



ISIS MALAYSIA HOUSE STYLE

1.0 UK spelling

All the way, note differences between British/American spellings:

sceptic, programme, colour, paediatrician, archaeologist, capitalise, formalise, organise, centre, organisation, defence

Merdeka Centre, World Health Organisation, defence secretary

2.0 Capitalisation/lower case

IN GENERAL, TAKE THE LOW ROAD

2.1 Caps only for proper nouns, honorifics and titles

Professor JR Howard

2.2 Political job titles have initial caps only when the title is next to the name, in whatever order:

Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin

Lower case when it's **former**, e.g. former prime minister Najib Razak

2.3 Use lower case for company and party posts, e.g. PKR **president** Anwar Ibrahim, Apple **chief executive officer** Tim Cook

2.4 The **government** of Malaysia uses **government** offices.

The **army**, **navy** and **air force** constitute the nation's **armed forces** and its **military**.

Here, in the **west coast** of the **peninsula** people often drive to visit their friends in Kelantan in the **east coast**.

3.0 Sentence case for headings

Impact of visa-rule changes on hiring policy

2 years on, mask compliance remains low

4.0 BM words

Bahasa Malaysia words, such as kampung, surau, sungai, imam, madrasah, are part of the everyday lexicon. No need to italicise or add an "s" to indicate plural, **exception**

Bumiputeras (plural)

5.0 Currency conversion

Convert to RM only for first mention unless there are multiple currencies (e.g. US\$ and €), in which case, convert to RM the first mention of both currencies

6.0 Tenses

Use present tense **when applicable**, as reported tense is going out of style

**7.0 Metric system**

120kph, 50km, 100ha, 10m, 20cm

8.0 Singular/plural

Political parties, societies, clubs, collective nouns – companies, governments and other bodies – all singular

Nouns that are plural in form but singular in meaning:

- News
- Politics
- Wages of sin
- Mathematics

9.0. Quotes/punctuation

The trend is towards minimising punctuation marks

	Examples
Apostrophe	The primary functions of the apostrophe are to show possessive case and it is also used to indicate contractions in words, such as can't and it's (which we avoid in written English) * The Philippines' military presence * The United Arab Emirates' (UAE's) oil and gas production * master's degree
Double quotation marks for level 1	"The phenomenon is common among the unemployed," he said.
Single quotation marks for level 2 (quote within a quote)	"The attempt to 'bribe' the immigration officers failed."
Ellipsis (...) • No spacing at end of first word or between full stops	Among the generals... (space) Aung Hlang is considered the most brutal
En dash (-) • Spaced before and after	No one – not even the president – realised what was happening.
Exclamation mark (!)	Don't use exclamation marks in Policy Papers
Square brackets • Used for translations of titles of books, articles or conferences, sayings	<i>Le Capital au XXI^e siècle</i> [Capital in the Twenty-first Century]
Colon • Use colon to set off a list	These events are linked to a spike in positive cases: football matches, gym classes, dine-ins and malls.



	Points within paragraph: (i), (ii), (iii), etc
Comma	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No comma before the last item, except to avoid confusion, e.g. item 1, item 2 and item 3• No comma after designation. Simpang Pulai BN coordinator (no comma) Alex Chan or XYZ managing editor (no comma) Ali Ahmad

9.0 Hyphens

No **need to hyphenate** adverbs compound **ending in -ly**

- strongly worded statement (no hyphen)
- totally awesome presentation
- similarly phrased
- racially charged (adjective) statement

Examples	cooperative (not co-operative) cooperation reinstate daycare centre email WiFi, not Wi-Fi wellbeing pre-war think-tanks low-budget production
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10.0 That/which

That defines; **which** explains. “The house **that** Jack built, **which** he built of straw, was invaded by little pig.” (**Which** is almost invariably preceded by a comma, while **that** is almost invariably not.)

A

Abbreviations	<p>Use sparingly and only when their meaning is clear. Full stops usually omitted in all categories of abbreviations, such as academic degrees and ranks or titles.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BA, MSc, PhD • Mr, Mrs, Ms, Gen, Dr, Prof, Assoc Prof • US, UK (only when used as adjectives, e.g. US foreign policy, UK property); spell out in full for country, e.g. the United States, the United Kingdom • am, pm, AD, BC, CE, etc • Initials of names: Steven CM Wong, Mohd, Abd
Acronyms	<p>If there is only one reference to a body with an acronym, do not put the acronym behind the name.</p> <p>Use the abbreviated form of a title without explanation only if there is no chance of any misunderstanding (e.g. UN, Nato, IRA, BBC). Otherwise, spell it out in full at first reference.</p>
Asean	
al-Qaeda, Al Jazeera	
age (<i>see figures</i>)	Numbers 1-9 used only for ages
Agong	<p>Yang di-Pertuan Agong and Raja Permaisuri Agong</p> <p>Second mention can be Agong or the king</p>
attorney-general	Attorney-General (cap) Idris Haron
Attorney-General's Chambers	
Agriculture and Agro-Based Industry Ministry (not Agro-Based Industries Ministry)	
Asia-Pacific	<p>the Asia-Pacific</p> <p>Asia-Pacific region</p>

B

Bill	<p>parliamentary bill (lower case b)</p> <p>The bill was introduced in parliament (not the Bill was introduced in parliament)</p> <p>Administration of Islamic Law (Federal Territories) Bill</p>
Bumiputera/Bumiputeras	

C

the cabinet	<p>“They were at the cabinet meeting and they know what the sentiment was,” said the minister.</p> <p>Note: It’s just ministers NOT cabinet ministers – ministers by default are members of the cabinet</p>
China/Taipei/Hong Kong	<p>To be used solely in reference to the People’s Republic of China. Due to Malaysia’s One China Policy, we never refer to Taiwan as the “Republic of China”.</p> <p>Never imply that Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan are separate sovereign states. Attach the initials SAR (for special administrative region) to Hong Kong SAR and Macau SAR. In conference programmes, those from Hong Kong and Macau are to be listed as from China.</p> <p>For the Asia-Pacific Roundtable and CSCAP, refer to Taiwan as Chinese Taipei. For other events, research heads will consider if it would be appropriate to use Taiwan or Chinese Taipei. Special circumstances – such as whether the event is sponsored by the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office (TECO) or involves participants from China – would dictate usage.</p> <p>China regards the use of the term “national” by Taiwanese institutions (e.g. National Chengchi University, National Taiwan University) as a subtle suggestion of Taiwan’s independence. Our usage to be resolved on a case-by-case basis by the research heads.</p> <p>When APR participants have come from the Institute of International Relations, National Chengchi University, this was easily resolved by omitting “National Chengchi University” altogether; but this isn’t always a practical solution.</p> <p>Be careful when using the adjective “Chinese” to mean “of or relating to</p>

	China, its inhabitants, or one of their languages”, especially if it could be misunderstood to refer to Chinese Malaysians or ethnic Chinese people in other countries.
Citations	There will be no in-text citations, use only footnotes or endnotes Footnotes or endnotes numbering to be after punctuation mark
Compare	Compare to dissimilar things, compare with similar things. e.g. compare this year’s trade figures with last year’s
Constitution	The constitution/federal constitution
Currency	For foreign currency amounts, put the foreign currency first, followed by the ringgit equivalent in brackets. e.g. “US\$100 (RM420)”
Covid-19	Can also use the Covid pandemic

D

Dash	– en dash Use the en dash in story body
Datukship <i>See titles</i>	Full honorifics (see title) – use highest honour Tan Sri Gen ..., Tun Dr Mahathir Datuk Datuk Seri Tan Sri Tun
Dewan Negara	
Dewan Rakyat	
Distance	Use metric system (i.e. km, metre), not the imperial system (i.e. mile, foot). No spacing so it’s “40km” not “40 km”, 5m, 30cm

E

East Malaysians	Please use Sabah and Sarawak folk or Sabahans or Sarawakians
Election	Elections, but general election – there is only one general election It's party elections
Ellipses	Ellipses are three dots done this way... joined to the previous word, followed by space and the next word. Not joining two words as in this, e.g. “Kueh galore and then some...All pre-packed and ready for sale at the pasar ramadan in Bangi yesterday.”
Email (no hyphen)	
Enquire/inquire	To enquire is to ask; to inquire is to investigate
Ethnicity/adjective	Use Indian Malaysian, Chinese Malaysian in describing ethnic/national identity of person. Not Malaysian Chinese
examinations	UPSR – Ujian Pencapaian Sekolah Rendah PMR – Penilaian Menengah Rendah SPM – Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia STPM – Sijil Persekolahan Tinggi Malaysia PT3 – Pentaksiran Tingkatan 3 (Form Three Assessment)

F

Figures	<p><i>Examples</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> More than 1,000 participants signed up (NOT – More than one thousand participants signed up) Four digits or more: X,XXX / XX,XXX Zero to nine spell out, from 10 onwards, numeral, e.g. one-third of humanity Do not begin a sentence with a numeral, use “Eight” not “8” when a figure is used at the beginning of a sentence
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	<p>5. Do not spell out decimal numbers or numbers attached to units: 9%, US\$5.25, US\$25 million, 10.30pm, 5cm, 56km, Channel 7, a 14-year-old boy</p> <p>6. Conference / meeting numbers: Spell out from first to tenth, after which express in numerals without superscript ending, e.g. Tenth Security Conference, 36th Asean Meeting</p>
Foreign Ministry, foreign minister	Not Foreign Affairs Ministry
Full stop	<p>No full stops for headlines e.g. / i.e. (with full stops, without comma)</p> <p>none for names e.g. Rahmat A Halim, GK Chen, M Manimaran</p>

G

GDP	gross domestic product
general election	The 14th general election, not 14th General Election
geo	geopolitics, geo-economics
GST	goods and services tax
The government	

I

Initials	Cap without full stops CF Tan
Islamic movements	Use Islamist movement, not militant or rebel or fundamentalist group, to describe them. For e.g. Hamas is not a militant group. It is an Islamist organisation/body/group/movement.



Italics	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Use for: title of books, newspapers, magazines, working papers, periodicals, plays, films, radio and television programmes, names of ships and works of art2. Use for: emphasis and foreign words, except proper nouns3. For plural foreign words, English convention is used, e.g.
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J

judgment	
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K

Koran – Use Quran	
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L

Legislation	<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Prevention of Crime Act (POCA)b. Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA)c. Syariah Criminal Code II 1993 (Amendment 2015)
Licence/license	Licence (noun) is the document, license (verb) is the permission
Listing	

M

Melaka	Not Malacca but it's still Strait of Malacca
Ministry	Use Education Ministry, Finance Ministry, not Ministry of Education, Ministry of Finance

N

Names (<i>see full stop & initials</i>)	For names after designations, no comma after designation: Prime Minister (no comma) Ismail Sabri Yaakob or XZY managing editor (NO comma) Ali Ahmad Mohamad Sabu is Mohamad in second mention
Negri Sembilan	Not Negeri Sembilan
Numbers (<i>see figures</i>)	

O

opposition	Lower case, e.g. “The opposition”, not “The Opposition”
Orang Asal	This term refers to the indigenous tribes of Malaysia. It is to be distinguished from Orang Asli, who are rooted in the peninsula.
Over	Use “more than” instead of over. E.g. for more than 10 months, he was jobless

P

Parliament	Example: Malaysia’s Parliament houses parliamentarians, each of whom must be elected to a parliamentary seat to gain entry to Parliament
Peninsula/peninsular	The peninsula Peninsular (adjective) Malaysia
Percent	Use %, not word
Persian Gulf	Some Arab states object to the term, mostly due to their rivalry with and anxiety about Iran. They prefer the term “Arabian Gulf”. In events or programmes that involve the Saudis and Emiratis, use the term “Persian Gulf” sparingly – or avoid it altogether.



Plural (<i>see earlier notes</i>)	Bahasa Malaysia words such as imam, ulama are now commonly used. At this point though, do not ascribe plural forms to them. So, if 10 imam say something, heading should read, “Imam ask for raise” water cannon, water cannons are both acceptable, but we will go with the former, i.e. water cannon Police are, have...
Political parties	Barisan Nasional (BN) Bersatu MCA MIC Pas Pakatan Harapan (PH) Pejuang PKR Umno
Possessive nouns (<i>see earlier notes on apostrophes</i>)	For common singular nouns, e.g. boss, witness, virus, use boss’, witness’, virus’ For proper nouns, e.g. Chris, James, use Chris’, James’ For plural nouns, e.g. dogs, ships, use dogs’, ships’
Practice/Practise	Practice is a noun/thing Practise is a verb/action
Programme	Not program
Proper nouns	Sg Tapah, not Tapah River Pulau Perhentian, not Perhentian Island

Q

QUAD	All caps because there’s an English word ‘quad’
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R

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ringgit (lower case)	RM200 not RM 200
RoS	Registry of Societies (not Registrar of Societies)
Rukun Negara	Not Rukunegara

S

Sea of Japan	South Korea prefers to use the term “East Sea” as a substitute for or in addition to “Sea of Japan”. The Japanese are prickly about this. Texts and maps in all publications should state “Sea of Japan” in the first instance.
shariah (lower case)	
Shia	Not Syiah
smartphone	
socio	socioeconomic
South China Sea	Avoid using terms have been deliberately formulated to advance the claims of individual states, such as the West Philippine Sea, East Sea or North Natuna Sea.
SOP	standard operating procedure
Strait	Strait of Malacca or Malacca Strait. Strait of Hormuz or the Hormuz Strait. There is only one strait. Plural “straits” example – the Straits of Malacca and Singapore.

T

telecommunication industry	
Territorial disputes	Use this term carefully. Territorial disputes can only occur over land (including islands) and the territorial sea, where countries can claim



	sovereignty. Countries only have “sovereign rights” over the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) and the continental shelf. Where an overlapping claim is only over the EEZ and/or continental shelf, there is a jurisdictional dispute, not a territorial one.
Time	5pm, not 5 pm or 5.00pm or 5:00pm, etc.
Titles	<p>Which comes first? The awarded title or the earned? It’s the former. If the person is a doctor: Tan Sri Dr XXXXX</p> <p>Note though, this is only for earned titles, e.g. something gotten through academic endeavour</p> <p>In other situations, for e.g. a rank or post, it will read differently. In the case of a professor who receives an award, his/her name should read: Professor Datuk XXXXX. Or a serviceman: Admiral Tan Sri</p> <p>Note: No other titles are used, e.g. Mr Ahmad Hamidi, Ms Joyce Lo, Miss Lavinia Devin</p>

W

Websites	in text: without http://
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Z

zones	Eastern Sabah Safety Zone (Esszone) Eastern Sabah Security Command (Esscom)
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