

## Specific stylistic points for *Palaeontology* and *Papers in Palaeontology*

**a**

*Abbreviations and acronyms.*

- Should be used as little as possible, and not at all in headings or the abstract
- Common terms do not need explanation (e.g. DNA, SEM, TEM)
- Others should be explained at first mention or collected together in a separate section in the text
- No full points required in acronyms (e.g. USA, NHM, IGCP, IUGS, ODP)
- Most abbreviations are lower case and do take a full point (e.g., ed., etc., fig., i.e., pers. comm.); exceptions include MSc, PhD, units of measurement (m, km) and (on figures only) sst, mdst, 1st and Fm
- Note that contractions such as pls, figs, chars and Dr do not take a full point
- Authors' own invented abbreviations are not recommended (e.g. the North Sea Basin (NSB))

*Acknowledgements.* Heading spelling as shown (not acknowledgments); should be as brief and direct as possible

*American spelling.* Use British spelling only (e.g. colour, not color; grey, not gray)

*Analyse*

*Approximately.* Use *c.* (for *circa*; not *ca.* or *~*)

**b**

*Boundaries.* Use an en rule to indicate a boundary (e.g. Coniacian–Santonian not Coniacian/Santonian)

*Biozones.* Use an initial capital in formal names, but not when referring to multiple zones (e.g.

*'linearis* Biozone', but *'linearis* and *tenuis* biozones')

*Biota.* Lower case 'b': e.g. Chengjiang biota

**c**

*Circa.* Use the abbreviation *c.* to indicate approximations of time and measurements.

*Citations.* Should take the form:

- Smith 2012
- Smith & Jones 2012
- Smith *et al.* 2012
- Smith 2012, 2013; Jones 2014
- Smith 2013*a, b*
- A. Smith, pers. comm. [year]
- AS, pers. obs. [with or without date]
- A. Smith, unpub. data [year]

See also *Authors of taxa*

No dated citations to be included in the abstract or title

*Character (taxonomic).*

Abbreviate to char. in parentheses

*Consecutive numbers and letters.* Use an en rule for ranges; comma for two consecutive; no & (e.g. 1, 2; 1–3; A, B; A, B–D). Exceptions may occur for clarity (e.g. Fig. 1A–B, 2E).

*Contractions.* These are shortened forms of words that include the final letter; they should not have a following full point (e.g. pls, figs, Dr)

*Comma:* a comma before 'and' (known as the Oxford comma or serial comma) is unnecessary but may be used in lengthy lists or to avoid ambiguity

*Compass points.* In the text these should be spelled out in lower case and hyphenated (e.g. north-east, not NE). Upper case initial letters should be used only when the area referred to is a widely recognized geographical region or political division (e.g. the Far

East, North Korea, but west Wales and southern England). Lower case, hyphen for north-western etc.

*Cross references.* References to other parts of the text should be given as 'above', 'below' or 'in the systematic section' etc.

**d**

*Dashes.* Sentences should be constructed so that commas, parentheses, semicolons and colons are used, not dashes

*Decimal points.* Should be online (e.g. 1.4, not 1·4). Commas should not be used as decimal markers

*Degrees.* Use symbol (e.g. 46°C; 20° 15' 20" N; 30° W)

*Dataset.* Not data set

**e**

*e.g.* The abbreviations *e.g.* and *i.e.* are not followed by a comma

*Enrolment.* Not enrollment

*En rule.* Should be used for ranges of numbers or in time (e.g. 4–6, Cambrian–Ordovician)

*et.* Not italic when used in 'gen. et sp. nov.' for example

*Etymology.* Use 'Derivation of name' as a systematic heading

*Equation.* Abbreviate to Eqn in brackets

**f**

*Fetus*

*Focused.* Not focussed

*Footnotes.* Are not allowed in main text; only in tables

*For example/that is.* Use full terms in main text (within parentheses, the abbreviations *e.g.* and *i.e.* are not followed by a comma)

*Formation.* Hith Formation but Hith and Rayda formations (see also Zone)

*Fractions.* Should be written out (one-quarter, three-fifths) or expressed using decimal points (e.g. 0.25–0.75 µm)

## **g**

*Geological.* Not geologic

*Geological Society, London, Special Publications*

*Greater than and less than.*

Symbols > and < may only accompany scaled measurements (e.g. > 40 m)

## **h**

*h.* Is preceded by the indefinite article 'an' only when it is not pronounced; hence, an hour but a history

*Headings.* Three levels in main text; no numbering; additional style for systematic section

*Hemisphere.* Lower case initials: northern and southern hemispheres

*Hyphens.* Use an en-rule (–) rather than a hyphen (-) where ranges of time or numbers are intended.

## **i**

*i.e.* The abbreviations e.g. and i.e. are not followed by a comma

*Inverted commas/quotation marks.* Single inverted commas ('...') should encompass words that are used in an unconventional way and direct quotations; the latter must be accompanied by a page reference to the article concerned.

*-ize.* Not '-ise' where alternative spellings exist. Exceptions include: advertise, advise, comprise, expertise, precise, revise, treatise.

*Italics.* May be used sparingly for emphasis. In italicized headings, words that would normally appear in italics should be roman (e.g. *Life of Homo sapiens*). Latin terms should be usually be italic unless they are generally used in English (see *Latin words and*

*abbreviations*). Use italics for variables, mathematical constants and probabilities (e.g.  $p = 001$ ).

## **j**

## **k**

*ka.* Refers to thousands of years ago. Use kyr to indicate a number of years.

*Konservat-Lagerstätte.* (plural Lagerstätten). Should be in roman, not italic font.

## **l**

*Lacrimal.* Not lachrymal

*Lagerstätte.* (plural Lagerstätten)

*Latin words and abbreviations.* Italicize terms such as *et al.*, *incertae sedis*, *in situ*, *inter alia*, *nomen nudum* (*nom. nud.*), *sensu stricto* (*s.s.*), *sensu lato* (*s. l.*) and *sic*, but not *aff.*, *cf.*, *e.g.*, *etc.*, *gen. nov.*, *ibid.*, *i.e.*, *sp. nov.*, *versus* (*vs*) or *vice versa*

*Likely.* In the British sense, something is likely to result or something will probably result in; *not* something will likely result in

*Litre.* Use lower case l (e.g. 1l)

*Longitude and latitude.* 57° 9' 45.01"N, 6° 6' 15.56" W

## **m**

*Ma.* Refers to millions of years ago; use myr for a number of millions of years

*Manuscripts in preparation or in review.* Not to be included in final manuscript; use 'unpub. data' and the relevant author (not all authors on a submitted manuscript will own the data referred to)

*Maps.* Should have an indication of latitude and longitude, and where appropriate a scale in m or km; a north arrow may be added for clarity

*Mathematics and theorems.* Generally not capitalized unless they include a proper name

*Metric units.* Abbreviate to mm, cm, m, km where they are include a value (e.g. 5 m, but it was several metres away); cm is not a standard (SI) unit but is widely used

*Middle.* Use 'middle' when referring to chronostratigraphical (time), and geochronological (rock) units

*Millilitre.* Use ml

*Modelled.* Not modeled

*Mould.* not mold

*Modern Synthesis.* Upper case initials

## **n**

*Nomenclatural citations.* Should include a comma before the date (e.g. *Megalophthalma ockerti* Schoch *et al.*, 2014). They should be accompanied by a full reference.

*Numbers.* Words rather than figures should be used for numbers up to and including ten, and those that start a sentence (also first, sixth etc.). Exceptions: ranges (e.g. 4–6 rather than four to six; note use of en rule rather than hyphen); where lists of numbered items would result in a mix, e.g. 4 vertebrate; 20 invertebrate; 6 plant species.

## **o**

*Online.* Not on-line

*Online publication.* References that are published online ahead of a print publication should be cited as published; include exact publication date and doi in the reference (see [Reference Examples](#) document). If a reference has both online and print publications, use the print details (unless it is a nomenclatural citation, in which case the online date should be used).

## p

*Palaeogene*

*Palaeontological*. Not palaeontologic

*Paleocene*. (= Pal + Eocene)

*Parentheses*. Place a full stop before the closing parenthesis when an entire sentence is enclosed, but following the closing parenthesis when it encompasses less than a full sentence

*Per cent*. Use % when accompanied by a digit

*Personal communications*. Abbreviate to pers. comm. followed by the date. Usually the year is sufficient (e.g. A. Smith, pers. comm. 2002) or (pers. comm. 2002 to WJK) if to one of the authors in a multi-authored paper.

*Personal observations*. Abbreviate to pers. obs., with the addition of an author's initials if the observation was made by only one of the contributors to a multi-authored paper (e.g. PJS, pers. obs.); the year may also be added if deemed appropriate (e.g. PJS, pers. obs. 2002).

*Platy*

*PLoS One*

*Post mortem*. But post-mortem damage.

*Post-temporal*. Not posttemporal

*p.p.* (*pro parte*) not used for dates; use range instead even if not entire end members included

## q

*Quotations*. Should be verbatim unless translated (in which case this should be indicated) and accompanied by a page reference; the quotation mark at the end of a quotation should

come before all other punctuation marks unless these form part of the quotation

*Quotation marks*: should be single ('...') and not double ("...").

## r

*Ranges*. In ranges, an en rule should be spaced where the period of time is modified by adjectives (e.g. Paleocene–Eocene (closed up en rule), but Early Paleocene – Eocene (spaced) and Early Paleocene – Early Eocene (spaced)). It may be better to use 'to' rather than a spaced en rule.

*References to single authors in multi-authored works*. e.g. 'Smith in Brown *et al.* (2011)' or 'Smith (*in Brown et al.* 2011)' if citing a statement in the text, and 'Smith, *in Brown & Smith 2011*', if concerning a taxon.

## s

*Sensu stricto, sensu lato*. Use abbreviations *s.s.* and *s.l.*

[*sic*] in italics, square brackets

*Shaly*

*Spacing*. A space should be inserted between distance and unit (e.g. 30 m, not 30m) also between an author's initials in the text and references (e.g. P. J. Smith, not P.J.Smith or P.J. Smith, and SMITH, P. J., not SMITH,P.J. or SMITH, P.J.)

*Specimens*. Repository (e.g. museum) letter codes normally prefix a specimen number; these should accompany all references to specimens unless it is clearly stated that only one repository is involved or there can be no confusion as to which institution houses the material

*Spelling*. Must be British English (e.g. colour (not color); grey (not gray); mould (not mold); artefact

(not artifact)). Where alternatives exist, use '-ize' rather than '-ise' (e.g. standardize). NB analyse, Paleocene.

*Stratigraphical divisions*. Use an upper case initial only when a division is formally recognized (e.g. Upper Jurassic, but upper Tithonian and upper Permian)

## t

*Tenses*. Use the past tense in references to all previous work (e.g. Smith (2012) stated that...)

*Time*. Use ka or Ma for thousands and millions of years ago respectively; 'millions of years' may be abbreviated to myr

*Time/rock nomenclature*. Distinguish between events that took place in the past (early, middle, late) and what is preserved today in the lower, middle and upper parts of a rock succession

*Through*. Avoid using as there is a difference between American (to the end of) and British (until) usage.

## u

*Unorthodox words or usages*. Use quotation marks (e.g. 'fossil forest') at the first instance

*Unpublished data*. Cite as 'A. Smith, unpub. data 2013'.

## v

*Variables*. In italics

*Version*. Use the abbreviation v. for software versions

*Versus*. vs

## w x y

## z

*Zone*. As for formations, *Pterospathodus celloni* Zone but *P. celloni* and *P. amorphognathoides* zones