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# LA TROBE UNIVERSITY

E D I T O R I A L  
S T Y L E  
G U I D E



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# La Trobe University

## Editorial Style Guide

### Introduction and scope

This is a Style Guide for La Trobe University, produced by the Marketing and Promotions Unit. The guide has been developed as a reference for La Trobe staff to assist them in preparing University publications. This is by no means a definitive guide but rather a reference tool to be used by staff to help maintain consistency in language in non-academic promotional publications and communications.

Broad principles are offered as a guide. In some areas of English usage there are no firm rules. Dictionaries are often in disagreement and usage varies between countries. Some rules that were firm ten years ago have lapsed or changed today. Some usage relies on personal preference or local convention.

This is an attempt to develop consistency across the University, and to remind users of firm rules where they do exist.

As English is a dynamic language, this guide will continue to evolve and be updated as the need arises. Your input to this process is welcome. If you have a query or suggestion regarding spelling or usage, send an email to [dme@latrobe.edu.au](mailto:dme@latrobe.edu.au) marking it 'Editorial Style Guide'.

In developing the guide, we have used the following publications as our primary references:

*Australian Oxford Dictionary*, Oxford University Press 1999  
*Style Manual for Authors, Editors and Printers*, John Wiley and Sons 2002 (referred to as *Commonwealth Style Manual*)  
*Association of Commonwealth Universities Yearbook*

## 1. University terminology

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### The University and its campuses

Wherever space permits, La Trobe University should be written out in full. It should always be written out in full when it is the first reference to the University in the body text. 'La Trobe' should never be broken at a line break.

The subtracted form is 'La Trobe'. Do not use LTU.

For external communications, La Trobe's Australian campuses are written as:

Melbourne (Bundoora)  
Bendigo  
Albury-Wodonga  
Melbourne (City)  
Shepparton  
Mildura  
Beechworth

There may be instances when alphabetical order is more appropriate for internal communications.

For internal communications, Bundoora campus and City campus may be used rather than Melbourne (Bundoora) and Melbourne (City).

Where possible, in each city where La Trobe University has a campus, we should simply use La Trobe University. However, where it is important to identify the particular campus, the campus at Bendigo should be referred to as:

La Trobe University's Bendigo campus

or the Bendigo campus of La Trobe University

or, more informally, La Trobe Bendigo.

Similarly

La Trobe University's Albury-Wodonga campus

or the Albury-Wodonga campus of La Trobe University (not the Wodonga campus)

or La Trobe Albury-Wodonga.

Use lower case 'c' for campus in general text:

The delegation walked around the Bundoora campus.

But use capital 'C' in headings or address blocks:

La Trobe University, Shepparton Campus

PO Box 6044  
Shepparton Vic 3632

On campus. Off campus  
Use two words in 'The rally was held on campus.'  
Hyphenate as an adjective: 'Many on-campus rallies were held during the year.'

Use capital 'U' when referring to La Trobe as 'the University'.\*  
La Trobe University is one of Australia's leading universities. Established in 1967, the University provides undergraduate and postgraduate education to over 27,000 students.

Use small 'u' when talking about universities generally:  
Three Victorian universities offer law courses.

\* There is difference of opinion over this rule which has changed over time. While the Commonwealth *Style Manual* differs on the recommendation above, the University has agreed to retain this convention. A perusal of other university websites indicates that most adopt the capital U in this context.

### **Courses, disciplines, programs, units**

Use upper case for names of courses:  
The Bachelor of Commerce is offered at Shepparton.  
He has just completed the Graduate Diploma in Journalism.

Lower case for disciplines:  
Some students enjoy studying economics, while others prefer sociology.

Lower case for program:  
The law program at La Trobe has an excellent reputation.  
Program, not programme.

Upper case for unit titles:  
The following units are available in first year: Introduction to Finance, Psychiatric Disorders in Health Care, Writing and Editing for Multimedia.

Undergraduate, postgraduate and postdoctoral. Not post graduate or post-graduate, or post-doctoral

Semester 1, Semester 2. Lower case when referring to semesters in general e.g. There are two semesters in the academic year. Or when dropping the numeral e.g. The first semester commences in March.

### **Faculties and departments**

Upper case for specific faculties and departments:  
The Faculty of Education is based at the Bendigo campus. The Faculty is engaging in various promotional activities. The Department of Finance offers courses in...

Lower case for faculties and departments generally:  
La Trobe University has five faculties. The School of Life Sciences has six departments.

## **Titles**

Senior officer titles.

Use a hyphen between 'Vice' and 'Chancellor' and 'Vice' and 'Principal' but not between 'Deputy' and 'Vice' or 'Pro' and 'Vice'.

Vice-Chancellor  
Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)  
Vice-Principal (Resources and Administration)  
Pro Vice-Chancellor (Strategic Development)

Dr is correct. Dr. is incorrect. (See rule at point 3. below.)

Professor should be spelled out in full. The abbreviation 'Prof.' should only be used if there is a lack of space. It may be appropriate in lengthy lists.

In formal verbal communications, Professors and Emeritus Professors are addressed as Professor.

Associate Professor is a position title not a personal title.

Therefore:

Dr Ann Brown, Associate Professor of Communication

Not:

Associate Professor Ann Brown

Avoid Assoc. Prof. and Assoc/Prof. and A/Prof.

With respect to University committees, avoid gender where possible. The term 'Chairman' should be replaced with 'Chair' or 'Chairperson' or 'Convenor' or another gender-neutral term.

## **2. Qualifications**

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Qualifications are listed in the following sequence:

Honours (conferred by the Crown or by governments)

Academic qualifications awarded by academic institutions

Memberships/Fellowships of learned institutions/professional bodies

e.g. Mrs S.J. Walton AO, DipEd, BA *Syd.*, BEd *La Trobe*, MA *Syd.*, FRGS, FACE, FAPC, FACL, MAICD

Academic qualifications are listed from the lowest to highest.

Degrees do not require full stops:  
(BA, PhD)  
but institutions do:  
(Melb., Lond., Oxf.)

Some conventions repeat the awarding institution if it is listed more than once:  
e.g. BA Melb., BCom *Melb.*, MEd *La Trobe*, PhD *La Trobe*

Some conventions use brackets rather than italics for the awarding institution:  
BA (Melb.), BCom (Melb.), MEd (La Trobe), PhD (La Trobe)

The La Trobe preferred convention is:  
Use italics for institution.  
Do not repeat institution except to maintain lowest to highest order:

Mr P.F. Smith, DipEd, BA *Syd.*, BEd, MA *La Trobe*, PhD *Syd.*

### **3. Abbreviations and contractions**

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Include a full stop after these commonly used abbreviations:  
the Hon., fig.1, ed., Vic., etc., et al., no. 3 (for number 3)

Only one full stop is shown at the end of a sentence, so drop a full stop at the end of:  
There are many student services on campus – medical, legal, childcare, etc.

Punctuation with ‘e.g.’ and ‘i.e.’

Although there is a trend to omit full stops in these abbreviations, this guide recommends retaining them. Do not use a comma after e.g. or i.e. (although a comma is usual after the unabbreviated forms (for example,)).

The rule when contracting words is:

When the final letter of the contraction is the final letter of the original word, do not use a full stop.

Therefore, do not use a full stop after these contractions:

Mr, Mrs, Dr, Rd, dept, Qld, 3rd, eds, edn, extn 9087, Pty Ltd, St Kilda

However, do use a full stop with:

Adel., Mon., Dec., tel., ed.

In line with modern trends, also omit the full stop from:

initials representing organisations – TAFE, ATSIC, RMIT, VTAC, UAC, CSIRO  
some abbreviations of countries and states – USA, UK, NSW, SA  
units of measure – 120 kg, 16 mm, 10 km

## 4. Acronyms

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Acronyms are usually formed from the initial letters of words and are written without full stops. In a document, the name or term is first given in full and then followed by the acronym in brackets. The acronym can then be used freely throughout the text.

For example:

DEST – Department of Education Science and Training (DEST). Then use DEST on second reference and thereafter.

HECS – Higher Education Contribution Scheme

STAT - Special Tertiary Admissions Test

TESOL – Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages

VTAC – Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre

Acronyms are made plural by adding 's' for example, CD-ROMs, NGOs.

## 5. Capitals

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Titles should be capitalised when they appear before or after a name e.g. Professor Joe Smith, Vice-Chancellor.

If you are referring to a specific person, entity or organisation, then use a capital, but if you are referring in a general or generic sense then use lower case:

Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee

but

Five vice-chancellors have formed a committee.

School and department titles should be capitalised when referring to a specific department/centre:

School of Business

Human Resources Division

Course and unit titles should be capitalised:

Bachelor of Arts, Master of Science

Introduction to Statistics, Current Issues in Sociology

Areas of study (disciplines) should appear in lower case except where proper nouns: accounting, biology, business law, Chinese, economics, French

State and federal should be lower case except when referring to State and Federal Government, Federal Parliament.

Indigenous:

Always capitalise 'Indigenous' when it refers to the original inhabitants of Australia,

as in Indigenous Australians. It needs no capitals when used in a general sense to refer to the original inhabitants of other countries, or to indigenous flora, fauna.

While some dictionaries may use capitals for Internet, the Net, World Wide Web, it is becoming common (and acceptable) usage to use lower case and this is the preferred La Trobe usage: internet, world wide web, the web, website.

In general, do not over-capitalise. Words and phrases such as  
international  
information session  
curriculum vitae  
application form  
higher education  
pro forma  
statutes and regulations  
staff  
academic staff  
general staff  
... do not require capitals.

## 6. Headings

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Minimise capitals in headings.  
La Trobe students rally for peace  
Not: La Trobe Students Rally for Peace

Minimise punctuation in headings.

A full stop is not required at the end of headings even if it is a full sentence.

## 7. Ampersand (&) and @

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Generally, the ampersand is used where it is the style of a registered corporate or company name e.g. P&O. It should not be used as a substitute for 'and' in La Trobe titles such as faculty, school, department, discipline and course or subject details. e.g. Department of Economics and Finance, not Economics & Finance

Do not substitute 'at' with @ in text:  
The meeting will be held at midday.  
Not: The meeting will be held @ midday.  
Open Day at La Trobe  
Not: Open Day @ La Trobe

## 8. Apostrophe

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The apostrophe is used to indicate possession with nouns only; the pronouns hers, its, theirs and yours are already possessive and do not need the apostrophe.

Omit an apostrophe from contractions:

Qld not Q'ld, dept not dep't

but retain in

it's, don't, won't, can't, where the contraction involves a second word.

Most shortened words and phrases are made plural simply by adding s, without a preceding apostrophe. Do not use an apostrophe in:

1950s, MPs, POWs, FAQs, paras, figs

Associate's, Bachelor's, and Master's degrees should be written with 's.

When a phrase takes an apostrophe in the singular, it must take one in the plural:

a course of one semester's duration

a course of three semesters' duration

## 9. Hyphens

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Hyphens are used in words with prefixes:

anti-discrimination, non-English speaking, bi-weekly, inter-university

When vowels are doubled-up, the hyphen prevents misreading:

de-emphasise, not deemphasise; re-enter, not reenter

Hyphens are also used with co- and ex- whether or not the word attached begins with a vowel:

co-author, co-requisite, ex-president.

However, the practice is less crucial where words are common. Words such as cooperate, coordinator and prerequisite do not require a hyphen.

Relatively new words such as macroeconomics, email and hyperlink do not require a hyphen, but words that begin with a capital letter after a prefix usually do, e.g. pre-Christian, un-Australian.

In compound adjectives:

Adjectival phrases containing an –ly adverb do not take a hyphen:

a poorly written essay, not a poorly-written essay

a commonly held view, not a commonly-held view

But when the adverb in such a compound does not end in –ly, the expression is usually hyphenated:

a well-known book

And in compound adjectives such as:  
fee-paying students  
decision-making body  
off-campus meeting

For more rules pertaining to hyphens, see the *Commonwealth Style Manual*.

## 10. Dates and times

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Morning or afternoon – 10 am, 5 pm  
However, when writing a list of times that includes half hours, it is acceptable to use two zeros - 10.00 am - for uniformity.

e.g.  
10.00 am–10.30 am  
10.00 am–5.30 pm  
9.30 am–4.00 pm

Do not use a colon in place of a full stop, e.g. 10:30 am. This is American usage.  
Do not use capitals or small capitals for am/pm (also American).  
Full stops in am and pm are not necessary, e.g. a.m.

Dates should be written as day/month/year.

Omit commas from dates:  
Tuesday 7 July – not Tuesday, 7 July  
7 July 2007 – not 7 July, 2007  
Even with four components in a date, commas are not necessary:  
Tuesday 7 July 2007

Avoid 'th', 'st', 'nd' etc.  
4 July 1954, not 4th July 1954  
1 January not 1st January  
2 March not 2nd March and definitely not 2nd of March

1990s – not 1990's

Centuries may be written in words or a mixture of numerals and words:  
the eighteenth century or the 18th century

## 11. Numbers

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In general text, use words for numbers up to one hundred and numerals for words above one hundred:

The lecturer marked eighty-five essays over the weekend.

The lecturer marked 155 essays in semester break.

However, numbers over one hundred may be spelled out if they can be expressed in two words e.g. five hundred, but 399 and 42 500.

Where numbers occur frequently in a sentence or throughout a document, use numerals for numbers over nine, for example:

The meeting was attended by 12 staff and 83 students; in addition 24 alumni attended.

When opening a sentence a number should always be expressed in words: Fifty-seven students attended the rally.

If the number is lengthy:

Six hundred and twenty-one complaints were received  
change it to

The board received 621 complaints.

Use numerals for numbers accompanied by a symbol:

8°C

4 km

10 kg

(A space is required between a numeral and a symbol of measurement but not for the degree symbol.)

Use commas for numbers of five digits or more:

4000 but 26,000.

Write telephone numbers in the following format:

(03) 9479 3500 or, for international audiences, (+61 3) 9479 3500.

Mobiles as 0430 142 683 and 1300 numbers as 1300 135 045.

Internal telephone numbers should be written as extn 3500.

Avoid superscript in numbers: 2nd not 2<sup>nd</sup>.

## 12. Monetary amounts

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Commas have been used traditionally to separate groups of three digits within a larger amount for example, \$100,000.

However, for publications which will be distributed internationally, the international specification of a space as the separator for numbers should be followed; this is because a comma is used as the decimal marker in Europe.

An 'A' should also be added to indicate Australian currency. This is particularly important when listing international student tuition fees:

A\$100 000.

## 13. Quotation marks

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Use single quotation marks when quoting or highlighting a particular word or phrase. Single quotation marks are recommended for Australian government publications in keeping with the trend towards minimal punctuation.

Double quotation marks are then used for quotes within quotes:

'The students greeted the Vice-Chancellor with "three cheers" as the procession began,' she said.

Quotation marks always come after the punctuation:

'The rain in Spain falls mainly on the plain,' he said.

However, if quoting something that is not a full sentence, the quote marks come before the punctuation:

He said the rain in Spain 'falls mainly on the plain'.

## 14. Lists

---

Use minimal punctuation in a dot-point series:

- Use a colon after the lead-in sentence and avoid using semicolons after each point.
- Use a full stop only in points that contain a complete sentence or more than one sentence.
- Use a capital letter to begin points that are full sentences, but lower case for points that are incomplete sentences.
- Use a full stop at the conclusion of the final point.

### **Correct:**

The survey data will provide information on:

- the age of students
- their country of origin
- the area in which they live
- their secondary schooling.

### **Incorrect:**

- The survey data will provide information on:

- The age of students;
- Their country of origin;
- The area in which they live; and
- Their secondary schooling.

## 15. Emphasis

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Do not use capitals or underlining for emphasis.

Where wording cannot provide the emphasis, use italics or bold, preferably italics. Cup Day is *not* a La Trobe University holiday.

When converting copy from the web for printed material, disable hyperlinks (remove underlining).

Where possible in promotional materials, URLs should be printed in bold. There is no need to include 'http://' and this should be dropped from the address: **www.latrobe.edu.au**

The exclamation mark should be used with restraint. It is an expression of surprise or emotion and is generally unsuited to university publications, even when writing for the youth market.

## 16. Correct or preferred spelling

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If MS Office is installed on your computer, ensure the program defaults to the Australian not the US dictionary.

Do not rely entirely on software spellcheckers. They do not detect words that may be spelled correctly but are misused e.g. 'there' and 'their'.

Similarly, do not rely on them for grammatical accuracy. We are all familiar with 'staff' trying to take a singular verb or being read as a stick.

Spell all words with 'ise', 'isation', 'ising', not 'ize' or 'yze' when these are suffixes e.g. organise, specialise, recognise, analyse.

Use 'our', not 'or' in many words e.g. honour, colour, flavour, valour, labour (exception Australian Labor Party).

The American dictionary will read 'ize' and 'or' in these cases as correct.

Use one 't' in budgeted, marketed, targeted and benefited. Use 'tt' in admitted and regretted.

The following words show the preferred spelling in the La Trobe University style:

Advanced Standing (credit transfer)

adviser

alumnus – a male graduate

alumna – a female graduate

alumnae – a group of female only graduates

alumni – a group of graduates, male and female

am/pm

analyse

Arts/Education – no space before or after forward slash for double degrees

Asia Pacific – no hyphen when a noun, but Asia-Pacific with hyphen when adjective  
i.e. Asia-Pacific region

audiovisual

Bachelor of Arts

bookshop

budgeted

C average

Credit or Distinction average

CD-ROM

centre

characterise

colour

convenor

cooperation

coordinate, coordinator

co-requisite

counselled, counselling

coursework

cross-institutional

Doctor of Philosophy

eBusiness

eCommerce

eResearch

email

enquiry, enquiries (not inquiry, unless it is an official investigation)

enrol

enrolment

faculty/faculties/Faculty (capitalised only when referring to a specific faculty)

first class – not hyphenated, even when used as an adjective

focus – focused, focuses, focusing

fulfil

full-time

goal

Graduate Diploma in Creative Writing

high-tech

honour

Honourable (i.e. the Honourable Gough Whitlam)

Honours degree, no apostrophe  
Indigenous – capitalised when referring to the original inhabitants of Australia  
Industry-based Learning (IBL)  
infrastructure  
Innovative Research Universities (IRU), Australia  
inquiry – official investigation (see enquiry)  
interdisciplinary  
International Network of Universities (INU)  
internet  
lifestyle  
long-standing  
major, minor  
marketed  
Master by Coursework  
Master by Research  
Master's degree (with apostrophe) e.g. Master's degree but Master of Science  
mature age  
Melbourne Wildlife Sanctuary  
mid-semester break  
multicultural  
multidisciplinary  
multifaceted  
multilingual  
multimedia  
off-campus  
off-shore  
online  
organise  
part-time  
Pass degree  
per cent – spell out unless in tables etc.  
percentage  
PhD  
policyholder  
policymaker  
postgraduate  
practice (noun), practise (verb)  
prerequisite(s)  
Professional Doctorate  
program  
purpose-built  
recognise  
Semester 1, 2 (but first/second semester)  
Shanghai Jiao Tong University Index 2006  
specialise  
staff-to-student ratio  
stakeholder  
state-of-the-art  
Student Exchange program (when referring to out-going La Trobe students or in-coming students on a formal exchange with an exchange partner)  
Study Abroad program (when referring to in-coming students who are coming for one or two semesters and paying fees to La Trobe)

targeted  
*Times Higher Education Supplement* (UK) 2006  
undergraduate  
underway  
unit (subject)  
update  
up to date – separate words, but hyphenated when used as an adjective  
web  
webpage  
website  
wellbeing  
world-class  
worldwide  
www – in texts without http:// when URL commences with www  
years old – 10 years old, but 10-year-old child  
Year 12

## 17. Titles

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Titles of books, anthologies, periodicals, plays, album titles and films should be in italics:

*The Catcher in the Rye, The Norton Anthology of Poetry, Meanjin, The Age, King Lear, Stranger on the Shore: The Best of Acker Bilk, 2001: A Space Odyssey.*

Titles of articles and talks should be in inverted commas in text:

'The mating habits of the spotted owl'

'An overview of a decade of research on the spotted owl'

Drop the inverted commas when advertising conferences, seminars, talks in flyers, display notices, advertisements on screen i.e. where the title is a heading.

## 18. Legal Acts

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Should be italicised including the year of legislation

e.g. *Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2001.*

## 19. Bibliographic reference systems

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This Style Guide is intended as a reference tool for non-academic, promotional publications.

For these publications, the Author-date (Harvard) system below is the La Trobe preferred style.

There are other systems with many variants, differing in minor style features such as punctuation, capitalisation, abbreviations and the use of italics.

For academic publications, please refer to your faculty/school/department for information on their preferred system.

Consistency with one reference system should be maintained throughout a publication. For further details, please refer to the Commonwealth *Style Manual*.

### **Author-date (Harvard) system**

The Author-date system is widely accepted in the physical, natural and social sciences, has gained much popularity in the humanities in recent years and is the La Trobe preferred style.

Merry, G 1997, *Food poisoning prevention*, 2nd edn, Macmillan Education Australia, Melbourne.

Marchelier, PM & Hughes, RG 1997, 'New problems with foodborne diseases', *Medical Journal of Australia*, vol. 275, pp 771-5.

The author(s) is followed by the date.

No full stops and no spaces are used with people's initials.

The components are separated by commas.

Minimal capitalisation is used in titles of books, chapters and articles.

Capitalisation is used in the titles of periodicals (journals, magazines and newspapers).

Titles of books and periodicals are in italics.

Single quotation marks are used for the titles of chapters and for the titles of articles in periodicals.

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## **20. Disclaimer**

The following disclaimers have been approved by Legal Services for promotional publications. The full disclaimer should be used in most cases. The abbreviated version is acceptable in small publications (flyers, leaflets) where space is a problem (see word count).

### **Full Disclaimer (for brochures; 143 words)**

**Disclaimer:** The information contained in this brochure is indicative only and is designed as an aid to students contemplating enrolment. While every effort is made to provide full and accurate information at the time of publication, the University does not give any warranties in relation to the accuracy and completeness of the contents. The University does not accept responsibility for any loss or damage occasioned by use of the information contained in this publication. The University also reserves the right to discontinue or vary arrangements, courses, subjects (units), assessment requirements and admission requirements. While the University will try to avoid or minimise any inconvenience, changes may also be made to courses, subjects (units), assessment requirements and staff after enrolment. The University may also set limits on the number of students in a course or subject (unit). For course information updates, please visit: [www.latrobe.edu.au/coursefinder](http://www.latrobe.edu.au/coursefinder).

### **Abbreviated Disclaimer (for flyers; 85 words)**

**Disclaimer:** The information contained in this publication is indicative only. The University reserves the right, before or after enrolment, to make any changes to the information, including but not limited to discontinuing or varying courses, subjects (units), staff, assessment and admission requirements. The University does not give any warranties in relation to the accuracy and completeness of the contents; nor does it accept responsibility for any loss or damage occasioned by use of the information contained in this publication. For course information updates, visit: [www.latrobe.edu.au/coursefinder](http://www.latrobe.edu.au/coursefinder).

## **21. Promotional publications for international students**

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Any publications which will be utilised for the promotion of La Trobe University for the purpose of international student recruitment should be developed specifically for that purpose and must be checked annually by the International Programs Office for compliance with the Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000 and the National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students (the National Code).

It is essential that the following statement and provider number appear on all international student communications:

**La Trobe University is a registered provider under the Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS).**

**CRICOS Provider Number: 00115M**