BCCAT Style Guide

1. HEADINGS AND TEXT

Examples of appropriate heading styles for 3 different levels are provided below. Heading levels should be distinct – in font size, style, etc.

- # Main Heading
- ## Section Headings
- ### *Body Copy Headings*

Most body content should resemble this [paragraph], there may be content that requires unique styling but the majority of the body copy text will look like this (e.g. size 10 or larger, normally sans serif.)

2. REPORT CONTENTS

TITLE PAGE – Including main title, author, organization, and date.

TABLE OF CONTENTS – List titles of chapters in the Table of Contents (TOC) as they appear in the body of the report. If your report is less than 20 pages, a TOC is unnecessary.

TABLES AND FIGURES – A list of these should be included (separate from the TOC) if there are several. If there are only a few, these may be provided at the end of the TOC.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY – The executive summary provides a concise synopsis of the research issue, the main findings or results, conclusions, the significance of the research, and recommendations. Limit the length of the executive summary to no more than four pages. (It is up to the author whether or not to include an executive summary, although it is strongly advised for larger papers.)

INTRODUCTION – The introduction serves as the report's first chapter. The introduction addresses the research issue, the historical background of the research problem, research goals, the basic approach to the project, and the report organization. Unlike the executive summary, it does not include research results, conclusions, or recommendations.

REPORT BODY – The organization and content of the report body depend largely on the nature of the project. Most include a background of the research problem, the approach and methods, an analysis of the results, conclusions and recommendations for implementation and further testing. Organize

the report body in chapters, with each chapter starting on its own page. The introduction would serve as the first chapter of the report.

CITATIONS – Include only those references in the reference section that you cite in the report; include other references as part of a bibliography. For guidelines regarding citation formatting, see:
- The *APA Style for Citing (7th Edition)*
  https://apastyle.apa.org/instructional-aids/reference-guide.pdf
- The *APA Style Guide,* based on the 6th Edition, as used by the University of Victoria
  https://www.uvic.ca/hsd/socialwork/assets/docs/APA%20Style%20Guide%20Libraries.pdf

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS – The acknowledgement page recognizes the individuals and/or organizations significantly contributed to the project. Keep acknowledgements to one page. The acknowledgement page normally comes before the Table of Contents and the executive summary.

APPENDICES – Appendices consist of material that supports the report but isn't critical in understanding project results. Appendices follow the report body. Appendices should be labelled by letter (A, B, C…) and the appendix title. Sub-sections of appendices should be numbered (e.g. A-1, A-2, etc.)

3. GRAPHICS

Please place graphics either immediately after they appear in the text, at the end of the applicable chapter, or in the appendix section.

Embed graphics in the page on which you intend them to appear in the report; do not use object links to other files.

If the graphics were created elsewhere, please provide the source files to BCCAT for design and layout production purposes. Source file names should correspond with the naming of the graphic within the main document.

Please include brief captions to describe the graphic, and number as appropriate, using a two-number format to indicate the section or chapter number (e.g., Figure 1.1 is the first figure in Chapter 1.)

4. OTHER NOTES

- Define abbreviations, acronyms, and symbols the first time they appear, and then use the abbreviation in additional uses.

- For text that will be designed for publication in Adobe InDesign, don't worry about fonts, margins, etc., but please make sections and headers distinct.

- Use the Oxford commas in lists (e.g., apples, oranges, and bananas)
- Put ONE space only between sentences

- Hyphenate compound adjectives (e.g., first-year programs)

- No periods in acronyms (BCCAT, BC)

- Use *active* rather than passive voice
  (Not – "the handbook was designed"; but "we designed the handbook")

- Break up long sections of text into smaller chunks (short, concise sentences and paragraphs)

- Use headings and sub-headings, as well as bulleted and numbered lists, to assist those who skim.

- Seasons representing academic terms should *not* be capitalized (e.g., fall 2023)

- Use "and" instead of ampersand (&), unless there is a good reason (e.g., part of an official title)

- Where contractors are involved, they should be named.
- Dates: for month/year do not use comma (March 2023); however, if specifying a day as well, use a comma (March 26, 2023)

- Enclose punctuation within quotes. (e.g., When she said "I'm not going," I was disappointed.)
- Where introductory text is five words or longer, use a comma. (e.g., "As we review the progress made in 2005-06, ….."). Commas may also be used for shorter introductory phrases, if deemed appropriate.

- Titles of documents, conferences, or presentations should be italicized.

- Write out in full numbers below ten (five-year, rather than 5-year). Use digits for numbers above ten (15).

- For years, use dash instead of slash (2020-21)