

Search Engine Optimisation Checklist

On-page Factors for Search Engine Optimisation

1. Research Your Keywords

Identify the target keywords which your users are likely to enter into a search engine when searching for your site with:

- [Google Sandbox](#)
- [Overture Keyword Selector](#)
- [UniqStats Search Strings](#) (Login required)
- [Hitwise Competitor Intelligence](#) (Login required)

2. Checklist

Page Content	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Use the targeted keywords in your page content several times as well as semantically linked words.	
Use the targeted keywords in the first paragraph	
Page URLs	
Targeted keywords are used if possible	
URL is as short and meaningful as possible	
Page Titles (The text displayed in the upper bar of most web browsers)	
Top two or three keywords are used in the title, without repeating them.	
Title is descriptive of page content	
Title is unique	
Title is less than 67 characters long	
Metadata	
Meta description:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is unique and describes the page contents in a meaningful sentence • Includes two to three keywords without repeating them • Is between 150 and 200 characters 	
Meta Keywords	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes all keywords without repeating them • Keywords are semantically linked to page content 	
Images	
Relevant keywords are used in the ALT tag	
If you read the ALT tag aloud, it describes the image accurately and succinctly	
Header tags (<H1>, <H2> etc)	
H1 Header tags contain your top keywords and represent your page's main content	
Keywords do not repeat in H1 header tags	
H2, H3 tags denote content of decreasing importance	
Link Label Text	
Link label text describes the destination, using keywords if possible (e.g. " Web and E-Marketing " not " Click Here for Web and E-Marketing")	

Microsite Factors for Search Engine Optimisation

Most of the more technical factors will be looked after by your webmaster and/or Online Services.

However:

- Make sure that every page is linked and working.
 - Pages more than 3 clicks from a landing page/home page may not be found by every search engine.
 - Have a sitemap for each major microsite
 - Regularly check for 404 errors/dead links
- Text embedded in Flash or images cannot yet be read by search engines. Do not embed important text in Flash objects or images.
- Valid HTML and CSS will have a positive impact on search ranking
- Server configuration issues, slow server response times and 301/ 302 redirections can have a detrimental effect on search ranking.

Off-page Factors

Incoming links

- Encourage incoming links from well-respected websites/partner websites. The number of incoming links, the respectability of the linking site and the keywords used in the incoming link text are all very important search ranking factors.

Internal links

- Make sure that every important page in the microsite is accessible via links
- Link to the most important pages more often (e.g. home page; your faculty home page), using appropriate keywords in the link label text.

Further Research

For a recent survey of search ranking factors and their relative importance:

www.seomoz.org/article/search-ranking-factors