

MAXIMISING the writing and design resource in Actuarial Private

We want everything that Hymans publishes to be of the highest quality. That means giving our clients the best advice, but also presenting it in a way that's most helpful to them.

Writing and design are crucial to making our work the best it can be, and the firm has invested in expert writers and designers to help you achieve this. You'll get the best results from using this resource if you follow best practice.

Following best practice also means we work efficiently, and avoid duplicating work. Doing so makes for a smoother experience for everyone.

The content creation process



Copywriter



Designer



Plan and structure

Before you start writing anything, you need to know what you're going to say and what order you'll say it in. Think about your audience and the purpose of the content. Also think about what format it's going to be in and how it'll look.

It can be useful to talk to a copywriter and designer at this early stage, especially if you're going to be working with one or both later on.



Write

Putting down the thoughts on a page.

This can be done by a consultant or a copywriter, and the first draft can be as simple as bullet points.

General edit

The initial stage of editing once all the sentences are down on the page. Move things around, add, remove, reword, break apart and recombine, see if the message comes through clearly.

It's common for more than one person to be involved at this 'review' stage.

Copy edit

The last stage of an edit, before design work starts.

The editing here focuses on the details. Because consistency is so important, one person should edit the whole text.



Design

The design stage is for 'setting' the text: laying it out and formatting it. The design stage also adds graphic elements – images, icons and charts, for example.

This is where the designer does most of their work.



Proofread

A check to ensure that everything in the designed version is correct. The last line of defence against errors – but not the time to be making substantive changes to the text.

The proofread is always done after the document is designed or laid out in its final format.

How to use writing and design resource

As far as our capacity allows, we expect writing and design input into new business proposals, templates that will be used for more than one client and larger pieces of marketing content.

There's more than one way to use the copywriting and design resource. However you use it, please be clear about your expectations.

WHAT?

What do you want the copywriter or designer to do on this particular piece.

WHO?

Who are you writing for and why are the audience reading it?
Is it for a client, a specific prospect, or the market in general?

PLAN

Please give us notice of what's coming our way, so we can plan our workload. Keep us in the loop and be clear about when you've finished with something and it's ready for us.

TIME

Please also give us enough time for us to do the work. It takes time to do it properly, especially if we are involved in more than one stage.

We encourage you to talk to us to explore the possibilities of what we can do. An early discussion might help you find the most appropriate format for whatever you're working on.

To get the best results, we all need to be disciplined, especially at the later stages of the process. A copywriter should do a **final** copy edit – if lots of people have contributed, things will need checking for consistency.

All text has to be finalised before work starts on design. Large changes to the text after this stage could affect the layout and design, duplicating work for the designer. And it takes longer to change text if it has to go through a designer than when working in Word, for example.

All 'designed' work needs a proofread, ideally by a copywriter. At this stage we are looking to make only necessary changes.

Continuous improvement

Dedicated design and writing resource is new to the business units. As we work together, we'll find ways to make things run even better. Please give us feedback on how we work and how the process works.

Your feedback and suggestions will help us improve.