

DEVELOPMENT POLICY CENTRE

DEVPOLICY BLOG

Guide for authors

The Devpolicy Blog is a platform for aid and development analysis, research and policy comment, with global coverage and a strong focus on Australia, PNG and the Pacific. Established in 2010, the blog is run by the Development Policy Centre at the Crawford School of Public Policy, The Australian National University, and is edited by Stephen Howes with support from an editorial team.

Our readers are analysts, policymakers, academics, researchers, advocates, development practitioners, public servants, consultants and students. While their fields of interests converge, their knowledge, experience and perspectives vary. Our three areas of focus are Australian aid, the Pacific and Papua New Guinea, and global development policy.

Unsolicited blog posts that have not been submitted or published elsewhere are welcome, though publication is not guaranteed, and revisions may be requested. Acceptance of articles is based on quality and relevance. All points of view are welcome.

Posts should:

- **be no longer than 1000 words**
- **be submitted in a Word document**
- **be attributed to individuals (not an organisation or anonymous author) and**
- **have sources provided as hyperlinks (not footnotes).**

Authors are encouraged to include a photo (feature image) to accompany their submission (resolution of 72–96 dpi). You must hold the rights to, or demonstrate that you have permission to use, any photos you submit. All articles and photos accepted for publication will be published under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License](#).

Submissions should also include an author photo and a short (one or two sentence) biography for each author.

Submissions should be sent to the [blog editors \(devpolicy@anu.edu.au\)](mailto:devpolicy@anu.edu.au).

Authors who have affiliations or conflicts of interest (actual/potential/perceived) that readers should be aware of must declare them in a disclosure statement. Disclosure statements should include information on any relevant: sources of funding/support (financial or in-kind) for the work; employment/consultancy inputs or arrangements; professional or personal affiliations and holdings. If you are unsure whether a particular affiliation or interest should be disclosed, please discuss this with the blog editors at the time of submission.

Detailed style guidelines for posts are laid out below. Please follow them, but don't be intimidated. We run a flexible and informal blog. We do try hard to avoid spelling and grammar mistakes. When in doubt, be consistent!

We may edit your post. We will send you a revised post if the changes are major. If they are small, you will have to trust us. We will make as few changes as possible.

Once published, we may also promote your article to regional outlets for republication. If you do not want us to promote your blog, please let the blog editors know. Note that regional media may republish under a Creative Commons licence even if we don't promote your article.

BLOG SUBMISSION CHECKLIST

| | |
|--|--------------------------|
| Wordcount (no longer than 1000 words) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Style guide followed | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Hyperlinks to references (not footnotes) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Feature image (with permission if necessary) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Author photo | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Author bio | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Disclosure | <input type="checkbox"/> |

STYLE GUIDE

Language

- We prefer 'ise' rather than 'ize' and 'am' rather than 'amme' spellings (as in 'authorise' and 'program'), unless in proper nouns. If you have a personal or organisational preference for alternate spellings, you may use them, but be consistent.
- It is acceptable to start a sentence with 'And' and 'But'.

- Use ‘and’ not ampersand (&).
- Use ‘%’ not ‘per cent’ or ‘percent’.

Punctuation

- Use either single quotation marks to enclose a quote and double quotation marks for a quote within a quote or the other way round, but be consistent.
- Keep punctuation inside quotation marks if it is part of the quote, otherwise place it outside. If the final punctuation in a quote is a question or exclamation mark, don’t use a full stop after the closing quotation mark.
- The use of **hyphens** (-) is a complicated business. We take a ‘less is better’ approach, particularly where a word or prefix is common (cooperate, macroeconomic, well, pre, post, de, anti, extra, sub, dis). But sometimes hyphens are needed. Use them with care for compound words (‘set-up’ as a noun, but not ‘set up’ as a verb), compound adjectives placed before their nouns (‘ill-fitting suit’) and multi-word numbers (‘two-thirds’, ‘twenty-five’). Also use them to avoid ambiguity (re-form rather than reform) and to refer to a range (May-September, 1999-2013). Finally, use hyphens when the suffix begins with the same vowel the prefix ends in (semi-industrial), and when the suffix begins with a capital letter (un-Australian).
- Use a dash with a space either side:
 - o to add an explanation or information, and to introduce a word, phrase or clause that amplifies, summarises or contrasts with what has been said
 - o to signify a brief, abrupt change in the direction of the sentence
 - o as an alternative to brackets.

Titles

- Minimal capitalisation should be used for **publication titles** except legislation, journals, magazines and newspapers, and names of films. Book and journal titles, names of newspapers, and magazines or reports should be in italics or underlined. Journal article titles should be in quotation marks.
- **Official titles** should be capitalised unless they are being used in a generic way or in the plural (‘... according to the Minister for Defence. In the minister’s view, the policy was a failure.’).

- The **titles of organisations** and institutions should be capitalised except when used in a generic way (The Australian National University; Government of Papua New Guinea; Rio Tinto; but, the university, the government, the company, the forum, the report).

Numbers, dates and amounts

- Numbers **nine and under** should be written as words. Numbers above 10 should be written in numerals.
- **Centuries** should be counted in words ('Nineteenth-century economists say that in the sixteenth century ...').
- **Date format:** 25 January 2012; The forum will be held on Monday 25 January; The conference will run from 25 to 27 January; the summit was held on 1–5 May.
- Include **currency** when referring to dollar amounts other than the Australian dollar.
- Indicate currency thus: US\$4 million or USD4 million. Be consistent after you make your choice.
- An AUD or USD conversion rate should be provided for lesser known currencies on first reference (1 million kina is approx. A\$457,000).

Formatting

- Avoid subheadings.
- Avoid bold type or underlining for emphasis.
- Italics should only be used for text such as book titles, not for emphasis or assimilated 'foreign' terms (a priori, bona fide, carte blanche, en masse, modus operandi, raison d'être).
- Underlining for emphasis should be avoided.
- Use a single space between sentences.
- Indent long quotations as a block quote with no quote marks and no italics.
- Dot (bullet) point lists of full sentences should be introduced with a colon and punctuated as follows:
 - This is a full sentence.
 - This is also a full sentence.
- Dot point lists of fragmented sentences should also be introduced with a colon but punctuated as follows:
 - this is a fragmented sentence
 - this is also a fragmented sentence
 - this fragmented sentence ends the series of points.

- Please use the following forms of these common terms, if you want to shorten them:

| | |
|---------|-------------------|
| e.g. | for example |
| et al. | and others |
| etc. | and so on |
| i.e. | that is |
| NB | take careful note |
| p., pp. | page(s) |
| vs | versus |
| viz. | namely |

Referencing

- In blog posts, hyperlinks should be used wherever possible in place of footnotes under terms such as ‘this report’, ‘this post’, ‘announced’, ‘launched’, etc. Please ensure links are correct and do not direct readers to password protected or subscription only pages.
- The [Crawford School of Public Policy style of referencing](#) [pdf] should be used where references are necessary.

Style for some commonly used terms

Asian Development Bank (ADB)

AusAID

Australian Labor Party

Devpolicy

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Pacific Islands

Pacific Island countries (PICs)

Pacific Island countries and territories (PICTs)

Pacific Island leaders/jurisdictions/concerns/etc

Pacific Islanders

Southeast Asia

The Australian National University (ANU)

World Bank (the Bank) – not WB

World Trade Organization (WTO)

The Asia Foundation

Updated November 2021