

Prepared by: Assisted Living and Social Services

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Alis Style Guide

2026-2027



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“Rules and regulations such as these, in the nature of the case, cannot be endowed with the fixity of rock-ribbed law. They are meant for the average case, and must be applied with a certain degree of elasticity.”
—*Chicago Manual of Style, 1906*

INTRODUCTION

This document constitutes house style for the development and editing of web content for the Government of Alberta’s [alis](#) site. Anything included in house style overrides all other sources. The next authorities are *Canadian Press* and the *Oxford English Dictionary*. We use the following editions:

- *The Canadian Press Stylebook* (19th Edition)
- *The Canadian Press Caps and Spelling* (23rd Edition)
- *The Canadian Oxford Dictionary* (2nd Edition) – NOTE: There isn’t an online version of the Canadian Oxford Dictionary available. Vendors are expected to purchase a hardcopy for their reference.

Occasional references are made to the *Chicago Manual of Style*.

If it becomes necessary to follow a spelling, style, or usage that differs from our standard, attach a style sheet to the front of the document you are working on noting the difference and your reasoning. Include the source(s) you used to reach your decision (include source name, edition, and page number references if possible).

Above all, be consistent.

THE VOICE OF ALIS

“**Alis** is the knowledgeable guidance counsellor who provides helpful information and guidance on matters related to career planning, learning and employment.

“She is genuinely caring, easy to talk to, friendly and outgoing. Being a young counsellor who is also growing and building her career, she understands and empathizes with the complexity and challenges of making career decisions.

“To the younger audience, she is seen as a role model and a big sister figure who can relate to their needs and concerns around building and planning for a fulfilling career. To the older audience or those who are established in their career path, she is a knowledgeable and trusted expert in matters related to career and employment.”

WORD LIST

The word list at the end of this guide represents house style for common terms and program names. If a word is not on the list, consult the other authorities in this order:

1. *Canadian Press Caps and Spelling*.
2. *Canadian Oxford Dictionary*.
3. Where the *Canadian Oxford Dictionary* indicates multiple spellings, use the first spelling presented.

Words with specific usage notes (rather than simply spelling guidelines) are included within the Writing Preferences section. See **boss** for an example.

WRITING PREFERENCES

Preference	Guideline
Aa	
&	Avoid. Only use the ampersand when it is part of an official name (e.g. Alberta College of Art & Design) or, if necessary, in a chart when space is limited. See and .
ABORIGINAL	Use “Indigenous” instead, except when referring to specific nations, external organizations, documents, or technical terms. See Indigenous for specifics regarding usage.
ABBREVIATIONS	See Abbreviations and acronyms in the <i>Canadian Press Stylebook</i> .
ACRONYMS AND INITIALISMS	Acronyms are abbreviations that are pronounceable words such as NATO and NOC. Initialisms are abbreviations pronounced letter by letter, such as Government of Alberta (GOA). See Abbreviations and acronyms in <i>Canadian Press Stylebook</i> , with the following exceptions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Use acronyms and initialisms sparingly, spelling them out wherever you can. ○ For acronyms and initialisms used often on alis [e.g. labour market information (LMI)], spell it out in titles, headings, and on the first occurrence on a page, and then use the acronyms or initialism for the rest of the article. ○ Alis is more forgiving of putting a bracketed abbreviation after spelling out the name of an entity. E.g. “Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of Alberta (APEGA)”. The rule here is to use it with care. Be judicious and creative in presenting the material to avoid overuse and, as always, consider the audience. <p>As readers are likely to access web content in a non-linear way, always spell out the acronym on its first occurrence on a page, as a minimum.</p> <p>You may wish to consult a list of common Government of Alberta acronyms.</p>
ACTIVE VOICE	See active vs. passive under Common faults in the <i>Canadian Press Stylebook</i> . Use active voice wherever possible: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ USE “The Government of Alberta surveyed 500 people...” ○ NOT “A survey of 500 people was undertaken...”
ADDRESS	Use Canada Post’s addressing guidelines with the modification to always include the country. When providing a generic example of a town or city, use <i>Anywhere, Alberta</i> , rather than choosing a place.
AGES	Hyphenate ages when used before a noun but not after.

Preference	Guideline
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ USE "...a 17-year-old student" and "The woman is 20 years old..."
ALPHABETIZATION	<p>Use the Letter-by-letter alphabetization method, as outlined in <i>The Chicago Manual of Style</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ "In the letter-by-letter system, alphabetizing continues up to the first parenthesis or comma; it then starts again after the punctuation point. Word spaces and all other punctuation marks are ignored. Both open and hyphenated compounds such as New York or self-pity are treated as single words. The order of precedence is one word, word followed by a parenthesis, and word followed by a comma, number or letters." <p>When alphabetizing, exclude the initial <i>a</i>, <i>an</i>, or <i>the</i> at the start of a title.</p>
ALIGNMENT	Use left alignment, ragged right. Never justify lines of type.
ALIS	<p>Formerly an acronym for the Alberta Learning Information Service, as of 2017 alis is now to be written as a common noun:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Use lowercase when referring to alis within a sentence ○ Capitalize alis when used at the start of a sentence, included within a proper noun (the Alis Operations team), or displayed as part of a title (Alis Style Guide) ○ Do not refer to alis as Alberta Learning Information Service or the acronym ALIS. This usage is only for internal-facing documents where reference to the original program name is required
AND	<p>Spell it out. See &.</p> <p>And, yes, you can begin a sentence with <i>and</i> or <i>but</i>. But be judicious. This construction can add zip when it's used once in a while in a publication with a conversational tone. Too much, though, and it will look like you can't construct a proper sentence. Keep it natural.</p>
APOSTROPHE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Apostrophes should be curly, not straight. See Quotation marks. ○ See contractions. ○ Consult <i>Canadian Press Stylebook</i> under Punctuation and Possessives for more on the apostrophe
ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE TOOLS	<p>With the emergence of third-party Natural Language Generators (NLGs) and other artificial intelligence tools that mimic human writing and speech, the Government of Alberta (GoA) has developed a policy explaining what constitutes acceptable usage in the Alberta Public Service.</p> <p>The following guidelines are most relevant to writing and editing content for alis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ensure personal information in the custody of the GoA is never input, disclosed, or provided to an NLG. ○ Only enter publicly accessible information. ○ Validate and verify the accuracy of any outputs provided by an NLG.

Preference	Guideline
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Do not use verbatim outputs from an NLG in your writing. Any text provided by an NLG that is to be published on alis must be revised into your own words and rephrased to meet the readability guidelines of the target audience. ○ It is acceptable to use NLGs to brainstorm ideas and research topics, so long as no confidential information is being inputted into the NLG. ○ Assume any content provided to an NLG (for example, user inputs or prompts) is documented. ○ Use generalized prompts (for example, “an organization” instead of “the GoA”). ○ Consider bias, tone, clarity, consistency, and context of NLG outputs.
Bb	
BIBLIOGRAPHIES AND ADDITIONAL RESOURCE SECTIONS	<p>A bibliography is an alphabetical list of all books, magazines, pamphlets, newspapers, or people consulted when researching and writing the material. In most cases, the list of material at the end of our publications or web page is additional resources and key contacts or services rather than a true bibliography.</p> <p>Where possible, order resources and services alphabetically by topic or by title, whatever is appropriate for the content. Often we list alis resources and services first, followed by Government of Alberta and Government of Canada, or we group resources by topic. Whatever structure you use, be sure it is clear, consistent, and easy to follow. Refer to recent alis publications and web content to get a sense of where a listing of additional resources is appropriate and how they are handled.</p>
BOLD	<p>Web readers have a tendency to skim. Use bold to highlight key words, concepts and calls to action. But use sparingly—if too many words are bolded, the effect is lost.</p> <p>One common use is within bulleted lists where the opening phrase or sentence of a bullet conveys the core concept in bold, followed by unbolded explanatory text.</p>
BOSS	<p>Avoid the term “boss.” While it is short and easy to understand, it also implies a power relationship some readers find intimidating.</p> <p>Instead, use “supervisor” in the context of a direct reporting structure, or “employer” in a more indirect context (such as HR decision-making or franchise-level policies). These words carry a more positive and supportive connotation.</p>
BRACKETS (PARENTHESIS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Consult the <i>Canadian Press Stylebook</i> under Brackets ○ Use sparingly ○ For using square brackets to display links within a draft, see links
BULLETED LISTS	See list and numbered list .

Preference	Guideline
BUTTONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Phrase as a meaningful call to action, two to four words: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ USE “Subscribe Now” ○ NOT “Submit” ○ Do not include punctuation ○ Capitalize the initial letter of each significant word
<h1>Cc</h1>	
CALLOUTS, SIDEBARS AND FEATURED CONTENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Callouts emphasize key information and break up text to make it easier to scan and inviting to read. ○ See also graphs, charts, and tables for other types of content that can be used to intentionally supplement body content. <p>Callouts include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Featured Content: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Displays as a tile on the right-hand side of the content (full-width on smaller screens), including the hero image, title, and hero description. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Article: Learn How to Change the Things You can Change ○ Publication: Identify Your Abilities and Interests ○ Question and Answer: Use Labour Market Trends to Find Career Opportunities ○ To indicate Featured Content in your document, preface it with “FEATURED-CONTENT (Type): URL” where type is either article, publications, Q&A, or other pages like CAREERinsite or OCCinfo. ○ Quote: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Displays either on the right-hand side of the content, or inline with the content. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Article (Inline): Understand Your Now Next Future ○ Article (Right column): Learn From Your Mistakes ○ To indicate a quote within your draft, type “QUOTE (Placement): TEXT - who the quote is attributed to” where placement is either Inline or Right Column. ○ Video Player: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Videos always display full-width and are playable directly within the article. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Article: Self-Employment Planning for Individuals with a Developmental Disability ○ To indicate a video within your draft, type “VIDEO: TITLE” ○ Infographic: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Information can be inserted between paragraphs in the article as an attractive infographic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Examples: Labour market Information ○ To indicate a video within your draft, type “INFOGRAPHIC: TYPE”

Preference	Guideline
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Include data. ○ Form: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Interactive forms display between paragraphs or can be their own page ○ Own page: Feedback ○ To indicate a form within your draft, type “FORM: TITLE”.
CAPITALIZATION (CAPS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Follow <i>The Canadian Press Stylebook</i> and its modified down style. ○ Avoid using ALL CAPS. The ascenders and descenders of lowercase letters help distinguish words and make the text easier to read. ○ The title of a legal document or legislative act always capitalizes the principal words. See italics for additional rules. ○ Capitalize the principal words in things like strategies, projects, programs, and events. ○ If a hyphenated word is capitalized, capitalize the word immediately following the hyphen as well: <i>Post-Secondary</i> ○ Do not capitalize the names of occupations, unless it precedes a person’s name – e.g. President of Communications, Erik Clarke. ○ For capitalization in headings, see headings and subheadings. ○ See buttons and checkboxes for additional capitalization rules specific to those use cases.
CERTINFO	The former CERTinfo website no longer exists although the alis.alberta.ca/certinfo link will still redirect to an appropriate location. Instead, refer to as “certification information.”
CHARTS	See graphs, charts and tables
CHECKBOXES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Capitalize the first word, then follow normal capitalization rules ○ Do not use end punctuation unless what follows the checkbox is a complete sentence
COLONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ For its use in bulleted and numbered lists, see lists ○ For general use, consult the <i>Canadian Press Stylebook</i> under Punctuation
COLOUR	○ Colour is determined by the website and does not need to be addressed during web content development.
COMMAS	Use the Oxford comma.
COMPRISE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Comprise means include or contain: “Canada comprises multiple provinces and territories.” ○ Avoid “comprised of.” Use “composed of” or “consists of” instead ○ Note that comprise may not be sufficiently plain language. Consider alternatives.
CONTACT INFORMATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Follow this format and order: For more information contact alis: Call: 780-422-1794 TTY/TDD: 780-456-7890 Fax: 780-422-5319

Preference	Guideline
	<p>Email: alis.info@gov.ab.ca</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal email addresses as contacts should be avoided. Instead, aliases should be used, for example: alis.info@gov.ab.ca. Where personal email addresses are necessary, ensure that any contact person whose email address is listed is aware of the link and approves of it. <p>Provide additional contact information as required.</p>
CONTRACTIONS	<p>The appropriateness of contractions depends on the formality of the content.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use liberally when speaking to youth-based audiences, such as on MyWorkQuest. Use judiciously for most alis content, which tends to be informal but professional. Reduce or avoid contractions in formal writing.
Dd	
DASHES	<p>There are two types of dashes: the em dash (—) and en dash (–). Both are longer than and distinct from a hyphen (-). For rules regarding hyphens, see hyphens and compound words.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Microsoft Word, use either Ctrl-minus or Alt-0150 to create an en dash and Ctrl-Alt-minus or Alt-0151 to create an em dash. Do not use a double-hyphen (--) in place of an em or en dash. Do not put spaces around em and en dashes. <p>Em dash (—)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the em dash to set off a parenthetical comment when you need a more abrupt break than commas provide. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Example: “Many of the classes are quite small—10 to 20 students—and youth benefit from close contact with the faculty.” You can also use the em dash to introduce a mid-sentence list punctuated by commas. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Example: “Select autumn fruit—pears, cranberries, apples—for a tasty pie.” The keyboard shortcut to insert an em dash is “alt+0151” <p>En dash (–)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The en dash is shorter than the em dash. It is used primarily to connect numbers and, in some cases, words. It is used as a substitute for the words “from...to” or “between...and” or to signify “up to and including (or through).” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Example: “For documentation and indexing, see chapters 16–18.” Example: “The legislature voted 101–13 to adopt the resolution.” Example: “The Edmonton–Saskatoon train leaves at 2 p.m.”



Preference	Guideline
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Note that the en dash replaces both words (between...and or to...from). Either retain both words or use the en dash, do not mix the two options: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ NOT: “She was in college from 1998–2002.” ○ BUT: “She was in college 1998–2002” or “She was in college from 1998 to 2002.” ○ The en dash is also used to join compound adjectives when one of its elements is also a compound. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Health care–related issue ○ Jam jar–bottom glasses <p>For further information, consult the <i>Canadian Press Stylebook</i> under Dashes or <i>Editing Canadian English</i> and the <i>Chicago Manual of Style</i> under Punctuation.</p>
DATES AND TIMES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Thursday, May 22, 2017 ○ Use a colon to separate hours and minutes: “9:23” ○ a.m. and p.m. (lowercase, periods) ○ Don’t display “:00” when it’s on the hour. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ NOT “8:15 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.” ○ BUT “8:15 a.m. to 4 p.m.” ○ Use the words noon and midnight without the numeral. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ NOT “12 noon” or “12 p.m.” ○ BUT “noon” ○ Use numerals whenever referencing time, rather than spelling out the number. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ NOT “one and a half hours” ○ BUT “1 1/2 hours”
DEFINITIONS AND GLOSSARIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Where possible, avoid or minimize the use of words that aren’t plain language. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In some cases, such as “boss” and “supervisor”, the plain language wording may cause other issues. See boss. ○ Organization names and official designations often involve wording that isn’t plain language. Explain the meaning where appropriate and introduce a simpler term in cases where repeated reference is needed. ○ Explain unfamiliar terms in the body of the text rather than in footnotes, endnotes, or relying solely on an external glossary. Consult the project coordinator if you feel a glossary is warranted. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Where a glossary exists, update the glossary and link to it where possible. <p>For online glossaries, the first use of the word within the online content should be a link to the corresponding anchor point (i.e. an in-page bookmark that can be linked or jumped to) in the glossary page.</p>

Preference	Guideline
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In Umbraco, the “Title” of the link should be used to provide the definition as a tooltip (in shortened form if the full definition is lengthy) on mouseover. Note that this tooltip may not appear on touch-screen devices.
DEGREES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ When spelling out academic degrees, use lowercase: <i>bachelor of science, master of business administration, bachelor’s degree, master’s degree, doctorate...</i> ○ Note the use of a possessive apostrophe: <i>bachelor’s degree, master’s degree...</i> ○ When abbreviating degrees: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Omit periods in all-capital abbreviations: <i>BA, MA</i> ○ Include periods in most mixed abbreviations, no space: <i>B.Comm, B.Sc.</i> ○ Omit periods in mixed abbreviations that begin and end with a capital letter, again, no space: <i>PhD</i> ○ House style overrules an institution’s own style for abbreviating degrees.
DIFFERENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Different from, not different than.</i> ○ This is an exception to <i>The Canadian Press Stylebook</i>.
DEPARTMENTS AND MINISTRIES	<p>Ensure ministry names are distinguishable when two or more are mentioned in the same sentence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ NOT: Alberta Children and Family Services and Justice ○ BUT: Alberta Children and Family Services and Alberta Justice
Ee	
E- (PREFIX INDICATING ELECTRONIC)	<p>The prefix <i>e</i> or <i>e-</i> is not to be used to indicate something is electronic, except where specifically included in <i>Canadian Press Caps and Spelling</i> (i.e. <i>ebook, e-reader, e-commerce, email, e-waste, e-zine</i>). Some past usage on alis has recently been changed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ NOT <i>eNewsletter</i> BUT <i>Newsletter</i> ○ NOT <i>eResumé Service</i> BUT <i>Resumé Review Service</i>
EASY READING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Easy Reading</i> refers to a series of alis publications for low literacy audiences and the professionals who work with them. ○ For general guidance about writing for this audience, see low literacy.
E.G.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Instead of <i>e.g.</i>, consider <i>for example</i> or <i>such as</i>. ○ Where <i>e.g.</i> is necessary, do not follow with a comma as the additional punctuation results in a cluttered look. ○ Note that <i>e.g.</i> and <i>i.e.</i> are not interchangeable. See i.e. ○ Link the provided example to a relevant page, where possible
ELLIPSES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Use when omitting a few words of quoted material or to indicate a deliberate trailing off, like <i>when you... or learn more...</i> ○ Do not add a fourth period if the ellipsis falls at the end of a sentence. ○ In Microsoft Word, type Ctrl-Alt-period to create an ellipsis. It is different than typing three periods.

Preference	Guideline
ENDNOTES	Rather than citing content, link to it.
ETC.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Short for <i>et cetera</i> which means <i>and so forth</i> or <i>and similar things</i>. ○ Do not precede with the word <i>and</i>. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ NOT: lions, tigers and etc. ○ BUT: lions, tigers, etc. ○ It is illogical to use etc. in a list that is introduced with <i>for example, such as</i> or <i>include/includes the following</i>, since these phrases indicate that what follows are only some of the possibilities.
Ff	
FEATURED CONTENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ See callouts, sidebars and featured content.
FILE NAMING CONVENTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Create intelligent file names by describing the document. ○ Use all lower case, append with YYYY-MM-DD, and use hyphens instead of spaces: e.g. alis-flyer-2017-03-23.pdf ○ For internal drafts and iterations, append the writing/editing phase and version number after the date to ensure clarity regarding the content (e.g. “alis-flyer-2017-03-23-copy-edit-v4.doc”). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The version number indicates the current revision within the current writing/editing phase and will reset with each new phase.
FILETYPES	<p>Most readers expect links on web pages to go to another web page. When that isn’t the case, identify the non-html content in square brackets and lowercase after the link. Examples include <i>doc, jpeg, mp3, ppt, pdf, xls</i>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ NOT: Alberta's Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA) (PDF) ○ BUT: Alberta's Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA) [pdf]
FIRST NATIONS, MÉTIS AND INUIT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Use “Indigenous” instead. ○ Do not use the abbreviation “FNMI”
FONTS AND TYPOGRAPHY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Use only one space after a period, rather than two. Computers vary the kerning (i.e. the spacing between letters) with each letter, eliminating the original typewriter-based need for two spaces. ○ For guidance regarding specific elements of typography, see bold, capitalization (caps), italics, headings and sub-headings, and paragraphs.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ On the web, much of the layout and typography is assigned automatically by the website and does not need to be reflected in the source document. ○ In general, stick to multi-level headings (as defined within Microsoft Word), boldface and bulleted/numbered lists.
FOOTNOTES	Avoid footnotes. See endnotes for guidance.

Preference	Guideline
Gg	
GENDER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ All alis material must be gender inclusive and gender-sensitive. ○ Never use gendered terms such as manpower, spokesman, etc. ○ Never use <i>s/he</i> constructions. ○ Never use the slashed <i>he/she</i>, <i>her/him</i> pairings. ○ Try to avoid constructions that need <i>he</i> or <i>she</i> references. However, there may be cases where this construction cannot be avoided; in those instances, use <i>he</i> or <i>she</i>. ○ Use the plural where possible or nouns instead of pronouns: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ NOT: He or she should bring his or her workbook... ○ BUT: Students should bring their workbooks... ○ If attempts to avoid <i>he</i> or <i>she</i> references produce awkward sentences (e.g. awkward repetition of a noun), mixing a singular with a plural is acceptable. Example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ NOT: Is the potential caregiver serious about taking on the job? Is the caregiver in a stable situation? Is anything unusual going on in the caregiver’s life that could make the caregiver unable to care for your children? ○ BUT: Is the potential caregiver serious about taking on the job? Are they in a stable situation? Is anything unusual going on in their life that could make them unable to care for your children? ○ Note: <i>everyone</i>, <i>everybody</i>, <i>anyone</i>, <i>anybody</i>, <i>someone</i>, <i>somebody</i>, <i>no one</i>, <i>nobody</i>, <i>each</i> and <i>every</i> are singular, so it is incorrect to refer back to them with the plural <i>they</i> or <i>their</i> when attempting to avoid mixing singular with plural. ○ Transgender person (adj.), avoid using as a noun ○ LGBTQ2S+ [initialism for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, Two-Spirit, and all of the other identities (non-binary, pansexual, asexual, and intersex)] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Avoid using compound terms (e.g. “LGBTQ2S+-friendly”) as the hyphen creates confusion. Instead, write a passive phrase (e.g. “Friendly to the LGBTQ2S+ community.”) <p>Because it is stated so well, here is a loosely adapted excerpt from <i>Editing Canadian English</i>, 2nd edition, point 8.24: “The use of she or he, he/she, her/him, his/her, hers/his, herself/himself constructions is one solution, but best applied frugally. Text littered with these shotgun pairings is offensive to the eye and ear. ‘S/he’ constructions are aberrations to be avoided at all costs. In many instances, a slight rewording can remove the pronoun entirely. Consider these alternatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ NOT: A good teacher learns from his students.

Preference	Guideline
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ BUT: A good teacher learns from the students. ○ NOT: Ask him to explain the problem. ○ BUT: Ask the writer to explain the problem. ○ NOT: Everyone who travels feels guilty as he approaches customs. ○ BUT: All travellers feel guilty as they approach customs...”
GRAPHICS, ILLUSTRATIONS AND PHOTOGRAPHY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Art must represent the wide diversity of Albertans and readers of the particular publication (Indigenous people, people with disabilities, youth, and seniors, for example). ○ Avoid gender-based or stereotypical images. ○ See graphs, charts, and tables.
GRAPHS, CHARTS AND TABLES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Most web content will require a photograph to serve as a hero image within the site. These images are typically selected by the project coordinator later in the process. ○ Use only where they improve readability (or scannability), add to the meaning of the information, and if they are appropriate for the audience. ○ Keep them basic and easy to understand. ○ Provide your data source. ○ Data Displays: Quantitative information can be inserted between paragraphs in the article as an attractive infographic to visually engage readers with the data. To indicate a data display in your document, preface it with “[DATA (TYPE):” where TYPE is the type of display, include the required and optional info listed below, and close with “]”. An example article demonstrating the different displays can be found here: https://alis.alberta.ca/look-for-work/labour-market-information/infographic-examples/. Data Display Types include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. PIE-CHART (displays the data as a circular pie chart):

Preference	Guideline																		
	<div data-bbox="562 224 1213 652" style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 10px; margin-bottom: 20px;"> <p>Title → Most Employment Increases</p> <p>Subtitle → In July 2015 from the previous month</p>  <table border="1" data-bbox="730 386 1213 646"> <thead> <tr> <th>Sector</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Professional, scientific and technical services</td> <td>54.3%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Information, Culture and Recreation</td> <td>25.2%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Utilities</td> <td>20.5%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ○ Required Info: Title (max 55 characters). Subtitle (max 100 characters). Table containing the data to be displayed. ○ Optional Info: N/A ○ Recommended Use: For showing percentages of a whole. ii. BAR-CHART (displays the data as a series of horizontal bars): <div data-bbox="562 857 1255 1247" style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 10px; margin-top: 20px;"> <p>Title → Most Employment Decreases</p> <p>Subtitle → In July 2015 from the previous month</p> <p>Descriptor → Educational Employment Decrease: 3,300</p>  <table border="1" data-bbox="730 987 1255 1247"> <thead> <tr> <th>Sector</th> <th>Employment Decrease</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Health Care and Social Assistance</td> <td>3,800</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Accommodation and Food Services</td> <td>3,700</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Educational</td> <td>3,300</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Transportation and Warehousing</td> <td>3,200</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ○ Required Info: Title (max 55 characters). Subtitle (max 100 characters). Descriptor (max 2 words) of what is being measured. Table containing the data to be displayed. ○ Optional Info: N/A ○ Recommended Use: For comparing scale across multiple data points. iii. LINE-CHART (displays data from a single series as a line plotted against an X/Y axis): 	Sector	Percentage	Professional, scientific and technical services	54.3%	Information, Culture and Recreation	25.2%	Utilities	20.5%	Sector	Employment Decrease	Health Care and Social Assistance	3,800	Accommodation and Food Services	3,700	Educational	3,300	Transportation and Warehousing	3,200
Sector	Percentage																		
Professional, scientific and technical services	54.3%																		
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Preference	Guideline										
	<div data-bbox="546 219 1270 625" data-label="Figure"> <p>Title → Alberta's Employment Subtitle → Seasonally Adjusted</p> <table border="1"> <caption>Alberta's Employment Data (Estimated)</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Date</th> <th>Employment</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Oct 2014</td> <td>2,275,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Jan 2015</td> <td>2,350,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Apr 2015</td> <td>2,310,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Jul 2015</td> <td>2,300,000</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ○ Required Info: Title (max 55 characters). Subtitle (max 100 characters). Table containing the data to be displayed. ○ Optional Info: X Axis Descriptor (max 3 words), Y Axis Descriptor (max 3 words). ○ Recommended Use: For displaying trends and changes over time. <p>iv. STAT (displays an oversized data point with a supporting caption):</p> <div data-bbox="541 852 934 1063" data-label="Figure"> <p>Alberta's unemployment rate - July 2015</p> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ○ Required Info: Factual statement that begins with a number (e.g. “83% of statistics are made up”). It does not have to be a %. ○ Optional Info: N/A. ○ Recommended Use: For stating numerical facts. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Avoid tables wherever possible. On smaller screen sizes, such as a phone, the columns become very narrow, causing readability to suffer. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Instead, most tables can be restructured as nested lists. ○ Depending on the website you are developing content for and the latest technology updates, interactive data displays (graphs, charts, etc.) may be available for use. Speak to your project coordinator to determine availability and current limitations. 	Date	Employment	Oct 2014	2,275,000	Jan 2015	2,350,000	Apr 2015	2,310,000	Jul 2015	2,300,000
Date	Employment										
Oct 2014	2,275,000										
Jan 2015	2,350,000										
Apr 2015	2,310,000										
Jul 2015	2,300,000										

Preference	Guideline
<h1>Hh</h1>	
HEADINGS AND SUBHEADINGS	<p>Levels:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Most alis materials use up to three levels of headings and subheadings. On rare occasions, four. ○ Use parallel construction in headings: start each heading the same way, with all verbs or nouns or articles. <p>Capitalization:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Capitalize the initial letter of each significant word in titles, subtitles, and main headings (Heading 1, Heading A). Most words three letters or fewer are not considered significant. For a more detailed definition of significant words in titles, see <i>Canadian Press Caps and Spelling</i>, Capitalization, item 19. ○ Capitalize only the first word in subheadings (Heading 2, 3, 4... Heading B, C, D...), then follow normal capitalization rules. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Use the Heading styles provided in Microsoft Word (rather than trying to indicate it manually through font changes or print-style classification). ○ Google uses heading levels to help understand page content. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Use Heading 1 for the page title and Headings 2-4 to indicate the internal structure of the article. ○ Use plain, informative language so readers (and Google) can find specific information in the document quickly and easily. Avoid using puns or clever phrasing in headings and subheads ○ Ensure the subhead contains enough information that its context is understood outside of the content it's in. E.g. "How to find entry-level jobs in Alberta" not "Find a job" ○ Do not link headings
HERO DESCRIPTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Most alis content now requires the creation of a Hero Description. This brief (160–320 characters) description is displayed on alis tiles leading to the article as well as in Google search results. ○ Hero descriptions should introduce the content of the article, be presented in an active voice and ideally include a direct call to action. ○ Hero description should be distinct from the introductory paragraph of the article and use different keywords and phrases to describe the content ○ See introductory paragraphs.
HERO IMAGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Modernized alis websites are more visual in nature. Typically every page will feature a 1100x800 jpg photograph that will show up within the article page and on the landing page tile that links to it. This image is also posted to social media when shared, providing a richer off-site experience. ○ Avoid non-photographic illustrations, logos, posters, and photos where the edges can't easily be cropped ○ See Graphics, illustrations and photography

Preference	Guideline
HIGHLIGHTING VALUABLE CONTENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Need to highlight or draw attention to certain material? See the following entries for more information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Bold type ○ Headings and subheadings ○ Lists and numbered lists ○ Graphics, illustrations and photography ○ Graphs, charts and tables
HYPHENS AND COMPOUND WORDS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hyphens are primarily used to form compound words and to distinguish between repeated letters (<i>re-educate</i>, <i>doll-like</i>). They are distinct from <i>em</i> and <i>en dashes</i> (see dashes). ○ Words having the prefix <i>self</i> always take a hyphen: <i>self-employed</i>, <i>self-confidence</i>, <i>self-esteem</i> (<i>selfish</i> and <i>selfless</i> do not take a hyphen because in these cases <i>self</i> is the root word, not a prefix). ○ Hyphen use is covered in detail in <i>The Canadian Press Stylebook</i> under both Punctuation and Compounds.
l	
I.E.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Means <i>that is</i>, not <i>for example</i>. ○ Where <i>i.e.</i> is necessary, do not follow with a comma as the additional punctuation results in a cluttered look. ○ Note that <i>e.g.</i> and <i>i.e.</i> are not interchangeable. Refer to the e.g. entry.
INDIGENOUS	<p>Use <i>Indigenous people</i>, not <i>Aboriginal people</i>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Indigenous</i> means “native to the area.” In this sense, Aboriginal Peoples are indeed Indigenous to North America. Its meaning is similar to Aboriginal Peoples, Native Peoples or First Peoples. ○ <i>Capitalize the term in all cases.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Words like Aboriginal Peoples, First Nations Peoples, Indian, Inuit, Métis, and Native should be capitalized as they are proper names of nations of people. ○ <i>Indigenous peoples</i> refers to First Nations, Métis and Inuit as a group—a group of populations, or a group of groups. Do not use the abbreviation FNMI. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Example: Indigenous communities, peoples and nations are those which have a historical continuity with pre-colonial societies. ○ <i>Indigenous people</i> refers to a specific group: tribe, band, First Nations, Métis, etc. —a group of people known as... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Example: Saddle Lake Nation is an Indigenous people. ○ <i>Indigenous person</i> refers to an individual that identifies with an Indigenous group. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Example: An Indigenous person is one who belongs to one of these Indigenous populations. ○ Avoid possessive phrases such as “Alberta’s Indigenous people”, but rather use “Indigenous people in Alberta”. ○ Avoid the congratulatory: Don’t offer meaningless platitudes or congratulate Indigenous peoples for obvious things (Indigenous peoples are important to Alberta’s economy)

Preference	Guideline
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The accent in Métis should be present in all cases, except when referring to the Metis Settlements or Metis Settlements General Council, because the legislation does not contain the accent ○ Use First Nation rather than band.
INFOGRAPHICS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ See section on graphs charts and tables.
INTERACTIVE WORKSHEETS (FORMS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Known as “Interactive Worksheets” on the alis site, and as “Forms” in the content management system (CMS). ○ This feature allows for the creation of several types of interactive content that readers can save, email, or print for later reference. They’re also useful for career counsellor to send to clients. Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Budget sheets ○ Self-assessment quizzes ○ Resumé templates ○ Checklists ○ Brainstorming ○ When writing content, look for opportunities to create worksheets that would enhance the article’s usefulness and increase engagement with the reader. Worksheets can be inserted anywhere in an article. ○ Worksheets can only be created in the CMS by an alis team member, and there are limits on the functionality. Speak with your project coordinator about any worksheet ideas to ensure your deliverables can be recreated in the CMS.
INTRODUCTORY PARAGRAPHS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The introductory paragraph of an article or chapter is presented in larger text to offer a general statement about the content and help orient the reader. ○ Keep introductory paragraphs short as the larger font size means they’ll quickly take up multiple rows of visual space. ○ For alis articles, the introductory paragraph is automatically separated from the rest of the body text and displayed in large font, similar to a level two subheading. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ For this reason, it’s best that the introductory paragraph be followed by additional body text rather than a subheading. ○ The hero description should be distinct from the introductory paragraph of the article and use different keywords and phrases to describe the content. ○ Aside from alis articles, no other web content currently applies special design elements to introductory paragraphs. Even so, the same writing guidelines should be applied as a best practice. ○ The recommended length is 135-160 characters, including spaces (typically 22-27 words).
ITALICS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Do not use italics for emphasis. ○ Do not italicize strategies, projects, programs, and events. Instead, capitalize these items. ○ Avoid italics on the web. Web readers have a tendency to overlook italicized text.

Preference	Guideline
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Where italics would normally be required, try to link to the item instead. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Exception: Always italicize legislative acts. ○ Exception: For books, if the link to the book is on a retail website, do not use the link; use italics instead. ○ For legal documents and legislated acts, link to the version on www.open.alberta.ca instead of linking directly to the PDF of the act. For example, The Alberta Bill of Rights links to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ https://open.alberta.ca/publications/a14 ○ NOT: https://kings-printer.alberta.ca/1266.cfm?page=A14.cfm&leg_type=Acts&isbnIn=9780779850273 ○ This prevents these types of links from expiring as quickly because open.alberta.ca always posts the latest version of each act at the top the page.
Jj	
JARGON	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Avoid wherever possible and use plain language. ○ Where jargon is needed or deemed appropriate, a definition or alternate word should also be included. ○ The names of organizations, official documents, and external content usually can't be changed. Provide context in cases where additional explanation is appropriate.
JOB TITLES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ See The <i>Canadian Press Stylebook</i> under Capitalization.
Kk	
KEYWORDS AND SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION (SEO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Since 2011, Google search has been focusing less on keywords and more on meaning. It takes into account synonyms and considers the intent behind the full search query (and other contextual cues), not just the individual words and specific word order the query contains. ○ Modern search engine optimization (SEO) experts focus on developing high-quality content that provides clear value to human audiences. The following principles will make content relevant to Google: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Write clear, informative content built from commonly used words (see plain language). ○ Use subheadings to provide an intuitive structure for your content (see headings and subheadings). ○ Avoid puns, and cute or clever turns of phrase. ○ Avoid clichés ○ Use idioms sparingly. Some work well across all cultures (e.g. keep your cool) but more abstract ones may not be familiar or easy to interpret for newcomers to Canada (e.g. knock it out of the park) ○ Write in a way that sounds natural and organic, without forcing specific keywords. <p>Use Keywords:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Within body text ○ For Title, Lead, Sub-headings and Link text

Preference	Guideline
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Keep core words and phrases in mind and ensure similar concepts and paraphrases appear multiple times and across multiple contexts within your content. <p>Research keywords most used by your audience by checking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Site analytics ○ Social media ○ Google Trends <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Given the high degree of variability seen across occupational names, alis occupational profiles do include “Also Known As” and “Related Words” sections. This helps the occupational search function surface relevant occupations for synonymous titles.
LI	
LAYERING	Use layering techniques in web writing. Keep initial statements brief and link to more in-depth information.
LINKS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Always test your links, as written, to ensure they function as intended and lead to the desired destination. ○ Avoid links that lack context (often called “bald” links). Always provide sufficient explanatory text or context so people have some understanding of what they’re clicking on or typing in. ○ Always link to a secure URL, where available. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ NOT: http://... ○ BUT: https://... ○ When linking to external websites, the information contained: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ must be credible, accurate and up-to-date ○ must be approved by an alis team lead and/or subject matter experts with GoA to ensure it is reputable ○ must directly benefit alis readers ○ must be freely available ○ should be authored by knowledgeable, reputable authorities ○ should not be authored by organizations in poor standing with the Better Business Bureau ○ should give Albertan or Canadian resources preference ○ should not require the creation of an account ○ should not require a Flash player (as Flash is not supported on many mobile devices) ○ Do not spell out the URL. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ NOT: Explore alis.alberta.ca/look-for-work ○ BUT: Explore the Look for Work section on alis. ○ Avoid vague and repetitive link names. Instead, use meaningful link names that uniquely identify the content being linked to.

Preference	Guideline
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ NOT: click here ○ BUT: Book a Learning Clicks ambassador ○ The best links start with the most important words. This helps readers scan the page more easily <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Web readers typically scan the first two words or so for most list items and the first 11 characters of links or headlines. ○ Telling readers what is behind the link is important. Giving them a reason to click the link is better. Frame it as a brief call to action, where possible. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ GOOD: Online reservation system ○ BETTER: Try our online reservation system ○ BEST: Reserve a table ○ Avoid articles that consist primarily of lists of links. Instead, convert these into landing pages where each link can be represented as a tile with an explanatory hero description. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Subheadings and basic introductory paragraphs can be used to help break the landing page into sections. ○ For links to non-html content (e.g. <i>xls, doc, mp3, ppt, pdf</i>) see filetypes. ○ When possible, add a hyperlink to the text in the Word doc. When linking to content that isn't uploaded on alis yet, add a comment to the text to be linked that indicates which content to link to. ○ Do not include the space at the end of linked text within the link. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ NOT: Explore your options on alis today! ○ BUT: Explore your options on alis today! ○ For guidance on how to link telephone numbers, see phone numbers.
LISTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Always end your lead-in statement with a colon, regardless of whether it is a sentence or a phrase. ○ Use parallel construction. See parallel constructions. ○ Items should be either all sentences or all fragments. ○ Capitalize the first word of each item. ○ Punctuate items that are complete sentences. Do not punctuate items that are not sentences. ○ Nested lists can be appropriate if used sparingly. However, consider whether the parent bullets might be clearer either as paragraph text or headings and subheadings. ○ Avoid articles that consist primarily of lists of links (see links for an alternate solution). ○ Lists of only two items are acceptable for web writing where they improve readability. <p>When each item in a list begins with a keyword that is followed by a definition, bold the keyword and offset the definition with an em-dash. The first word of the definition should be lower case and end with a period. Example:</p>

Preference	Guideline
	<p>“The following are traits that most employers value:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adaptability—being able to learn new skills, deal with change, and not give up. 2. Collaboration—working with people from diverse backgrounds and cultures, knowing how to deal with co-workers and others in difficult situations.” <p>See numbered lists and word order in a series for further detail.</p>
LOW LITERACY	<p>Alis content for low literacy audiences is typically targeted at a 4.9 or lower on the New Dale-Chall Score readability scale. For details, see plain language and reading level.</p> <p>Word choice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Choose simple, clear words, but do not be condescending. Refer to the Dale-Chall word list. ○ Choose concrete words over abstract words. ○ Choose words with fewer syllables. <p>Sentences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Use short sentences, around 10 to 15 words. ○ One idea per sentence. <p>Other notes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Avoid parentheses; they are difficult for beginning readers. ○ For guidance regarding recommended font size, see fonts and typography.
<h1>Mm</h1>	
MARKETING URLS	See links .
MATURE	Use when referring to students, workers, and job seekers over 40.
MORE THAN / FEWER THAN VS OVER / UNDER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Use <i>more than</i> or <i>fewer than</i> when referring to items that can be counted: <i>More than 16,000 students received the letters.</i> ○ Use <i>over</i> or <i>under</i> when referring to spatial relationships: <i>The cow jumped over the moon.</i>
MYRIAD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Be sure to use this correctly. Myriad means <i>ten thousand</i> or <i>numerous</i>. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ NOT: There are a myriad of ways... ○ NOT: There are myriads of ways... ○ BUT: There are myriad ways...

Preference	Guideline
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note that myriad may not be sufficiently plain language. Consider alternatives.
Nn	
NAMES	It is the writer's duty to confirm the correct spelling of names.
NON-BREAKING SPACES	Never use.
NON-HTML CONTENT	For guidelines regarding links to non-HTML content (e.g. filetypes such as <i>xls, doc, mp3, ppt, pdf</i>), see links .
NOTES	See endnotes and footnotes .
NUMBERED LISTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use a numbered list when there is a process, order, organizational need for clarity or series of steps to follow. See lists for further guidance.
NUMBERS AND NUMERALS	<p>See <i>The Canadian Press Stylebook</i> under Numbers for details.</p> <p>Alis web writing differs from the <i>Canadian Press Stylebook</i> in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use figures in most cases, including at the beginning of a sentence: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 500 eager students... ...4-week program... ...156-hour course... Currency: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> use figures for all monetary units use a comma for numbers of 4 digits and over use 'to' instead of dashes to show number ranges do not use decimals unless cents are included <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 cents, not \$0.05 \$75 not \$75.00 \$15,000 not \$15000 200 to 400 \$1 billion... (note that large, rounded values such as <i>million</i> and <i>billion</i> are spelled out, but NOT smaller values like <i>hundred</i> or <i>thousand</i>). Spell out the number only in casual usage: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There were thousands of students. It cost billions of dollars. ...on one hand...

Preference	Guideline
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ...from one position to another.
Oo	
Pp	
PAGES	
PARALLEL CONSTRUCTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Elements in a series should be parallel (similar) in construction. Start with all action words, all nouns, or all articles like <i>a</i> or <i>the</i>. Just make them all from the same family. Without parallelism, sentences become awkward, confusing, and difficult to read. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ NOT: The mother, the father, their young child ○ BUT: The mother, the father, the child ○ Parallel construction is particularly important when creating lists.
PARAGRAPHS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Keep paragraphs short and active. Paragraphs of a few tight sentences are inviting. Long, grey blobs of text are not. ○ Do not indent the first line of a paragraph. ○ Do not add manual carriage returns between paragraphs. To help keep paragraphs visually distinct within the source document, change your point-based paragraph spacing in your settings. ○ To avoid long paragraphs, use lists wherever possible.
PDFS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ See filetypes for more information about linking to non-HTML content. ○ With the exception of official acts, try to link to web content rather than to pdfs.
PER CENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Always use the % symbol (e.g. 5%) except where used as a casual reference (e.g. <i>What per cent of...</i>).
PERIODS, SPACE AFTER	Sentences are always separated by one space, not two.
PERSON, FIRST VS SECOND VS THIRD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Speak directly to the reader, addressing them in second person (<i>you</i>). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There may be rare exceptions, such as legal material, where third person is required. ○ Avoid referring to alis, related programs and services, or the Government of Alberta in first person (e.g. <i>we</i>).
PHONE NUMBERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Use the word “call” rather than phone, press, or dial. This is true within a sentence as well as when providing contact information as a block. ○ Always include the area code. ○ Use hyphens between the area code, prefix, and number. ○ No brackets around area code.

Preference	Guideline
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Call *310 (Rogers) or #310 (Bell or Telus), followed by the 10-digit number for the office you want. ○ in Edmonton, call 780-555-9999 ○ call toll-free 1-800-555-9999 within Alberta ○ Note that our professional audiences sometimes print out web and pdf content for use with clients. In cases where internet access is not an option, provide a central information phone number where the reader can get referrals. Examples include 310-0000, Alberta Support Services, 211 Alberta, etc. <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Use click-to-call links for phone numbers so readers can easily complete the call on their mobile device. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To do so, create a link within the document as normal, but rather than a http: or mailto: destination, set it to “tel:+1-780-555-9999”. Always include the “1-” long distance prefix, even for local numbers.
PLAIN LANGUAGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ All alis materials should be written following the principles of plain language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Write with the audience in mind. ○ Use the active voice and strong verbs. ○ Minimize use of negatives. ○ Limit yourself to one idea or piece of information per sentence. ○ Use concrete words. ○ Use short words with few syllables. ○ Explain unfamiliar or different words. ○ Write simple sentences. Be precise and concise. ○ Avoid slang, jargon, government speak and acronyms ○ Refer to the Dale-Chall word list. ○ See reading level.
PREFACE TEXT	Refer to <i>The Chicago Manual of Style</i>
PULL QUOTES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pull quotes are a type of callout that applies special design elements to highlight a block of quoted text outside the normal flow of content. The intent is to attract the reader to an interesting snippet from the article that tantalizes the reader. ○ Attribution text (i.e. an indication of who the quote is attributed to) is optional, depending on usage: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If used to help emphasize a point already made within the content, attribution is only needed if attributable to an individual or organization outside of alis ○ If used to provide a testimonial or informative quote not explicitly included elsewhere in the content, attribution is required ○ Attribution lines are prefaced with an em dash (e.g. “—Emily Boyle, John Howard Society”) ○ Capitalize job titles in the attribution statement. Example:

Preference	Guideline
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ “If you don’t find ways to gather and retain that knowledge then it all just walks out the door when someone retires or leaves.” —John Simpson, Director of Personnel and Human Resources, Standen’s ○ To indicate a pull quote within your draft, create a two-row table. Type “PULL QUOTE” in the top row and place the relevant quote and attribution text (if applicable) within the second. ○ Pull quotes are currently only available in alis articles. They show up full-width, intentionally interrupting the flow of the article. ○ Based on current implementation in alis articles, pull quotes are recommended not to exceed two sentences and attribution text is recommended not to exceed five words. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Exceptions can be made but it does impact readability, particularly when viewed on smaller screens. Discuss with your project coordinator if you feel an exception is needed.
<h2 style="margin: 0;">Qq</h2>	
<p>QUOTATION MARKS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ For better readability, use double, smart quotes (curly) that look like commas and apostrophes (“smart”) rather than straight quotes that look like inch marks ("straight"). See apostrophe. ○ Periods and commas go inside closing quotation marks. All other marks go inside if they belong with the quoted material, outside if they don’t. ○ When mentioning words as such that are being explained in the sentence, bold the word instead of using quotation marks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ NOT In the “gig economy,” people take on temporary or freelance work gigs. ○ BUT In the gig economy, people take on temporary or freelance work gigs. ○ When calling out a specific word(s) as part of instructions for the reader, use quotations marks around the word(s). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ NOT Adjust the level of education filter at the top of the page. ○ NOT Adjust the <i>level of education filter</i> at the top of the page. ○ BUT Adjust the “level of education” filter at the top of the page. ○ Avoid overusing. For guidance regarding appropriate use of quotation marks and how they interact with other forms of punctuation, consult <i>The Canadian Press Stylebook</i> under Quotation marks.
<p>QUOTES</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ See pull quotes and quotation marks.
<h2 style="margin: 0;">Rr</h2>	
<p>READING LEVELS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reading level is measured by the New Dale-Chall scale. New Dale-Chall emphasizes the use of 3,000 words familiar to 80 per cent or more of grade four students (see the Dale-Chall word list). Our target scores are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Low literacy: 4.9 or lower. See low literacy.

Preference	Guideline
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ General alis and publications: 6.5 ○ OCCinfo and other technical content: 7.5 ○ Consult with your project coordinator if you feel another reading level is appropriate. Certain case-by-case accommodations may be made for terms outside of our control, such as names of occupations and organizations. ○ Alis staff have subscription accounts to readable.io to measure reading level. Vendors are expected to sign up for their own paid accounts. The site provides other helpful guidance to inform your writing and editing work. ○ For internal drafts, post the current score, right-justified, at the top of each article or chapter. Update the score after each major content change.
Ss	
SEMICOLONS	Try to avoid.
SENTENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Keep sentence length to fewer than 30 syllables wherever possible and fewer than 20 syllables on average (see reading level for a helpful measurement tool). ○ Avoid making all sentences short and choppy—flow is important and varying lengths make for a more interesting read. ○ Generally, aim to communicate one idea with each sentence. ○ See also paragraphs and plain language.
SIDEBARS	○ See callouts, sidebars and featured content .
SLASHES	Avoid. Do not use a slash when you could say <i>and</i> or <i>or</i> . There is rarely a legitimate reason to slash two words. Exceptions exist for OCCinfo; see the style sheet.
Tt	
TABLE OF CONTENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ For long articles, consider using a table of contents with anchor links to each heading in the article. This will allow readers to quickly jump to a spot on the page and avoid excessive scrolling. ○ Avoid when the content is meant to be read in sequence and we don't want the reader to miss important steps in a process – e.g. "6 Steps to Resolving Conflict in the Workplace"
TECHNICAL TERMS	Where technical terms are required, make sure they are adequately defined in the text.
TENSES	Avoid mixing tenses (past, present, future).
THAT, WHICH, WHO OR WHOM	Consult <i>The Canadian Press Stylebook</i> under <i>Common faults</i> .
TIPS AND TIP SHEETS	Do not use. The former alis tip sheets are now referred to as <i>articles</i> .
TITLES	○ Avoid cute or clever titles for alis publications and web pages

Preference	Guideline
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Titles should plainly indicate the topic and align with common phrases and keywords that the public would use when seeking information on this topic. ○ Try not to exceed 55 characters in length as this is where Google begins to truncate the title in search results. ○ For rules regarding the italicization and capitalization of titles, see italics and capitalization (caps).
TONE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ See The voice of alis in the preamble of this document. ○ Keep a positive, practical, solution-focused tone. Watch especially for negative constructions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ NOT: Don't forget to bring your Social Insurance Number... ○ BUT: Remember to bring your Social Insurance Number... ○ Use caution when referring to trends or forecasts: use <i>will likely</i> or <i>is expected to</i>, rather than <i>will</i> or <i>should</i>. ○ Avoid fads and trendy words for documents that are going to be posted long term, as these fade quickly. ○ Use a tone appropriate for the audience. For example, when writing for youth, use their everyday language to help develop rapport. Read some current youth magazines to get an idea of their lingo. Use engaging language and questions to captivate this audience.
TRADEMARKS	Consult <i>The Canadian Press Stylebook</i> under <i>Trade names</i> , which also has a list of generic alternatives, or points 11.56–11.61 in <i>Editing Canadian English</i> .
Uu	
UNDERLINING	Use only for hyperlinks.
UNITS OF MEASURE	Use metric units: metre (m), kilometre (km), centimeter (cm)
URLS	See links .
Vv	
Ww	
WEB ADDRESSES AND WEBSITES	See links .
WHO OR WHOM	Do not use “whom”. Use the informal “who” or restructure sentence to use him/her/they.
WORD COUNT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Target word counts can vary depending on project need. If you feel a project would benefit from a greater or lesser word count than the range specified in the Editorial Plan, discuss with your project coordinator.

Preference	Guideline
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ For internal drafts, post the current word count, right-justified, at the top of each article or chapter. Update that word count after each major change. ○ Typical alis articles are 1,000-1,500 words. ○ Long-form content for alis is 1,500-2,000 words. Some occupational profiles already fall into this category. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A 2016 analysis of one million top Google search results found longer content tends to rank higher. The average Google first page result contains 1,890 words, suggesting that, where appropriate and supported by high quality writing, we should consider opportunities for long-form content.
WORD ORDER IN A SERIES	<p>Arrange elements logically in a sentence or, if longer than three elements, in a bulleted list (see list), either by chronology, obvious sequence, familiar order, syllable count (shorter to longer), complexity (simple to compound), or alphabetically.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Chronology: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Tuesday, Thursday, Friday ○ Obvious sequence: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Where do I start? ○ Know yourself ○ Explore options ○ Get ready ○ Take action ○ Familiar order: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ comparing apples to oranges ○ Syllable count: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ peas, carrots and potatoes ○ Complexity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ tent, shack, lean-to ○ Alphabetically: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Aboriginal Liaison ○ Baker ○ Data Miner ○ Psychologist ○ Waiter
WORDS TO AVOID	<p>Within the body of a web page or article, avoid using words that presume the reader is reading the website from beginning to end.</p>

Preference	Guideline
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Spell out acronyms and explain technical terms (or link out to a shared glossary) on every page. ○ Avoid references such as continued, previous paragraph, table below, figure above, next section and the following.
Xx	
Yy	
Zz	

WORD LIST

The following words and abbreviations are frequently used in alis content. They are included here because they either are not included in other authorities or override those authorities. After the word list, refer to *Canadian Press Caps and Spelling* and then the *Canadian Oxford Dictionary*.

- advisor
- aged (with “d”, e.g. school-aged, middle-aged)
- alberta.ca (central Government of Alberta website)
- Alberta government but Government of Alberta
- Alberta Student Aid (alis partner)
- Alberta Student Loan
- Alberta Supports (alis partner)
- Alberta Works/Alberta Supports Centres
- alis (not ALIS, not Alberta Learning Information Service)
- alis’s (not alis’)
- Asperger disorder
- autobody
- BA (degree, no periods), or bachelor of arts (lowercase)
- bachelor’s degree (lowercase)
- B.Comm. (degree, no space)
- B Corp (not B-Corp or B-Corporation)
- B.Sc. (degree, periods, no space)
- Canada pension plan (uppercase only when used as adjectival phrase – e.g. Canada Pension Plan contributions)
- Career Information Hotline
- CAREERinsite (standalone alis website, terminology to be reviewed in 2018)
- Canada Student Loan
- cellphone
- child care (not childcare)
- contact (not e-Contact)
- contact the Government of Alberta (formerly Government of Alberta Call - Centre, formerly Service Alberta)
- cooperate (not co-operate)
- coordinator (not co-ordinator)
- coursework
- daycare (not day care)
- Deaf (capitalized when used as a sociological term referring to Deaf culture); deaf (lowercase when used as a medical term)
- decision making (n.); decision-making (adj.)
- dos and don’ts
- EI funded (no periods, no hyphen)
- employment insurance (uppercase only when used as adjectival phrase – e.g. Employment Insurance contributions)
- English as a Second Language (ESL)
- front-line (adj.), front line (n.)
- GPA (no periods)
- hard-working (adj.)
- health-care (adj.), health care (n.)
- hearing-impaired (adj.)
- homeless person (adj.) – avoid using “the homeless” (n.)
- Indigenous (not Aboriginal)
- informational interview (not information interview)
- internet (lowercase, except at start of sentence)
- job site
- jpeg (not jpg)
- judgment (not judgement)
- landowner
- lay off (v.), layoff (n.)
- learners (not e-Learners)
- Learning Clicks (alis partner)
- life cycle (two words)
- like, such as (The former is normal usage. The latter is often used to introduce examples set off with commas.)
- log on (verb), logon (number, screen; noun, adjective)
- log out (verb); logout (number, screen; noun, adjective)
- MA (degree, no periods), or master of arts (lowercase)
- makeup (unless used as a verb – e.g. “make up the missed assignment”)
- manoeuvre (not manoeuver)
- marginalized (avoid)
- master’s degree (lowercase)
- medicentres
- microaggression (s.), microaggressions (pl.),

- M.Sc. (degree, periods, no space)
- multi-skilled
- multitask
- MyWorkQuest (standalone alis website)
- newcomer (not immigrant)
- newsletter (not e-Newsletter)
- nondisclosure
- nonstop
- not-for-profit (not non-profit or nonprofit)
- OCCinfo (standalone alis website, terminology to be reviewed in 2018)
- occupational profiles “over 500 occupational profiles” (March 2017)
- oil sands
- OK (not okay)
- onsite
- overachieve
- over-prepare
- overuse
- pdf
- people with disabilities (not persons with disabilities, disabled persons)
- PhD (degree, no periods)
- pop-up window
- practice (n.) A professional’s business – e.g. dental practice
- practise (verb) The act of repeating something to get better – e.g. hockey practise
- practised (v. and adj.)
- practising (v. and adj.)
- preventive (not preventative)
- problem solving (n.); problem-solving (adj.)
- Province of Alberta (corporation), province of Alberta (geography)
- provincewide
- publications (not e-Products)
- question (not e-Question)
- re-enter
- resumé (one accent, not e-Resumé)
- Resumé Review Service (not e-Resumé Review Service)
- self-employment (noun), self-employed (adj.)
- school work
- sign in (verb), signin (number, screen, noun, adjective)
- sign out (verb), signout (number, screen, noun, adjective)
- sign up (verb), signup (number, screen, noun, adjective)
- students finance (plural, not possessive)
- subscription (not e-Subscription)
- such as (see *like*)
- the web (lowercase, not World Wide Web)
- timeline
- toll-free
- Tourette syndrome
- toward (not towards, as per Canadian Oxford Dictionary)
- Tradesecrets (alis partner)
- tradespeople (one word)
- transfer, transferred, transferring, transferable
- Transfer Alberta (alis partner)
- Two-Spirit
- website (one word)
- well site (two words)
- work-life balance
- work site (n.), work-site (adj.)
- Workers’ Compensation Board – Alberta (WCB-Alberta)