

Writer's review checklist

Leave time between writing and reviewing. Review from a printed version as well as on screen. Check the following.

1. Content plan

Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meets its intended purpose or goal
Key messages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focuses on the main messages/information
Target audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written for the target audience

2. Basic quality issues

Spelling, grammar, punctuation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No spelling errors No grammatical errors No punctuation errors
Readability statistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Average sentence length 15-18 words Passive voice less than 10% Flesch-Kincaid grade level below grade 10
Links	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All links work Links lead directly to named resource (not just to site home page)

3. Style guide compliance

Branding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uses brand voice Images on brand
Style	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uses organisation's styles for spelling, punctuation and capitalisation Uses organisation's preferred terms Uses appropriate template

4. Usability and accessibility

Findable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Content is useful and original Keywords match users' language Page titles are meaningful and concise <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keywords first, context added, organisation name last Less than 70 characters Meta description provides useful summary or description of content File name (last part of URL) uses keywords Headings (particularly h1) use keywords Links use keywords (not 'click here', 'read more')
Scannable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Looks uncluttered; main parts of content are visually distinct Structured well <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Important information first

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Logical order, based on user's tasks/needs • Headings, sub-headings are meaningful <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headings show content structure • Headings signpost each part of the content • Informative words are close to the start of each heading • Paragraphs are short and focused on a single topic • Lists are used appropriately and designed well <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lists and list items not too long • Parallel phrasing used • No repeated terms at start of each item • Page not full of lists • Tables designed well <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not too wide or resizable/scrollable for small screens • Labelled well (with a heading or caption) • Header cells tagged and labelled clearly • Data cells concise • Gridlines to guide eye across information • Links in text <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only important links included • Links do not make text look too cluttered • References or related links are grouped at bottom • Images used appropriately <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positioned well • Appropriate size, legible • Captioned if required
Readable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses everyday words (relevant to the target audience) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No jargon, technical terms • No acronyms, initialisms, abbreviations (unless well known to target audience) • Short words used; long words avoided • Short sentences (average 15-18 words) • Active voice preferred • Nominalised verbs avoided • Personal pronouns used • Concise <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No unnecessary or trivial content) • Tight writing: no unnecessary words, no repetition
Accessible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Images are accessible <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blank, short or long text alternatives as required • Do not rely on colour for meaning • Colour contrast sufficient • Not used just to present text • Do not flash too quickly • Icons used consistently • Link purpose and behaviour clearly labelled • Headings use correct heading level tag • Lists use appropriate list tags • Quotation tags used where needed • Tables properly tagged (check with developer/designer if needed) • No tags are used purely for visual effect