

# THE TVO TRIBESMEN

## OFFICIAL WRITING STYLE GUIDE (2021)

### I. INTRODUCTION

At TVO Tribe, telling the African stories is a crucial part of our existence, but even more important to us is telling these stories with precision, organisation and excellence thus the need for a consistent, standard and novel writing style that encourages coherence, unity and appreciates uniformity.

It is not just simply imperative but mandatory for all TVO Tribe reports, articles, monographs, manuscripts and other pieces of writing to follow this style guide to the letter, putting in mind the importance of maintaining good writing gradients and standards.

***TVO Tribe Editor***

***Dayo Oluyide***

*February 2021*

## II. GENERAL GUIDELINES

The following guidelines shall apply to all pieces of writing carried out by any member of TVO Tribe in relation to or for TVO Tribe or in association with anything TVO Tribe. These guidelines will on a basis of compulsion be followed to full effect and will remain the only set of guidelines adopted unless stated otherwise in this document.

### Use of English

- [1] The intellectual content of any TVO Tribe write-up must be presented in proper English, and in styles appropriate to the type of writing (e.g. poems in stanzas, prose in paragraphs).
- [2] The United Kingdom (UK) spelling system must be used; no piece of work must adopt any other spelling system nor multiple spelling systems in a piece of work.
- [3] Typographical errors should be thoroughly avoided. Pieces or write-ups found to contain more than a minimum number of typographical errors will be considered very poorly written and might require a re-write or rejected outrightly. As a result, TVO Tribesmen are advised to proof read their writings carefully themselves, even before the in-house editors further vet such pieces.

### Formatting Consistency

- [4] All texts should be formatted consistently throughout in line with the provisions of these guidelines.

### Margins

- [5] Typing shall allow the following margins on all pages, including pages containing pictures, diagrams, or charts:

<i>Left</i>	<i>1.25 inches</i>
<i>Right</i>	<i>1.0 inch</i>
<i>Top</i>	<i>1.0 inch</i>
<i>Bottom</i>	<i>1.0 inch</i>

### Line spacing

[6] Text shall be typed double line spaced on all pages, including headings, sub-headings and other sections of any work.

### **Paragraphing**

[7] Paragraphing shall be done consistently using only one of the following methods:

- (a) Left indentation of the first line of the paragraph only, or
- (b) Paragraphs separated with one double line blank space or one blank line space (block paragraphing).
- (c) On no circumstance must any piece of writing contain both of these styles in the text(s) of the work.

### **Page Numbering**

[8] Page numbers must always be placed at the bottom centre.

[9] Initial pages, including forewords, prologues, dedication, acknowledgement, summary or abstract of any work must be numbered using lower case Roman numerals (i.e., i, ii ...)

### **Fonts**

[10] Fonts used should be Arial or Calibri (both can't be used in a piece of writing), with the following font sizes and appearances for the different parts or sections of any work:

**(a) Headings**

*16 points, Bold, Uppercase, Centred*

**(b) Sub- Headings for: Prose, Poetry, Articles, Magazines, Reports, Monographs, Reviews,**

*14 points, Uppercase, Bold, Centred*

**(c) Body of Work**

Lower case with initial letters of first and all key words capitalized; all other words will remain in lower case.

Keywords may include: Names, Countries, Titles, Objects or Places of historical significance and abbreviations of Organisations (e.g. the UN, NATO)

*12 points, Bold, Flushed left*

**(d) Paragraph of text**

*12 points, Normal font*

**(e) Page numbers**

*12 points, Normal font*

### III. OTHER RULES AND GUIDELINES

- ❖ Where not indicated, follow the *Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary and Webster's Manual for Writers and Editors*. Whenever in doubt, refer to Amy Einsohn, a *Copy-editor's Handbook*.
  
- ❖ **S-spellings throughout** (e.g. analyse', 'revise', 'advise',) as in line with the British Spelling System.
  
- ❖ **Accessibility:** bear in mind that the text should be intelligible and comprehensible to a well-informed reader outside the field –even to a novice reader. In essence:
  - (a. ) that the texture should not be too technical, and
  - (b. ) that the arguments and linkages between them should be clear.
  
- ❖ **Jargons** should be translated; technical language doesn't have to be, even though it might require explaining. This also rubs on to significant social, political and economic concepts.
  
- ❖ **Both abbreviations and contractions** take a full point, as in: Mr.; Dr.; the Revd. John. *No. (as in number) takes a full point as well.*
  
- ❖ **Initials and organizations, etc.:** would not be written with full points and must be in all caps—the UN, EU, NEPAD, UNHCR, ASEAN etc. Regardless of the assumed familiarity of the reader with the following organisations: EU, NATO, OPEC, ADB, WTO, NGO, ICC, CIA, WHO, IMF, initials will be used only after

spelling out the full text the first time, thereafter, acronyms can be used e.g.: ‘the Economic Commission for West African States (ECOWAS), the regional...’.

Always use uppercase for acronyms, not lcc, Ecowas, etc. If an organization appears only once, don’t bother to give its acronym in parentheses, just use it in full. This applies particularly in book reviews.

### ❖ Dates and Numbers

- 13 January 2021; in footnotes save space by abbreviating months, e.g. 13 Jan. 2021.
- 1980s (no apostrophe, and not ‘the eighties’);
- 2006–2008; 1990–1997, 2012–2013 (2012–13 is fine with footnotes); 1999–2001 (use en-dash);

*PS: The rule is to use the fewest possible digits compatible with clarity;*

- Use 10 per cent in text, but 10% in figures and tables;
- Spell out numbers from one to ten, figures thereafter. Except for names of centuries on aesthetic grounds, e.g. seventeenth, twentieth century (twentieth-century if it’s an adjective).
- Always spell out high round numbers when writing a literature, as opposed to a mathematical context;
- Always spell out units of measurement (centimetres, milligrams etc.) in text but abbreviate (km, kg) in in statistical functions
- Use commas in thousands: 7,885.

- Always hyphenate figures in adjectives or adjectival measurements: a 20,000-pound cargo.
  
- ❖ **Uppercase:** Uppercase should be used within the text(s) only when absolutely necessary. **The** meat, **Nigerian** government, or otherwise in lower case, romantic musings, presidential elections, parliamentary (but the Parliament when referring to a particular individual).
  
- ❖ **Book Titles:** upper cases are preserved for titles, e.g. *Half Of A Yellow Sun*.
  
- ❖ **Journal and Newspaper Titles:** All text for journal and newspapers titles should be preserved; e.g. *The Daily Times*, *Genevieve*, (but all should be in italics).
  
- ❖ **Places:** Country, State capitals and geo=political zones should be preserved in upper cases (e.g. London, Accra, Lagos, Ibadan, South West; North East); Always capitalize global political concepts or entities, e.g. North–South, East–West, the Far East, the Middle East, North Africa, Central-Africa; lowercase for all other geographical and regional designations: central and eastern Europe, west European, central Asia, eastern Nigeria.
  
- ❖ **United Kingdom/United States:** Always spell out the first time, subsequently, they can be written as; ‘America’, ‘England’ or ‘Britain, (but written as USA).

- ❖ **Countries**, ships (and other vehicles) should be referred to as 'her' and not it.
  
- ❖ **Quotations**: single quotation marks should be used when quoting a single word. Doubles should be used for quotations with multiple or statements. Original punctuation should be preserved.
  
- ❖ **En-rules and hyphens**: en-rules should be used between words when the association means 'and', 'to' or 'between': e.g. German–British; the 1914–18 war.
  - **En-rule**: US–Russia relations; India-Pakistan Feud; East–West; Greek–Turkish conflict; relations.
  - **Hyphen**: Anglo-Spanish relationship; Czech-Slovakia split; post-industrial; ratios.
  
- ❖ **Roman**; all articles, chapter titles, unpublished works and theses, with quotation marks must be preserved in roman numerals.
  
- ❖ **Legal cases**: names of plaintiffs and defendants must be written in italics, 'x.', in roman numerals, followed by year in parentheses.