



HM Government

Government identity system

Creating a cohesive family of identities

Introduction

These guidelines outline how government organisations can adopt the government identity system and how it should be applied.

This system has been designed to provide a cohesive, cost-effective and consistent approach to branding government departments, their agencies and their arm's-length bodies (ALBs). Its creation complements the principle of 'digital by default' with a practical and efficient system.

Placed at the heart of the identity system is the Royal Coat of Arms, designed by Reynolds Stone and approved by Her Majesty The Queen in 1956. The Royal Coat of Arms provides a clear and distinguishable visual reference for HM Government, allowing citizens to easily identify when they are communicating with a government organisation.

For specific advice on creating identity artwork that adheres to the HM Government family of identities and its broader application, contact Branding at No 10 and Cabinet Office Communications at branding@cabinet-office.gsi.gov.uk

Introduction

The HM Government family of ministerial department identities is shown below.



HM Government



Cabinet Office



HM Treasury



Home Office



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office



Ministry
of Defence



Ministry
of Justice



Wales Office



Department
for Business
Innovation & Skills



Department
of Health



Department
of Energy &
Climate Change



Department
for International
Development



Attorney General's
Office



Scotland Office



Department
for Work &
Pensions



Department
for Education



Department
for Culture
Media & Sport



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs



Office of the
Advocate General
for Scotland



Northern Ireland
Office



Department
for Communities
& Local Government



Government
Equalities Office



Department
for Transport

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Identity elements

The building blocks to create consistent identities

When to use the identity system

The government identity system has been designed to provide government organisations with a consistent, unified and cost-effective approach to the creation of identities and branding.

The system should be used only by HM Government and its organisations. This includes all ministerial departments and, where appropriate, non-ministerial departments, executive agencies or non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs). Agencies, NDPBs and ALBs that use the identity system must be clearly perceived as organisations with a direct relationship to government.

Teams, units and services within departments must not adapt the system for their use. They should always use their department's identity, clearly stating their team/unit or service name on communications as illustrated in the stationery section of this guidance(see page 17).

Specific agencies, NDPBs or ALBs can apply for an exemption on the grounds that it would be detrimental to the delivery of their objectives to adhere to such a system.

If you require further advice regarding the exemption process, please contact the Cabinet Office Strategy team (see page 23).

When applying the government identity system the majority of organisations will use the Royal Coat of Arms. Organisations specific to Scotland should adopt the Royal Coat of Arms Scotland, a variant which is used by the Scotland Office.

Organisations that use other coats of arms, badges, insignia or symbols for practical or historical reasons can do so by agreement, as the system has been designed to be flexible. More technical detail on the use of coats of arms, insignia or symbols within the system is available on pages 9 and 10.

Identity lock-up

The government identity system has been designed to be a practical and cost-effective solution for consistent identity creation. Its flexible approach allows identities to:

- work across different media platforms
- be tailored to specific audiences.

All identities can be created in both landscape and portrait format to work across a range of media.

All identities consist of three elements:

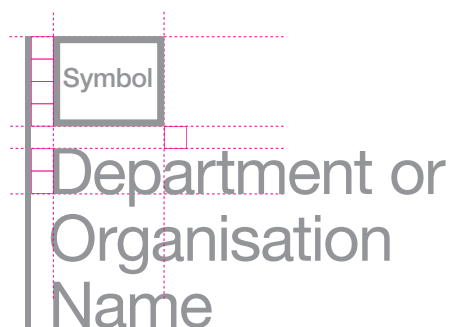
- a colour line
- a symbol (primarily the Royal Coat of Arms)
- the department or organisation name.

The principles of how the two lock-ups work are illustrated below. They have been designed to keep the sizing, weight and spacing of the three elements consistent.

Figure A shows the lock-up for use on traditional media.

Figure B shows the lock-up for use online.

A.



B.



Identity lock-up

The way in which the three elements (colour line, symbol and the department or organisation name) work in practice is illustrated below.

Figure A shows the portrait lock-up for use on traditional media, for example print, stationery and banners.

Figure B shows the landscape lock-up for use online.

Figure C shows the Home Office identity in landscape and portrait format, illustrating the consistent placement of other insignia.

Place alternative insignia or symbols in the designated area, aligning them with the left edge of the lettering for the portrait lock-up or centred to the lettering for the landscape format.

Ensure that any replacement coats of arms, badges, insignia or symbols give the impression that they are part of the larger family of HM Government identities in both proportion and weight.

A.



B.



C.



Coats of arms, insignia and symbols

The primary symbol for use with the government identity system is the Royal Coat of Arms.

In specific cases the Royal Coat of Arms will not be appropriate, for example:

- for departments that have been issued with coats of arms, badges or insignia by the College of Arms
- for identities primarily used in Scotland which adopt the Royal Coat of Arms Scotland

- for identities used overseas where the Royal Coat of Arms is not recognised by the desired audience
- for identities where use of the Royal Coat of Arms is too restrictive, or to avoid duplication of the Royal Coat of Arms on a single piece of communication.

The primary symbol may only be replaced by a department's coat of arms, badge, insignia or symbol by agreement with Cabinet Office.

Primary symbol



Primary symbol – Scotland



Departmental insignia



Symbols



Using the Royal Coat of Arms

The government identity system places the Royal Coat of Arms at the heart of HM Government's visual identity.

The Queen is Head of State, and the United Kingdom is governed by Her Majesty's Government in the name of the Queen. The Royal Coat of Arms is personal to the Queen and because of the constitutional relationship between the Sovereign and government, central government departments and their executive agencies and ALBs are permitted to use the approved versions of the Royal Coat of Arms.

They must, however, adhere to the principles specified by the College of Arms:

- Government departments, and their clearly associated executive agencies and ALBs, have a general discretion to use the Royal Coat of Arms for official purposes as illustrated in these guidelines. This discretion may not be extended to associated bodies (e.g. advisory groups or government department clubs and associations, nor other clubs and associations of civil servants) which, although having a role in the processes of national government, are not government departments or part of them, and which accordingly operate to a greater or lesser extent independently from ministers.
- In some circumstances, if necessary and by agreement with Cabinet Office, it may be possible to use the Royal Crown as a simpler alternative device to the government version of the Royal Coat of Arms.
- **The Royal Coat of Arms should not be used in isolation.** It should always be used in conjunction with the department or organisation name.
- HM Government identities using the Royal Coat of Arms must adhere to the **superior rule**. The superior rule ensures that identities using the Royal Coat of Arms have prominence and authority. To achieve this, identities must be placed at the top of any communications, adhering to the exclusion zone illustrated on page 14. In certain cases it may not be possible to adhere to the superior rule, for example online or when co-branding, in which case the identity must have equal prominence to that of its partners.
- The Royal Coat of Arms should be reproduced in black only, for consistency. In specific instances it is possible to reproduce the Royal Coat of Arms in a single colour; however, it should never be a metallic colour (silver etc) as such colours have a Royal association.
- The Royal Coat of Arms should not be used as a watermark or overprinted.
- The official versions of the Royal Coat of Arms are not to be altered, distorted or modified in any way.
- Care should be taken to ensure that the Royal Coat of Arms within a department/organisation identity is given due respect.

Typographic and naming principles

The typeface featured in the HM Government identity system is Helvetica Neue. Selected for accessibility, it provides a contemporary balance to the heraldic values of the Royal Coat of Arms, reflecting a progressive institution steeped in a rich heritage.

To ensure consistency across the HM Government family of identities, we follow a set of principles when typesetting the department or organisation name.

If followed consistently, the set of principles will create a cohesive and accessible family of identities across government, with the Royal Coat of Arms at the heart.

- The relationship between the Royal Coat of Arms/symbol and department name must always be consistent with one of the two positions set out in these guidelines.
- Names must be set in Helvetica Neue, Roman.
- Names must be set in upper and lower case to ensure accessibility.
- Always use an ampersand rather than 'and'.
- Use the full name rather than acronyms (the exception being HM). This is to reinforce transparency and accessibility.
- Whenever possible, names should be set over one line and up to a maximum of three lines, depending on length.
- Where applicable, 'Department' should always be the first word and appear on its own line for emphasis and consistency.
- The identities have been designed not to use commas within the name.

The colour line

A colour line is used to align and contain the identity elements into a single piece of artwork.

The line is a device to highlight your organisation's departmental family colour; it is chosen by the department. When defining your colour, ensure that it works well both in print and digitally.

Non-ministerial departments, executive agencies and NDPBs should adopt the colour of their parent department when using the identity system.

The weight of the colour line used in any identity should be consistent throughout the HM Government family of identities. To ensure that this is the case, please use the artwork provided by the Cabinet Office (see page 22).

The line weight has been defined so that it is clearly visible in both larger and smaller formats while complementing the Royal Coat of Arms/ symbol and the typography.

Identity artwork and minimum sizes

To ensure consistent legibility and clarity of all HM Government identities and their use of the Royal Coat of Arms, insignia or badges, there are several versions of each identity. Each version has refined the symbol to enhance its usage with certain media or at its stated size.

Maximum and minimum sizes refer to the width or height of the Royal Coat of Arms, not the identity as a whole. Identities using different symbols will have their own guidance.

The identity's application will dictate which version of the artwork should be used:

- A. Detailed artwork in which the large version of the Royal Coat of Arms is used for media that needs the highest standards of reproduction. Minimum width of 20mm.
- B. Small artwork in which the reduced version of the Royal Coat of Arms is used for small printed items such as business cards or for larger digital use. Minimum width of 5mm or 60 pixels.
- C. Digital artwork in which the simplified version of the Royal Coat of Arms is used online or with mobile devices. For use at 50 to 30 pixels high.

A.



HM Government

B.



HM Government

C.



HM Government

Identity exclusion zone

For maximum impact, the HM Government identity should always be used prominently and legibly, as illustrated in 'Placing the identity' on page 15. The exclusion zone ensures that the identity is not compromised by other elements.

The exclusion zone is a distance equivalent to the width of the Royal Coat of Arms around the identity (x in the diagram below). This is the minimum clearance; whenever possible, leave more space around the identity than the exclusion zone.



Placing the identity

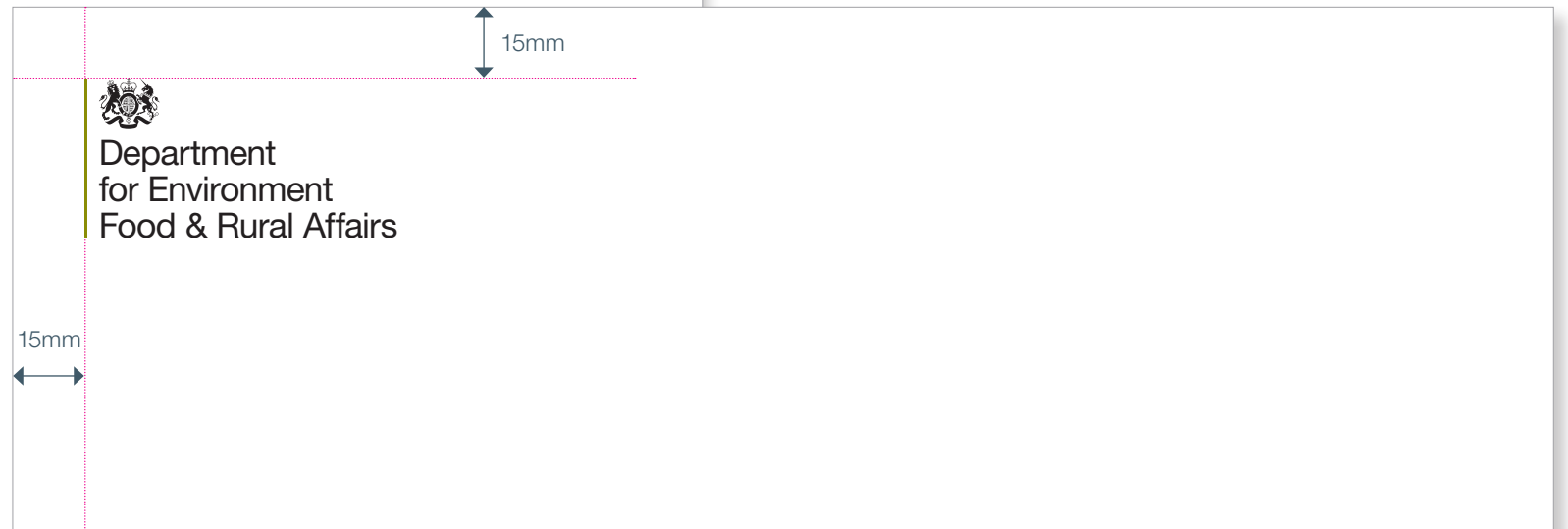
For consistent application of HM Government identities, wherever possible place them in the top left of communications, with equal spacing above and to the left. This will ensure their prominence while adhering to the 'superior rule' and exclusion zone guidelines.

These placement rules apply to both landscape and portrait format communications. For documents with a spine, we recommend that you leave an extra 5mm of space to the left of the identity, to ensure that it is clear of the binding.

Portrait



Landscape



Identity sizes

The recommended usage sizes for common formats are illustrated below. The width of the Royal Coat of Arms is used as the reference point, as it is consistent across the HM Government family of identities.

The size of the two other elements, the name and the line, is variable due to the differing lengths of department/organisation names.

All the formats illustrated use the small artwork.



Stationery


Consistent communications across government

Letterhead

A cohesive approach to stationery design has been created to provide unity across the family of HM Government identities.

The designs shown below follow the guidance concerning the Royal Coat of Arms and have been created for both print and digital use.

For artwork files or templates, see page 23.



Cabinet Office

Service/team
First Address Line
Second Address Line
Town/city Postcode

T +44 (0)20 7000 1234
F +44 (0)20 7000 1234
www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk

Recipient's name
Position, company
Street name
Town
County/Country
Postcode

11 November 2011

Dear Recipient


Use this line to title your letter in Helvetica or Arial Bold (if required)

Ensure that you take care to lay your letter out as shown here. The letter style is to type in 10-12pt Arial regular, with 12-14pt line spacing, aligned left and unjustified.

The left-hand side of the letter should align with the first letter of the department/organisation name at the head of the paper. The left-hand margin is 30mm; the right-hand margin is 16mm.

Yours sincerely

Author's name
Position/title
D +44 (0)20 7000 1234
E employee.email@urfname.gov.uk



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



Department
for Education

Service/team
First Address Line
Second Address Line
Town/city Postcode

T +44 (0)20 7000 1234
F +44 (0)20 7000 1234
www.education.gov.uk

Recipient's name
Position, company
Street name
Town
County/Country
Postcode

11 November 2011

Dear Recipient

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Yours sincerely

Author's name
Position/title
D +44 (0)20 7000 1234
E employee.email@urfname.gov.uk



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

Service/team
First Address Line
Second Address Line
Town/city Postcode

T +44 (0)20 7000 1234
F +44 (0)20 7000 1234
www.defra.gov.uk

Recipient's name
Position, company
Street name
Town
County/Country
Postcode

11 November 2011

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Use this line to title your letter in Helvetica or Arial Bold (if required)

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Yours sincerely

Author's name
Position/title
D +44 (0)20 7000 1234
E employee.email@urfname.gov.uk



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Business card

For efficiency, business cards have been set up for single-sided printing.

For artwork files or templates, see page 23.


Cabinet Office

Service/team
First Address Line
Second Address Line
Town City Postcode

First Name Surname
Job Title
M 07700 012345

T +44 (0)20 7000 1234
E employee.name@cabinet-office.x.gsi.gov.uk
www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk


Department
for Education

Service/team
First Address Line
Second Address Line
Town City Postcode

First Name Surname
Job Title
M 07700 012345

T +44 (0)20 7000 1234
E employee.name@education.gsi.gov.uk
www.education.gov.uk


Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

Service/team
First Address Line
Second Address Line
Town City Postcode

First Name Surname
Job Title
M 07700 012345

T +44 (0)20 7000 1234
E employee.name@defra.gsi.gov.uk
www.defra.gov.uk

Compliments slip

The compliments slip shown has been created for both print and digital use.

For artwork files or templates, see page 23.



Cabinet Office

First Address Line

Second Address Line

Town City Postcode

T +44 (0)20 7000 1234

F +44 (0)20 7000 1234

www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk

With Compliments



Department
for Education

First Address Line

Second Address Line

Town City Postcode

T +44 (0)20 7000 1234

F +44 (0)20 7000 1234

www.education.gov.uk

With Compliments



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

First Address Line

Second Address Line

Town City Postcode

T +44 (0)20 7000 1234

F +44 (0)20 7000 1234

www.defra.gov.uk

With Compliments

Resources

Assets for a smooth transition

Artwork

To easily identify your artwork files, the following naming principles have been used.

A. Detailed artwork:	Name_COL_AW.eps Name_COL_AW.png	e.g. Defra_582_AW.eps*
B. Small artwork:	Name_COL_SML_AW.eps Name_COL_SML_AW.png	e.g. Defra_BLK_SML_AW.png**
C. Digital artwork:	Name_COL_DIGI_AW.png	e.g. Defra_582_DIGI_AW.png

* All colour references refer to the Pantone colour guides (coated).

** BLK = black

Contacts

For the artwork specified in these guidelines or details and advice on the practical application of the government identity system, contact branding at No 10 and Cabinet Office Communications at branding@cabinet-office.gsi.gov.uk

For broader advice on the strategic role of the government identity system within government communications, contact the Cabinet Office Strategy team at dwatson@no10.x.gsi.gov.uk

Agency, ALB and NDPB exemptions can be applied for through your departmental director of communications.

For advice on the Royal Coat of Arms and heraldry, contact the [College of Arms on 020 7248 2762](#).

For advice on the Royal Coat of Arms Scotland, contact The Court of the Lord Lyon at lyonoffice@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

For advice on how to use the identity online, contact Government Digital Service at digital.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/contact