

# Loop

# Reference

# Manual



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# Contacts

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# Deadlines

LOOP is a publication in a newspaper so it is essential we are committed to delivering a high standard of work, that we are professional in our dealings with others and take the responsibilities of meeting all deadlines extremely seriously.

If there are any issues that arise with deadlines please contact Matt or Damian immediately.

Loop is published the last Wednesday of every month. Below is the timeframe we need to work to.

## Timeframe

- All submissions need to be firstly received by Matt at [projectofficer@dvc.tas.gov.au](mailto:projectofficer@dvc.tas.gov.au) Writers should include their name and contact details on every article.
- After checking, Matt sends them to Damian. He will go over them and where necessary send them back to the writers with feedback and suggestions.
- Loop editors then make the amendments and decide which articles are to be used in the issue
- Damian does the layout and design of each page
- Loop editors send final drafts of all material to Damian by two (2) Wednesdays before the Loop publishing date. Email to Damian at [besterd@dbl.newsltd.com.au](mailto:besterd@dbl.newsltd.com.au) or [damianbester@gmail.com](mailto:damianbester@gmail.com)
- Feedback and draft page from Damian will be received by the following Friday which will include any amendments to be made.
- Final copy needs to be submitted to Damian by the Wednesday before publishing.
- Loop published the following Wednesday.

### **For example**

The publishing day is Wednesday, October 28.

Final drafts of all material is to be sent to Damian by Wednesday, October 14.

Feedback and draft page from Damian received by Friday, October 16. You will have five days until Wednesday, October 21 to make any changes and submit final copy to Damian.

The page then appears in *The Gazette* on Wednesday, October 28.

## What are the different roles?

- Writers, journalists
- Photographers
- Editors

## What are the different teams?

### Editing team

- Editors, responsible for:
  - Going through all submissions and selecting for publishing
  - Editing and proofreading content
  - Liaising with the Mercury and council
  - Ensuring deadlines are met

### Contributors' team:

- Journalists & photographers responsible for:
  - Submitting articles and photographs for monthly publication by due deadline
  - Communicating with editing team

## When are meetings held?

LOOP meetings are generally held each Friday afternoon at 5.30pm in the youth participation office at the Derwent Valley Council Chambers in Circle St, New Norfolk. All team members are encouraged to attend these meetings for discussions about upcoming articles, feedback on articles written, and general discussions about the project. Peer appraisal is an important part of the project.

- Apologies for meetings:
  - Loop members agree to notify Matt Hill **at least one hour beforehand** if they are unable to attend a Loop meeting and/or project, including an explanation of the reason they cannot attend.

# News writing

## What's making news?

The content, layout and design of Loop page may vary but in general the team will need to provide about three main stories on the page and one or two photos. For example, this could be:

- A lead story, sometimes with a photo (about 300-400 words)
- A smaller "picture story" (about 200-300 words)
- A third story (about 100-200 words)
- Vox Pops

It's important to keep the articles relevant and current. This is an important factor to consider when planning your page. Will the stories you write still be current when the page is published? For the purpose of the Loop page there are no word limits. However, the common instruction to journalists is only to use as many words as is absolutely necessary.

## Aspects of journalistic style

The editorial content (the written articles) of the Loop page is important. The articles should be written briefly using short sentences and simple language. Most news articles should contain a quote from a person involved in the story.

## News writing

A news story is designed to inform the reader of something in a crisp, concise, easily-read way. Just like in the *Mercury*, news stories for the Loop page should be kept short. Each paragraph should develop a single thought and one-sentence paragraphs should be used where possible.

- Keep sentences short but vary their lengths
- Check and re-check your facts
- Always use both first and second names in the first reference (i.e. The principal, Mrs Mary Jones) and be absolutely sure of the spelling. Do you know how many ways there are to spell Smith?
- Where possible, try to use quotes (i.e. "Lunch hours will be extended to 90 minutes next term," Mrs Jones said.)
- Be fair and accurate and don't let your own views creep into the story. Only columnists and editorial writers are supposed to give opinions
- Avoid starting every sentence with "the"
- Avoid clichés like the plague. (Think about this for a moment)
- Don't start writing until you are certain you understand the whole story. If you're in doubt, go back and re-check your information
- Don't use big words when shorter words will do just as well.

**Please remember:** The Loop should contain mainly news stories about what is happening in your school or community. It should not be an anthology of poems or creative writing.

## The famous Five Ws (and one H)

The first sentence or two of a news story is called the Lead or Intro. There are many forms of leads, but the most common is the Five W or summary lead. This is so named because it summarises the story. It is the best approach for student news reporters. Here is a typical news story lead:

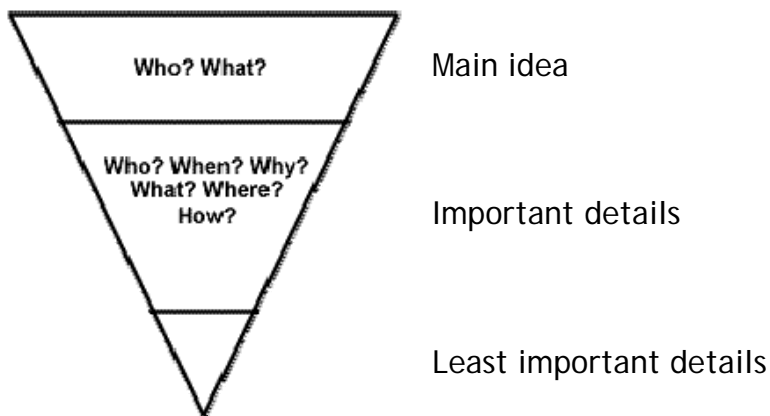
*A New Norfolk man was injured on Tuesday when his car skidded off a wet road and hit a concrete bridge foundation, three kilometres west of Plenty.*

Find the 5 Ws

<b>WHO</b>	A New Norfolk man
<b>WHAT</b>	was injured
<b>WHEN</b>	Tuesday
<b>WHERE</b>	Three kilometres west of Plenty
<b>WHY/HOW</b>	His car skidded off a wet road

## Inverted pyramid style

The majority of newspaper articles are written in what is called the “inverted pyramid” style. As the diagram shows, this means the most important facts appear at the top of the story. Explanatory information and other details are then added in declining order of importance.



There are two reasons for this:

- Not everybody has the time and interest to read every word in every story. If the main facts are in the headline and first part of the story, people can be quite well informed without reading right to the end.
- Before computers were used to produce newspapers, stories that were too long had to be physically “cut” to fit the available space. Even with modern technology, it is still likely that the end of the story will be cut first.

Please note: The end of a story is also important for the reader who reads right through. Look at a number of stories in the *Mercury* and consider the importance of a strong concluding sentence.

Loop writers are welcome to contact Damian Bester at any time for further advice about writing for the Loop page. This includes sending draft articles for assessment or comment, if desired.

## Photographs

UNLIKE online publications and school newsletters, newspapers require high-resolution photos with a large file size.

- This means:
  - 
  - 300dpi
  - 1-2 megabytes file size
  - Most modern digital cameras produce acceptable images when set to the highest setting
  - Photos should not be digitally altered before sending to the Gazette/Mercury

TO prevent errors in identification, the following principles should be followed

- Change the photo's file name (such as IMG001) to a new name including the details of the people in the image, such as: Matt Hill and Damian Bester
- Provide the full details of the photo caption in the same email as the accompanying article

## Vox Pops

THE vox pop or "Street Talk" section of the Loop page will generally include six photographs, but it is possible that not all may be published. Reasons could include a poor photograph or an unacceptable comment.

- This means:
  - Photographing six individual people
  - Focusing on the person's head and shoulders (a "head shot") rather than a photo of their whole body
  - Having only one person in each photo (if someone insists on having their child/sibling/grandchild etc in the photo with them, be sure to ask the extra person's name, age and locality)
  - Asking a question that will encourage an interesting answer (avoid Yes or No answers)
  - Asking each person's name, age and locality (New Norfolk, Moogara etc)
  - If a person provides an unsuitable answer or pulls a silly face in their photo etc, thank them for their time and move on.