Checklist for content to go on the GSS website

When should this be used?

This checklist should be used to check over anything submitted for publication on the GSS website.

Small pieces of content

If you have a small piece of content such as a news article, blog post, vacancy, event advert, new training course or minor update to an existing page, use this checklist to check it over. When you’re happy, submit your content for publication using the [online content request form](https://gss.civilservice.gov.uk/content-submission/). You don’t need to send us your checklist, it is just there to help you.

Large pieces of content

If you have a large piece of content it will need to be reviewed by the GSS website editorial team. Use this checklist to check your draft content over.

Fill in the “response” column

Email your draft content with your completed checklist to [goodpracticeteam@statistics.gov.uk](mailto:goodpracticeteam@statistics.gov.uk).

Please put “Editorial board submission” in the subject line.

Please give us an outline of what you are submitting, a date you would like your content to be published (even if it is a rough date) and a contact to speak to about the content.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Item | Response |
| Format  Is the content in HTML or PDF?  If it is in PDF you will need to give a reason to justify this format.  [Reasons why we are moving away from PDF.](https://gds.blog.gov.uk/2018/07/16/why-gov-uk-content-should-be-published-in-html-and-not-pdf/) |  |
| Readability  If your content does not contain any sensitive unpublished material, paste it into the online [Hemingway App](http://www.hemingwayapp.com/). It will give you a grade level score that reflects the readability of the content.  If you can’t use the Hemingway App, then use the readability tools on Microsoft Word.  This will give you a “Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level”.  [How to find your readability score on Word.](https://www.google.com/search?rlz=1C1GCEB_enGB874GB874&sxsrf=ACYBGNRAYeWfhbz5CMDOqC3uqfXp4ZGHKg%3A1579187837245&ei=fX4gXujTDtTzgAaqpJ_4Aw&q=how+to+find+readability+score+on+word&oq=how+to+find+readability+score+on+word&gs_l=psy-ab.3...5323.7649..8609...0.3..0.156.440.0j3......0....1..gws-wiz.......0i71j33i10.RBWuORssG20&ved=0ahUKEwiohsqQtYjnAhXUOcAKHSrSBz8Q4dUDCAs&uact=5)  On both you should aim for Grade 9 or lower.  If you can’t get your content down to Grade 9 you will need to give a reason.  The Hemingway App is more helpful than Word so use this if you can. | Grade given:  (If your grade is above grade 9 please give a reason. E.g. if the only thing pushing the content above a Grade 9 is the unavoidable use of key terms then this would be OK). |
| Have you run a spelling and grammar check? |  |
| Are all the links sending users to the correct content? |  |
| Has all directional text been removed?  We shouldn’t use directional text, such as “click here” or “see below” as this is misleading for users with screen readers.  When creating hyperlinks (i.e. links to different webpages), the text containing the link should be a specific description of the destination page.  [Guidance on link text.](https://gss.civilservice.gov.uk/requesting-to-upload-content-on-the-gss-website/#links) |  |
| Are all documents followed by type and size?  If you must have documents available for download you must specify the type and size of the document in the text.  E.g. You can read more about accessibility standards in our accessibility guide (PDF, 3.4MB)  BUT! We would stress that we want to avoid document uploads wherever possible. We can explain why in more detail if you wish. If you have documents you want to upload you should speak to us about making a page for that content. Alternatively, if the content already lives somewhere online, you should link to the page the document lives on. |  |
| Have all acronyms have been expanded the first time they are used?  It is fine to leave GSS unexpanded.  There are some other exceptions like BBC and NHS. Please refer to the guidance.  [Guidance on acronyms.](https://gss.civilservice.gov.uk/requesting-to-upload-content-on-the-gss-website/#acronyms) |  |
| Have you removed all bold and italic fonts?  All text should be in the same font and nothing should be in bold or italic as this is bad for accessibility.  [Guidance on use of fonts.](https://gss.civilservice.gov.uk/requesting-to-upload-content-on-the-gss-website/#fonts) |  |
| Have you used capital letters correctly?  Capital letters should be used sparingly as they make content harder to read.  [Guidance on using capital letters.](https://gss.civilservice.gov.uk/requesting-to-upload-content-on-the-gss-website/#capital-letters) |  |
| Have you set out bullet points correctly?  We need to be consistent in how we present bullet points. Please refer to the guidance.  [Guidance on setting out bullet points.](https://gss.civilservice.gov.uk/requesting-to-upload-content-on-the-gss-website/#bullet-points) |  |
| Have all email addresses been set out correctly?  We need to be consistent in how we embed email addresses. Please refer to the guidance.  [Guidance on setting out emails](https://gss.civilservice.gov.uk/requesting-to-upload-content-on-the-gss-website/#emails). |  |
| Have dashes been used correctly?  Dashes should not be used to indicate a spread of time or money. Please refer to the guidance.  [Guidance on using dashes](https://gss.civilservice.gov.uk/requesting-to-upload-content-on-the-gss-website/#dashes). |  |
| Have symbols been used correctly?  There are some symbols that should not be used. Please refer to the guidance.  [Guidance on using symbols.](https://gss.civilservice.gov.uk/requesting-to-upload-content-on-the-gss-website/#symbols) |  |
| Have you set out numbers correctly?  Numbers between one and nine (inclusive) should be written as words. Numbers 10 or greater should be written as figures. Please refer to the guidance. [Guidance on numbers in text.](https://gss.civilservice.gov.uk/requesting-to-upload-content-on-the-gss-website/#numbers) |  |
| Have you set out dates correctly?  Do not use “th” or “rd” after dates. Please refer to the guidance. [Guidance on writing about dates.](https://gss.civilservice.gov.uk/requesting-to-upload-content-on-the-gss-website/#dates) |  |

Notes

1. Some of this checklist may seem like nit-picking. But, in online communication we must be consistent. People don’t usually read content online, they scan it. Consistency helps people to scan content so it’s easier for them to find what they want. Much of the checklist also ensures we meet accessibility standards which will become a legal requirement in September 2020.
2. If any of the links on this document do not work here they are in full:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Link | url |
| Online content request form | https://gss.civilservice.gov.uk/content-submission/ |
| Reasons why we are moving away from PDF | https://gds.blog.gov.uk/2018/07/16/why-gov-uk-content-should-be-published-in-html-and-not-pdf/ |
| Hemingway App | http://www.hemingwayapp.com/ |
| How to find your readability score on Word | This url is too long to paste – it is just a Google search result |
| Guidance on link text | https://gss.civilservice.gov.uk/requesting-to-upload-content-on-the-gss-website/#links |
| Guidance on acronyms | https://gss.civilservice.gov.uk/requesting-to-upload-content-on-the-gss-website/#acronyms |
| Guidance on use of fonts | https://gss.civilservice.gov.uk/requesting-to-upload-content-on-the-gss-website/#fonts |
| Guidance on using capital letters | https://gss.civilservice.gov.uk/requesting-to-upload-content-on-the-gss-website/#capital-letters |
| Guidance on setting out bullet points | https://gss.civilservice.gov.uk/requesting-to-upload-content-on-the-gss-website/#bullet-points |
| Guidance on setting out emails | https://gss.civilservice.gov.uk/requesting-to-upload-content-on-the-gss-website/#emails |
| Guidance on using dashes | https://gss.civilservice.gov.uk/requesting-to-upload-content-on-the-gss-website/#dashes |
| Guidance on using symbols | https://gss.civilservice.gov.uk/requesting-to-upload-content-on-the-gss-website/#symbols |
| Guidance on numbers in text | https://gss.civilservice.gov.uk/requesting-to-upload-content-on-the-gss-website/#numbers |
| Guidance on writing about dates | https://gss.civilservice.gov.uk/requesting-to-upload-content-on-the-gss-website/#dates |