



Document Naming Conventions

Naming conventions are critical to effective records management. They enable users to locate and decipher exact documents with minimal time and effort.

These guidelines are for naming electronic documents recorded in an Electronic Document and Records Management System (EDRMS), Business Information System or shared drive. They are not recommended for titling of files/folders containing multiple documents. For files/folders organisations should use their File Titling Plan, Keyword Thesaurus or Business Classification Scheme (BCS) etc.

The following elements should be considered when creating a document naming convention guideline or policy.

Firstly, keep document names short and relevant. They should be concise, but contain sufficient information and be meaningful enough to explain the content of the document without anyone having to physically retrieve or open the document.

Order of title fields

Order the sections of information in a logical sequence. Use the date first on events that are time specific or reoccurring, and use the name of the event for events that are infrequent and will be easier to find by name rather than date.

| | | |
|----------------------------|-----|--------------------------|
| 2019-6-23 Minutes | NOT | Minutes 23 June 2019 |
| 2019-7-05 Agenda and notes | | Agenda & notes 5-7-2019 |
| Strategic plan_2015-2020 | | 2015-2020_Strategic plan |

Terminology

Adopt standard terminology for subjects and activities. Where there are synonyms, pick one term as your organisation's approved Abbreviations and Acronyms list. For example, use the term "human resources" instead of "personnel."

Metadata

Decide whether metadata elements can be repeated in the document title. For example, if you have a system that incorporates personal names as a subject, does the name require repeating in the title field?

Abbreviations and Acronyms

If your organisation permits the use of acronyms and / or abbreviations, develop a guide to maintain consistency. Try to keep acronym, abbreviation and jargon use to a minimum. It can become confusing, especially as some acronyms and other abbreviations can mean



different things to different people at different times. Jargon changes over time, making it difficult to find records and documents later when usage is no longer current.

Initial articles

Avoid the use of initial articles (the, an, a) unless they form part of a proper noun.

| | | |
|--|-----|--|
| Bureau of Meteorology_Weather The West Australian_Sales | NOT | The Bureau of Meteorology_Weather West Australian_Sales |
|--|-----|--|

Formats

Avoid descriptive format terms at the front of the title, the subject should be at the front.

| | | |
|---|-----|---|
| Spatial data project_Draft Coogee Beach_WAPC_MEMO Recordkeeping Plan V1.0_FINAL | NOT | Draft-Spatial data project Memo WAPC Coogee Beach Final - Recordkeeping Plan V1.0 |
|---|-----|---|

Names

- Personal Names

Generally, names should be filed as *Surname, First name*. Decide if middle names or initials will be included and if any titles will be used. This may depend on the number of names you have in your EDRMS.

When entering a personal name, the name must be copied exactly including any punctuation such as hyphens or apostrophes.

Decide on case where applicable, e.g. Sentence case, Title Case, UPPER CASE.

| | | |
|--------------------------------|-----|-----------------------------|
| SIMPSON, Fred Green, Joseph | NOT | Mr Fred Simpson J. Green |
|--------------------------------|-----|-----------------------------|

- Organisation and Company Names

Enter organisation and company names the way they appear on their letterhead, signature block or brand. Do not use acronyms alone unless specified on your organisation's approved Abbreviations and Acronyms list.

Dates / Numbers

Ideally dates should follow the ISO 8601 standard of YEAR-MONTH-DAY in the format XXXX-XX-XX. This files documents in chronological order. However, this format may not suit all organisations, implement a consistent date format that suits your purposes.



| | | |
|------------|-----|---------------------------|
| 2015-10-18 | NOT | 1 September 2018 |
| 2016-07-27 | | 18 Oct 2015 |
| 2017-09-05 | | 27 July 16 |
| 2018-09-01 | | 5 th Sept 2017 |
| 2018-12-06 | | December 6, 2018 |

Drafts or versions

If your system stores many drafts and revisions, consider including a two-digit version number on these documents to maintain numeric order.

| | | |
|---------------------|-----|-------------------|
| V04 Version 0.02 | NOT | V4 Version 0.2 |
|---------------------|-----|-------------------|

Special characters

- The underscore (_) is a quasi-standard for separation of words or a group of words.
- Use the hyphen (-) to separate words within a field or Capitalise the first letter of each word within a field.
- Avoid using special characters such as: ? / \$ % & ^ #. These may be confused with 'wild cards' or search operation terms by the system.
- Full stops should not be used within the title.

SharePoint

If you are using SharePoint, refrain from using spaces in the title as these are represented by %20 when they are converted to an URL, making the file path harder to read. Use an underscore or capitalise the first letter of each word instead.

| | | |
|--|-----|---|
| RecordkeepingPlanV04 Coogee_Beach_WAPC_Memo | NOT | Recordkeeping Plan V4 Coogee Beach WAPC Memo |
|--|-----|---|

A simple policy will help staff logically and easily name documents and help ensure that they are accessible.

For further information, contact the State Records Office via email at sro@sro.wa.gov.au