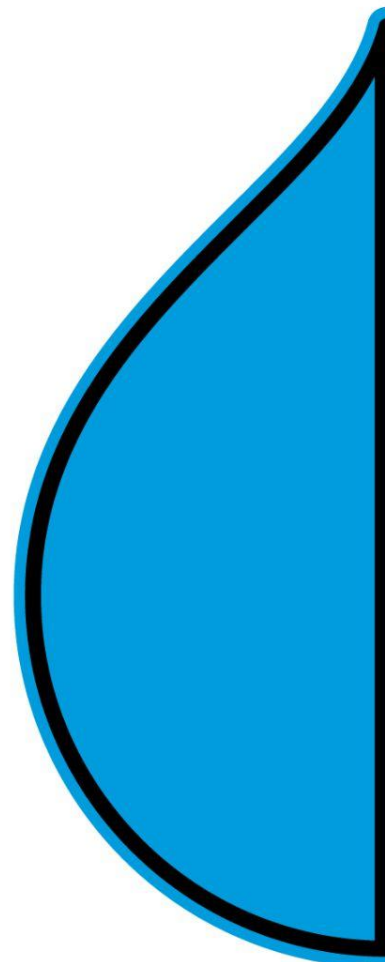
Drupal: drupal.org/u/amberhenry

LinkedIn: linkedin.com/in/ambie-henry

Web: www.morph.com

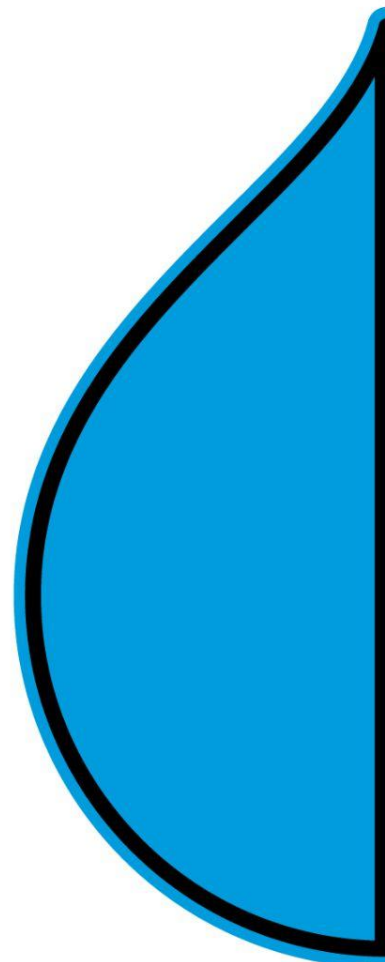


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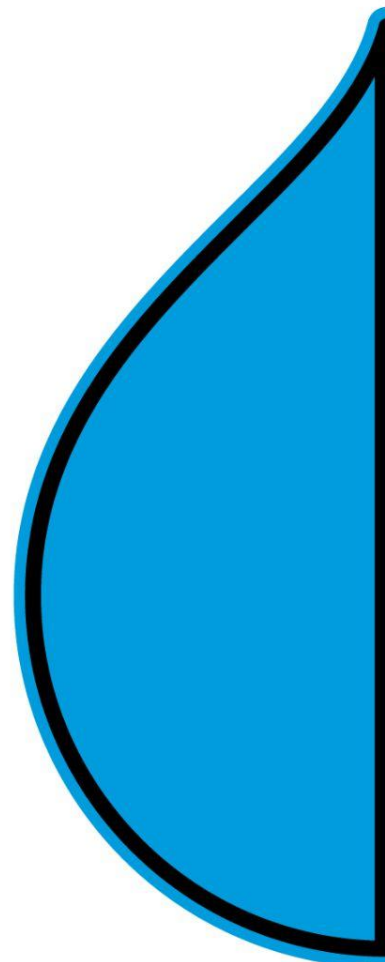


Overview

- Digital inclusive policies
- Australian Government Style Manual
- How the Government is doing
- Case study
- Useful tools



Digital Experience Policy



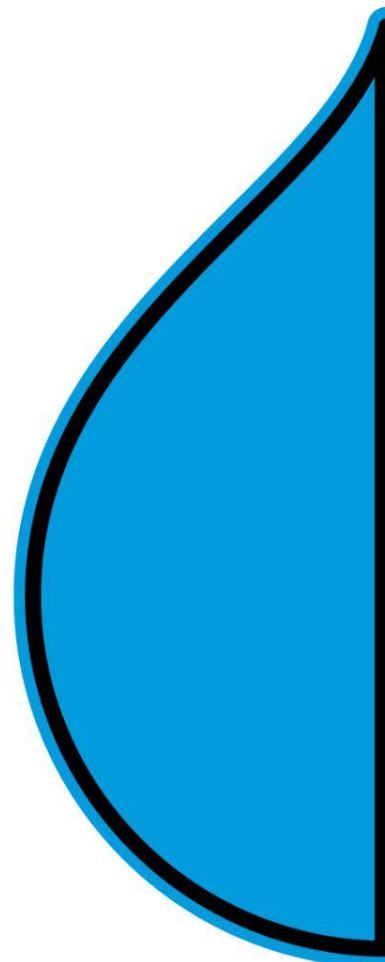
DX Policy Standards

- Digital Service Standard
- Digital Access Standard
- Data Inclusion Standard
- Digital Performance Standard



digital.gov.au

Australian Government Style Manual



Australian Government Style Manual

- Reading level
- Culturally sensitive/inclusion
- Plain language
- Consistent tone of voice



stylemanual.gov.au

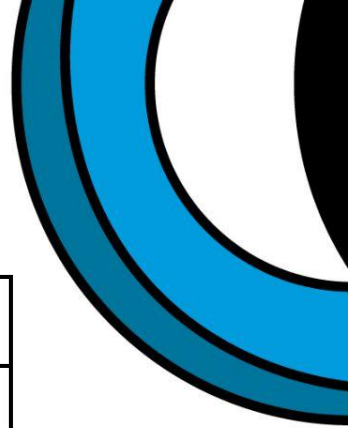
Reading level scores



“Regardless of literacy levels, all users want to be able to interact with government easily. Respect their time by writing in plain language. Check that your content is a reading level 2 (Australian year 7 equivalent). This level also helps users with higher literacy.”

Source: Australian Government Style Manual

Flesch Kincaid



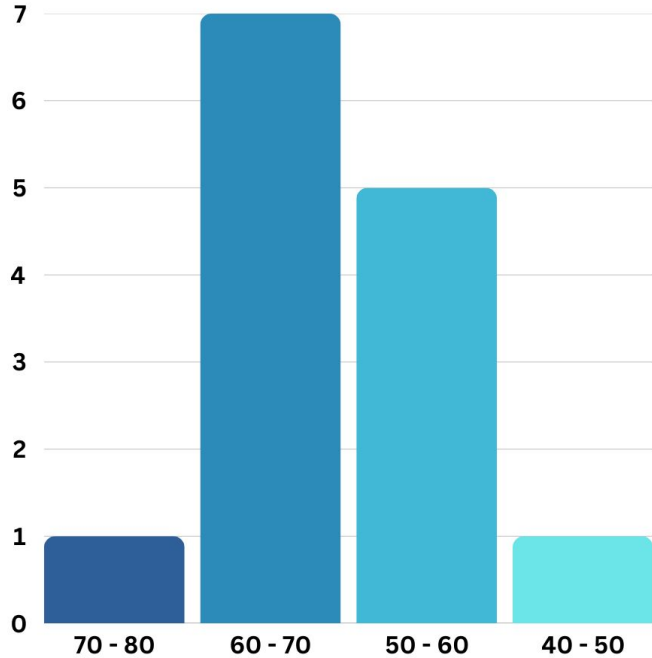
Score	School level	Notes
100 - 90	Grade 5	Very easy to read. Easily understood by an average 11 year old student.
90 - 80	Grade 6	Easy to read. Conversational English for consumers.
80 - 70	Year 7	Fairly easy to read.
70 - 60	Year 8 - 9	Plain English. Easily understood by 13 to 15 year old students.
60 - 50	Year 10 - 12	Fairly difficult to read.
50 - 40	College	Difficult to read.
30 - 10	College graduate	Very difficult to read. Best understood by university graduates.
10 - 0	Professional	Extremely difficult to read. Best understood by university graduates.

How is the Australian Government doing?

Methodology

- 15 widely used government sites
- Range of sectors
- Tested a consistent range of pages

Results: Reading scores



70 - 80

Year 7 = Fairly easy

60 - 70

Year 8-9 = Plain English

50 - 60

Year 10-12 = Fairly difficult

40 - 50

College = Difficult

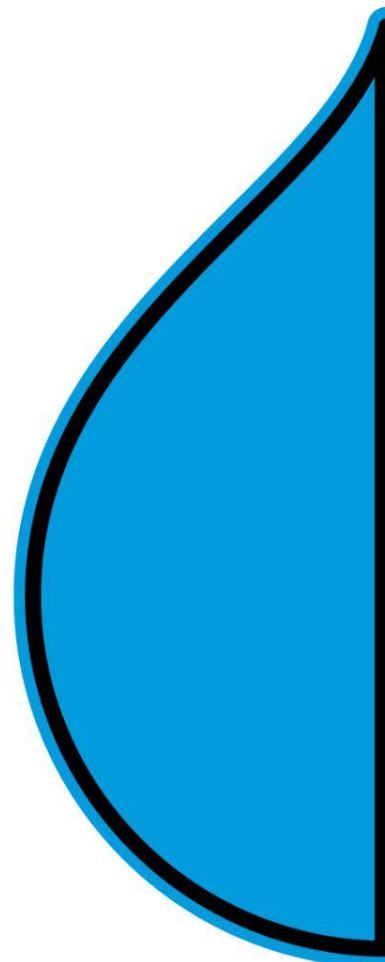


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“Readability is more than a number”

- A reading score is a mathematical equation
- Avoid over editing your content for a better score
- Stick to the basics
- Structure your content

Case study



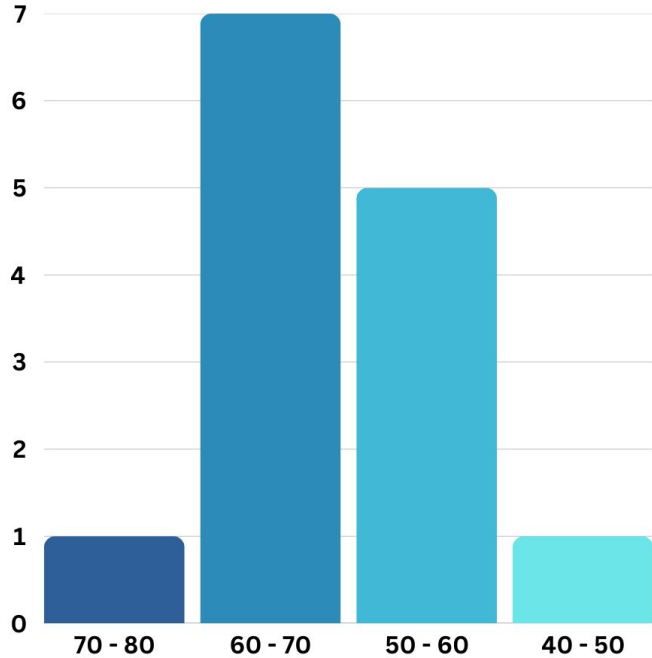
Case study

- Understanding the audiences
- Information had to be accessible
- Aim for Year 7 reading level
- Meaningful and factual

Case study

- Validating the content
- Understanding your audiences
- Keeping content meaningful and factual
- Re-evaluating the content

Gov sites: Reading scores



70 - 80

Year 7 = Fairly easy

60 - 70

Year 8-9 = Plain English

50 - 60

Year 10-12 = Fairly difficult

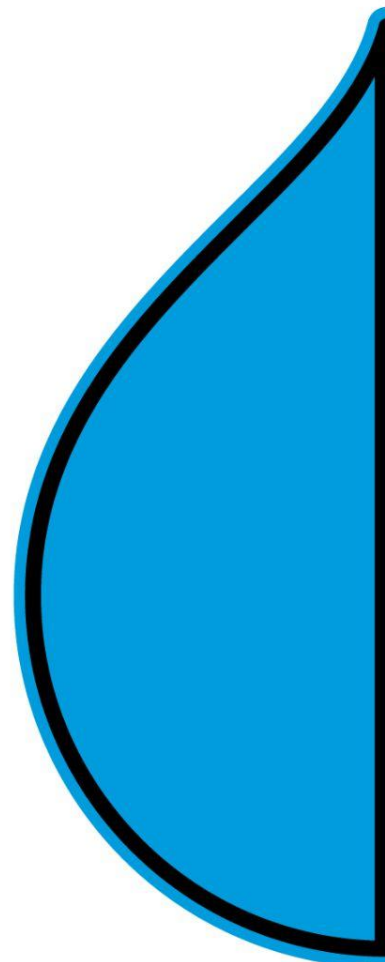
40 - 50

College = Difficult



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Useful tools



Useful tools

Flesch Kincaid

- Mathematical equation
- Aim for a Year 7 reading level
- Consider that your content is still meaningful



[goodcalculators.com](https://www.goodcalculators.com)

Useful tools

Grammarly & Hemingway

- Correct grammar
- Suggest clear language
- Accessibility checks
- Reading levels



app.grammarly.com



hemingwayapp.com

Useful tools

AI: ChatGPT

- Apps: ChatGPT, Gemini, Perplexity
- Drupal CMS: AI integration
- Prompts

AI: Prompts

What can I help with?

Rewrite the following to use simple, clear, concise, inclusive, non-threatening language suitable for a 12-14-year-old: Keep sentences under 15 words in length, and try to include up to 3 sentences when writing a paragraph.



Search

Reason



Performance

Text score: 91 out of 100. This score represents the quality of writing in this document. You can increase it by addressing Grammarly's suggestions.

91

Word count

Characters	5,376	Reading time	3 min 33 sec
Words	891	Speaking time	6 min 51 sec
Sentences	97		

Readability

Metrics compared to other Grammarly users

Word length	4.9	Above average
Sentence length	9.2	Above average
Readability score	66 ⓘ	Readability score 66 ⓘ

Your text is likely to be understood by a 13-14 year old.



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AI: Prompts

What can I help with?

Create a blog post on the topic of DTA Digital Experience Policy for an audience of content authors.

Write a 1,500 word (minimum) article using the outline above, taking into account the same audience, topic, and tone guidelines.

Use list formatting as much as possible, where appropriate. Structure the format of the article for maximum scannability and readability.

+ Search Reason



Performance

Text score: 92 out of 100. This score represents the quality of writing in this document. You can increase it by addressing Grammarly's suggestions.

92

Word count

Characters	2,786	Reading time	1 min 44 sec
Words	437	Speaking time	3 min 21 sec
Sentences	78		

Readability

Metrics compared to other Grammarly users

Word length	5.2	Above average
Sentence length	5.6	Average
Readability score	68 ⓘ	Readability score 68 ⓘ

Your text is likely to be understood by a reader who has at least an eight-grade education (3-14)



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Conclusion:

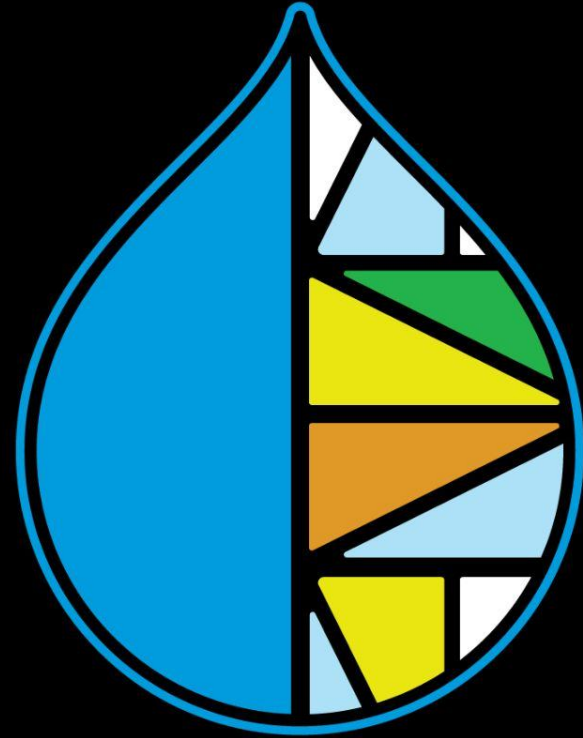
Authoring better content

Authoring better content

- Know your audiences
- Plan and structure content
- Plain language
- Maintain consistency
- Validate and test

Thank You!

Any questions?



AI: Prompts

What can I help with?

Rewrite the following to use simple, clear, concise, inclusive, non-threatening language suitable for a 12-14-year-old: Keep sentences under 15 words in length, and try to include up to 3 sentences when writing a paragraph.



Performance

Text score: 82 out of 100. This score represents the quality of writing in this document. You can increase it by addressing Grammarly's suggestions.

82

Word count

Characters	17,840	Reading time	11 min 54 sec
Words	2,977	Speaking time	22 min 54 sec
Sentences	249		

Readability

Word length	4.9	Average
Sentence length	12	Average

Readability score 59

Your text is likely to be understood by a reader with a 5th grade reading level.

Readability score 59

Text score: 92 out of 100. This score represents the quality of writing in this document. You can increase it by addressing Grammarly's suggestions.

92

Word count

Characters	5,372	Reading time	3 min 33 sec
Words	890	Speaking time	6 min 50 sec
Sentences	97		

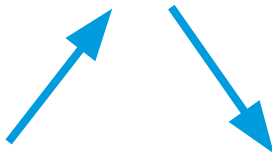
Readability

Word length	4.9	Average
Sentence length	9.2	Average

Readability score 66

Your text is likely to be understood by a reader with a 7th grade reading level.

Readability score 66



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DX Policy

- Whole-of-Government approach
- Unified approach to improve digital experiences
- Set of standards and guidelines
- Who is the policy for?