

How to check layouts

Layout

After your manuscript has been signed off your document will be laid out. This will provide a realistic idea of what your publication will look like in print.

Once the layout artist has completed the first draft a first layout will be sent to you for checking. Sometimes this is supplied in PDF format or in a desktop publishing program such as Quark, Pagemaker or In-Design. In the latter case a printout will be supplied to you.

The Publications Unit will check the layout for any production and editorial inconsistencies. These may include checking that design elements are correct and that text flows appropriately.

What to look for:

Please check that:

- your text is in the correct place;
- heading and sub-headings are correctly indicated;
- no typographical errors have crept in;
- page references are accurate;
- contents and index references are accurate
- graphics are appropriate to text
- cover art and text reflects what you want
- authorisation, disclaimer and other compliance information appears

Please mark all corrections in red on the printout of the layout and return by the date advised. Delays at this stage will mean delayed delivery and could cause problems with the printing schedule.

Other attachments

If your publication has additional sections such as application forms or inserts you need to check that this information is correct. Pay particular attention to:

- how it is being assembled;
- the order in which it is being laid out;
- how it should be attached to the main document;
- any other information which may be crucial to how you wish the information to appear.

Subsequent layouts

It is usual to receive more than one layout to check as adjustments are made and marked up changes are checked.

Best practice is to have 3 layouts.

1. The first provides an initial draft of how your publication will appear.
2. The second will provide you with the opportunity to check that your changes to the first layout have been made and to indicate any final changes before signing off.
3. The third should provide you with the opportunity to signoff the laid out publication before preparing to print.

Most budgets allow for 3 layouts. Substantial changes at layouts subsequent to the third incur additional cost and blow your budget and production schedule timelines. This should be avoided.

Signoff

You will be requested to authorise progress to the next stage of printing your publication by signing off on the final layout. At this stage it's a good idea to employ a fresh pair of eyes by asking a colleague to do this.

If you are signing off on a publication that is being produced through the Publications Unit you will be required to sign and date your layout on a proforma sticker.

Please check carefully as this is your last opportunity to ensure that your layout is exactly as it should be and ready for print.

Checklist

Have you checked for:

- correct text placement ?
- correct heading hierarchy?
- typographical errors?
- correct page references?
- correct content and index page references?
- appropriate graphics placement?
- appropriateness of cover art?
- compliance information?
- application forms correctly positioned and attached?
- correct colour?
- correct size?
- deadlines met?
- correct binding?