

Quality content is key to the success of any intranet, making it both useful and usable. To achieve this, intranet teams must ensure intranet authors have the right tools, training and support to make this happen.

As one of many author resources, a simple checklist for quality content should be provided on the intranet. This checklist is a support tool for authors to use back at their desks following face-to-face or online author training. See earlier article *An outline for intranet author training* for more information on what should be included in training.

This article outlines possible topics to consider for your checklist. Depending on the environment, authoring experience and level of authoring complexity in your organisation, some topics may be more relevant than others. Use this as a starting point to create checklists for your authoring community.

### Writing style

- content written for the target audience
- easy to scan with clear headings, sub-headings, labels and lists
- content is ‘chunked’ by topic
- inverted pyramid structure with the essential information at the top of the page
- uses familiar, easy to understand words avoiding acronyms or jargon
- uses the active voice for more direct communication
- text is concise, cutting out any unnecessary words
- summaries or tables of contents are used for long pages
- content makes sense if it is the first page a person visits (out of context)
- contains all the information about a topic and links to related content
- written to meet the intranet style and obviously up-to-date
- appropriate keywords and metadata have been included

### Links

- text is written as if there were no links
- are conveniently placed
- are the object of interest
- describe the destination

### Site structure

In most cases, the intranet site structure is controlled by the intranet team. If this is not the case, consider including these points about new content:

- positioned with related information
- included in A-Z list
- located in a logical place for users when browsing the site structure
- new site sections or major additions to the site structure have been tested with users

### Accessibility

Various levels of accessibility need to be applied depending on your situation. The items below should be used as a minimum accessibility check for authors. Intranet managers may want to do a more thorough accessibility check.

- images are clear, well-sized and useful
- images have meaningful ALT text
- complex images and flow charts have a text equivalent
- tables are used for data not layout

### Approving or editing content

Not all content is created equal and some will be of sufficient organisational value that it needs to be approved prior to publishing. The following list can be used as a checklist or guide for content approvers.

- content written or signed off by subject matter expert
- content clear and necessary
- material is as short and simple as possible
- style, linking, findability and accessibility guidelines been met