# INTRODUCTION

## Introduction

### Iconography
- McMaster.ca  
- Construction

### Structured content
- Tabs  
- Tables

### Forms
- Fields  
- Field with button and dropdown

### Buttons
- Primary buttons  
- Secondary buttons  
- With no symbol  
- Radio buttons

### Ask | Search bar

### Modals | Overview

### Media | Video

### Heroes | Treatment

### News treatment | Brighter World

### Loading | Overview

---

# RESPONSIVE DESIGN

## Responsive design

### Global and site header

### Department (Tier 1) | Faculty (Tier 1)

### Approved logo and marks

---

# VISUAL EXPRESSION

## Logos and marks
- McMaster Future Students Lockup

## Colour palette
- McMaster Heritage Colours  
- Brighter World Colours

## Typography
- Primary typeface  
- Headings  
- Body copy

---

# NAVIGATION

## Navigation | Faculty (Tier 1)

## Global and site header

## Navigation

## Department (Tier 1) | Faculty (Tier 1)

## Approved logo and marks

---

# SOCIAL MEDIA

## Social Media

### Overview

### Logos and Avatars - Square

### Logos and Avatars - Circle

### Logos and Avatars - The Shield

### Snapchat and Instagram videos

### Post length

---

# ACCESSIBILITY

## Accessibility

## Digital

---

# Voice

### Voice and tone

### Writing for the web

---

# Responsive design

### Breakpoint overview

---

# Logos and marks

### McMaster Future Students Lockup

---

# Colour palette

### McMaster Heritage Colours

### Brighter World Colours

---

# Typography

### Primary typeface

### Headings

### Body copy

---

# Accessibility

### Digital
INTRODUCTION

1.0
These brand guidelines are designed to ensure recognition of the McMaster University brand and consistency of its message.

Who should use these guidelines?
Anyone at McMaster who communicates on the University’s behalf can refer to these guidelines when creating any digital communications or web pages.

RESPONSIVE DESIGN 2.0
Responsive design | Breakpoint overview

All McMaster websites need to have fully responsive design across device breakpoints, ranging from standard desktop to smartphone dimensions. The default grid system is built in Foundation with 12 columns and fluid expandable containers. See below for general guidelines.

### Grid system

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Screen format</th>
<th>Viewport width range</th>
<th>Number of columns</th>
<th>Gutter between columns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Desktop</td>
<td>1200px and up</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20 pixels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tablet</td>
<td>1024px - 641px</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20 pixels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile</td>
<td>640px and smaller</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20 pixels</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Fluid to viewport width)

---

**Grid structure — Desktop**

1200px - Visual area 1140px

---

**Grid structure — Mobile**

640px - Visual area 620px
Strengthen the McMaster brand by consistently using the McMaster colour palette across all digital communications. The rich hues suggest tradition and solidity. These colours are all reflected in the McMaster logo, an essential element of our brand identity. McMaster Heritage Maroon is a key brand colour. Continue to use this Heritage colour for all digital applications where appropriate. The Brighter World colours are to be used in all brand communications in addition to the Heritage colours.

**Colour palette | McMaster Heritage Colours**

McMaster Heritage Colours

McMASTER HERITAGE MAROON
HEX 7A003C

McMASTER HERITAGE GOLD
HEX FDBF57

McMASTER HERITAGE GREY
HEX 5E8A71

**TINTS**

A tint is a screened (lighter) version of a colour. Tints of the McMaster Heritage colours are allowed only in tables and charts when information should be separated to increase the legibility or provide hierarchy of information. Keep in mind that for web and other digital applications, all colour combinations have to pass AA standards from W3C.

**IMPORTANT**
The colours below are only to be used on web and other digital applications. For any other uses, please see the McMaster Brand Standards Manual.
Colour palette | Brighter World Colours

The Brighter World brand colours blend well with McMaster Maroon and Gold and provide a broadened range of colour options that renew McMaster’s image in a youthful way. This palette is intentionally vibrant and these hues complement each other and the Heritage Colour palette, reflecting the “Brighter World” brand story (see the McMaster Brand Standards Manual) and spirit of collaboration at the university.

HIGHLIGHTS
Used for highlights and backgrounds in the duotone images.

- BRIGHTER WORLD YELLOW
  HEX FFD100

- BRIGHTER WORLD LIME
  HEX D2D755

- BRIGHTER WORLD SKY BLUE
  HEX 8B03E6

DARKER TONES
Used only to contrast the highlights in the duotone images.

- BRIGHTER WORLD RED
  HEX A6192E

- BRIGHTER WORLD GREEN
  HEX 00704B

- BRIGHTER WORLD BLUE
  HEX 007096

NEUTRAL SUPPORT

- COOL GREY
  HEX DBDBDD
Typography | Primary typeface

For all digital applications, the Roboto web font set replaces the original Univers print font set. Roboto web font is a sans serif typeface with a clean, modern look.

Univers

Use for print materials only.

Roboto

The entire font family can be used for digital applications.

By using a web font we ensure that the typeface will be displayed consistently across all devices.

DO:
Use Roboto for web and other digital applications.

DO NOT:
Use Roboto for print materials.

For more information about print guidelines, please see the McMaster Brand Standards Manual.

Roboto Condensed Regular

Roboto Condensed Light

Roboto Black
Typography | Headings

These are the font styles available for headlines and subheads when designing a new webpage.

H1

 произведен

Used on hero banners and main page headers.
Font: Roboto Condensed Regular 50/55
Colour: 5E6A71

H2

 произведен

Used on section titles for subheads, in sentence case or all caps.
Font: Roboto Condensed Regular 28/34
Colour: 5E6A71

H3

 произведен

Used on form titles.
Font: Roboto Condensed Regular 20/24
Colour: 5E6A71

H4

 произведен

Used for subheads and for dates on posts.
Font: Roboto Black 13/16
Colour: 5E6A71

Roboto Condensed Light - 50/55

Roboto Condensed Regular - 28/34

ROBOTO CONDENSED REGULAR - 28/34

Roboto Condensed Regular - 20/24

ROBOTO BLACK - 13/16 - TRACKING 200
Typography | Body copy

These are the Roboto font styles available for body copy. This type weight is preferred for regular body copy because it creates a more sophisticated look and contrasts well with other elements on the page.

Body copy

Font: Roboto Condensed Regular 16/28
Colour: 525C85

At McMaster, we measure our success by the degree to which we improve people’s lives, contribute to our global knowledge base and advance the societies in which we live. Learn about the groundbreaking research taking place at McMaster.

Quote

Font: Roboto Regular 28/30
Colour: 7A003C

“STATISTIC OR FACTOID ABOUT MCMASTER AND RESEARCH AREA”

Legal copy

Font: Roboto Condensed Regular - 13/16
Colour: 525C85
Iconography | McMaster

Icons are used to represent McMaster services, subjects and way-finding tools simply and visually. These icons are pared down to their simplest form for a contemporary look, and for maximum clarity.

When creating new icons, keep in mind that, in some cases, we also need to consider interaction states, such as hover, clickable and disabled. As a reference, always use the icon examples below, created for the McMaster.ca homepage.
Iconography | Construction

When creating new icons, it’s important to use the same visual treatment as existing icons. Use the same colour schemes and line properties, so that even if icons change size, they keep a similar look.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Iconography</th>
<th>Construction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When creating new icons, it’s important to use the same visual treatment as existing icons. Use the same colour schemes and line properties, so that even if icons change size, they keep a similar look.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### ON WHITE

**DEFAULT STATE**

- Icon height: 30pt
- Line: 1.5pt

**HOVER STATE**

- Icon height: 30pt
- Line: 1.5pt

#### COLOURS

- **DEFAULT STATE**
  - Drop Shadow
    - Angle: 105°
    - Distance: 28px
    - Size: 16px
    - Opacity: 30%

- **HOVER STATE**
  - Drop Shadow
    - Angle: 105°
    - Distance: 28px
    - Size: 16px
    - Opacity: 30%

### ON MAROON

**DEFAULT STATE**

- Icon height: 30pt
- Line: 1.5pt

**HOVER STATE**

- Icon height: 30pt
- Line: 1.5pt

#### COLOURS

- **DEFAULT STATE**
  - Drop Shadow
    - Angle: 105°
    - Distance: 28px
    - Size: 16px
    - Opacity: 30%

- **HOVER STATE**
  - Drop Shadow
    - Angle: 105°
    - Distance: 28px
    - Size: 16px
    - Opacity: 30%
Structured content | Tabs

Tabs are used to organize content, to help to reduce page scroll and make content easier to read. When organizing text-heavy content, always consider using tabs, and take into consideration how users will read and navigate through the site.

Bringing together the best and brightest minds is the spark that makes a Brighter World possible.

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Ut enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exercitation ullamco laboris nisi ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat. Duis aute irure dolor in reprehenderit in voluptate velit esse cillum dolore eu fugiat nulla pariatur. Excepteur sint occaecat cupidatat non proident, sunt in culpa qui officia deserunt mollit anim id est laborum. Sed ut perspiciatis unde omnis iste natus error sit voluptatem accusantium doloremque laudantium, totam rem aperiam, eaque ipsa quae ab illo inventore veritatis et quasi architecto beatae vitae dicta sunt explicabo. Nemo enim ipsam voluptatem quia voluptas sit aspernatur aut odit aut fugit, sed quia consequuntur magni dolores eos qui ratione voluptatem sequi nesciunt.
Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Ut enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exercitation ullamco laboris nisi ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat.
Forms | Fields

Clearly labelled form fields make it faster and easier for users to complete forms. Follow the guidelines below when creating form fields, and keep the text labels within each field in uppercase.

---

**Input field:**

- **DEFAULT**
  - Box Height: 50px
  - Outline: 1px – DBDBDD

- **ERROR MESSAGE**
  - Outline: 1px – A6192E

- **CONFIRMATION MESSAGE**
  - Outline: 1px – 007B4B

- **TEXT INPUT AREA**
  - Font: Roboto Condensed Regular 16px
  - Colour: A6192E
  - Round corner: 5px

---

**HEADER**

- Font: Roboto Condensed 20px
- Colour: 222222

---

**INPUT TEXT – DEFAULT**

- Font: Roboto Condensed 14px - Uppercase
- Colour: 60% – 222222

---

**INPUT TEXT – ACTIVE**

- Font: Roboto Condensed 14px - Uppercase
- Colour: 100% – 222222

---

**SHADOW TREATMENT**

- Angle: 90°
- Opacity: 30%
- Distance: 14px
- Size: 20px

*Create new shape for shadow and decrease 30% width size*
### Forms | Field with button and dropdown

When creating form fields with buttons and/or drop down menus, follow the guidelines below.

**Input field with button:**

- **DEFAULT**
  - Box Height: 50px
  - Outline: 1px – DBDBDD
  - Button = HOVER/CLICK
    - Font Colour: FFFFFF
    - Background Colour: 7A003C
  - Button = ACTIVE
    - Font: Roboto Condensed 14px - Uppercase
    - Colour: 222222
    - Background Colour: FDBF57

**Dropdown:**

- **DEFAULT**
  - Box Height: 50px
  - Outline: 1px – DBDBDD
  - Button = ACTIVE
    - Font: Roboto Condensed 14px - Uppercase
    - Colour: 222222
    - Background Colour: FDBF57
  - Button = HOVER/CLICK
    - Font Colour: FFFFFF
    - Background Colour: 5E6A71

**HEADER**

- Font: Roboto Condensed 20px
- Colour: 222222

**INPUT TEXT – DEFAULT**

- Font: Roboto Condensed 14px - Uppercase
- Colour: 80% – 222222

**HOVER**

- Font: Roboto Condensed 14px - Uppercase
- Colour: FFFFFF
- Background Colour: 7A003C
**Buttons | Primary buttons**

Call-to-action (CTA) buttons indicate that the user can perform an action. These over hero images need to be clear and simple in order to guide the user to the next step. Text inside of buttons should be uppercase. See below for examples of primary buttons in a default and hover state.

---

**Primary buttons - Burgundy over heroes**

---

**DEFAULT**

- **Roboto Condensed Bold**
  - 15 px
  - Tracking 100px
  - HEX FFFFFF

- **Button Height:** 50px
- **Sides padding:** 30px

**Default** shape colour HEX 7A003C

---

**HOVER - SELECTED**

- **Roboto Condensed Bold**
  - 15 px
  - Tracking 100px
  - HEX FFFFFF

- **Button Height:** 50px
- **Sides padding:** 30px

**Default** shape colour HEX 7A003C

**Hover** shape colour HEX 5E6A71

**Shadow treatment**

- **Angle:** 90°
- **Opacity:** 30%
- **Distance:** 14px
- **Size:** 20px

*Create new shape for shadow and decrease 30% width size*

---

**Primary buttons - Gold over heroes**

---

**DEFAULT**

- **Roboto Condensed Bold**
  - 15 px
  - Tracking 100px
  - HEX 222222

- **Button Height:** 50px
- **Sides padding:** 30px

**Default** shape colour HEX FDBF57

---

**HOVER - SELECTED**

- **Roboto Condensed Bold**
  - 15 px
  - Tracking 100px
  - HEX 222222

- **Button Height:** 50px
- **Sides padding:** 30px

**Default** shape colour HEX FDBF57

**Hover** shape colour HEX DBDBDD

**Shadow treatment**

- **Angle:** 90°
- **Opacity:** 30%
- **Distance:** 14px
- **Size:** 20px

*Create new shape for shadow and decrease 30% width size*
**Buttons | Secondary buttons**

Follow the guidelines below when creating secondary and tertiary buttons. Text within buttons should be uppercase.

---

### Secondary buttons - Feature stories

**DEFAULT**

Roboto Condensed Bold

15 px

Tracking 100px

HEX 222222

Button Height: 50px

Sides padding: 30px

**Default** Shape HEX FFFFFF

Circle HEX 7A003C

**Hover** Shape HEX DB0BDD

Circle HEX 5E6A71

**Outline** 1px HEX DBDBDD

*Create new shape for shadow and decrease 30% width size*

---

### Tertiary buttons - Non-feature stories

**DEFAULT**

Roboto Condensed Bold

15 px

Tracking 100px

HEX FFFFFF

Icon size: 20px x 20px

Padding: 30px

**Default** HEX 222222

**Hover** HEX 5E6A71
**Buttons | With no symbol**

See below for guidelines to use when creating buttons with no symbol. Use these buttons at the end of a limited selection of images, videos, stories, or other content, to allow users to view a wider selection.

---

**Buttons with no symbol - Burgundy**

**DEFAULT**

 Robbins Condensed Bold

15 px

Tracking 100px

HEX FFFFFF

Button Height: 50px

Sides padding: 30px

**DEFAULT shape colour HEX 7A003C**

**Hover shape colour HEX 5E6A71**

**Shadow treatment**

Angle: 90°

Opacity 30%

Distance 14px

Size 20px

*Create new shape for shadow and decrease 30% width size

**HOVER - SELECTED**

**Buttons with no symbol - Gold**

**DEFAULT**

 Robbins Condensed Bold

15 px

Tracking 100px

HEX 222222

Button Height: 50px

Sides padding: 30px

**DEFAULT shape colour HEX FDBF57**

**Hover shape colour HEX DBDBDD**

**Shadow treatment**

Angle: 90°

Opacity 30%

Distance 14px

Size 20px

*Create new shape for shadow and decrease 30% width size
Buttons | Radio buttons

See below for examples of radio and buttons to be used, in both default and hover/selected states, on forms or selection boxes.

Radio buttons

**DEFAULT**

Outline 1px  HEX 222222
Fill HEX FFFFFF  W: 15px  H: 15px

**HOVER - SELECTED**

Outline 1px  HEX 222222
Fill HEX 7A003C  W: 15px  H: 15px

Radio buttons over colour overlay treatment

**DEFAULT**

Outline 1px  HEX FFFFFF
Fill HEX N/A  W: 15px  H: 15px

**HOVER - SELECTED**

Outline 1px  HEX FFFFFF
Fill HEX FFFFFF  W: 15px  H: 15px
**Ask | Search Bar**

See below for guidelines on creating a search bar in the open, hover and default states. Any text within the search bar should be uppercase, except for the “c” in McMaster, which remains lowercase.

## HAVE A QUESTION?

**default**

Header - Uppercase
Roboto Condensed Bold 28px
Tracking 80px
HEX 222222
Box Height: 50px

Input text
Roboto Condensed Bold 28px
Tracking 14px
HEX 656565
Box Height: 50px

**Shadow treatment**
Angle: 90° Opacity 30% Distance 14px Size 20px
*Create new shape for shadow and decrease 30% width size

**hover**

Hover shape colour HEX 5E6A71
Roboto Condensed Bold 28px
HEX FFFFFF
Box Height: 50px Sides padding: 30px
Modals | Overview

A modal dialog is an effective tool for directing a web user’s attention toward important information. They are designed to interrupt the user to inform them or demand an action. See below for examples and guidelines.

---

**Close button**

**DEFAULT**

Circle HEX 222222

Line HEX FFFFFF

**HOVER**

Circle HEX DBDBDD

Line HEX 222222

All dialogs require a backdrop

HEX 222222 behind them - Gray @ 90%.

---

**Confirmation**

Notification titles can be informative, and tell the user what has happened.

- **Hex:** HEX 00A650
- **Outline:** 1px
- **Width:** 30px
- **Height:** 30px

---

**Error**

Notifications can only have two lines of text, and when a new one appears, it dismisses any current one.

- **Hex:** HEX ED1C24
- **Outline:** 1px
- **Width:** 30px
- **Height:** 30px

---

*The default copy layout is left align*
Media | Video

When creating videos representing McMaster, use the After Effects working files provided for the intro and outro in order to maintain brand consistency and ensure identification of the McMaster identity.

Variations

Use either a short introduction featuring only the logo, or animation that also brings in a title treatment.

When to use these animations

These can be used to introduce or close video profiles of researchers, department tours, student interviews, or other short video subjects.

Where to use these videos

These intro and outro animations are ideal for McMaster videos to be shared on YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, or other social media.
Heroes | Treatment

Here are some examples of hero image treatments to use for reference and inspiration when creating or updating web pages.

**Overlay treatment**

Overlay treatment

Overlay

Photography or video

**OVERLAY EFFECTS SETTING**

Please refer to the Brand Standards Manual

- “Image Style | Creating duotones using Photoshop, method” Page 41
- “Image Style | Creating “fake” duotones using Adobe InDesign.” Page 42

**Non overlay treatment**

Use the working files provided for the intro and outro in order to maintain brand consistency and ensure identification of the McMaster identity.
News & Events | Treatments

See guidelines below for the treatment of news story teasers, and external link symbols, for the Brighter World website.

**News treatments - Brighter World**

- **Background Colour**
  - McMaster Gold
    - Default: \#FDBF57
  - Hover: \#7A003C

- **Default** shape colour: \#FDBF57
  - **Shadow treatment**
    - Angle: 140°
    - Opacity: 30%
    - Distance: 14px
    - Size: 20px
    - *Create new shape for shadow and decrease 30% width size

**Events**

- **Header** - Uppercase Roboto Condensed Bold 20px
  - HEX: \#7A003C

- **Event Title** - Roboto Condensed Regular 18px
  - HEX: \#222222

- **Location** - Roboto Condensed Bold 14px
  - HEX: \#F0F0F0

- **Date** - Roboto Condensed Light 13px
  - HEX: \#5E6A71

- **Introduction Copy** - Hyperlink
  - Default: \#5E6A71
  - Hover: \#5E6A71 - Underline

- **Shadow treatment**
  - Angle: 90°
  - Opacity: 20%
  - Distance: 5px
  - Size: 45px
Loading | Overview

Progress indicators, or load spinners, let website users know that progress is being made on the action they’ve taken, such as a download. Text can help provide further clarity about what’s happening. See guidelines below.

LOAD SPINNERS

Load spinners should be used when there is an indeterminate amount of time/progress related to a process (e.g., downloading data).

LOADING BUTTON WITH TEXT

For buttons with text, the load spinner can appear where the icon would appear. The text may change to reflect the current state.
NAVIGATION
Navigation | Faculty (Tier 1)

The main navigation is a key feature of your website. It provides the guideposts visitors need to navigate your site and needs to be as clear and accessible as possible. This is the main header for your website (The Faculty of Engineering example is provided for reference only), so it’s important to strictly adhere to the guidelines below for placement of elements, font and logo size, brand colours, and other design features.

**HEADER WITH FACULTY NAME (TIER 1)**

- **McMaster Logo**
  - Left-align
  - Maximum width size 140px

- **Background Colour**
  - **White**
  - HEX: FFFFFF

- **Fonts**
  - **H1 Title**
    - 40px Roboto Condensed Bold
    - Sentence case
    - Tracking: -20px
    - HEX: 7A003C

- **Search and Menu**
  - Right-align
  - Maximum width size 55px
  - Minimum px separation between elements 70px

**NAVIGATION LEVEL 01**

- **Background Colour**
  - McMaster Heritage Maroon
  - HEX: 7A003C

- **Fonts**
  - Right-align
  - 17px Roboto Condensed Bold
  - Upper case
  - Tracking: 20px
  - HEX: FFFFFF

- **Bar Background**
  - Height: 60px
  - McMaster Heritage Maroon
  - HEX: 7A003C

- **Selection Bar**
  - Height: 5px
  - HEX: FFFFFF

  - Minimum px separation between buttons and arrow: 20px
  - Minimum px separation between buttons: 85px
Global and site header | Department (Tier 1) | Faculty (Tier 1)

This header is used for the departmental pages of the website, so follow these guidelines to maintain consistency with the rest of the site. See below for placement of elements, font and logo size, brand colours, and other design features.
Global and site header | Approved logos and marks

Below is an example of a website header that includes a faculty logo. Follow these guidelines closely to ensure consistency with the McMaster brand.
Global and site header | Navigation

For clarity and ease of reading, the elements of the navigation menus must consistently follow the guidelines for sizing, spacing, formatting and colours outlined below.

**NAVIGATION LEVEL 01**

**NAVIGATION LEVEL 02**

**NAVIGATION LEVEL 02 SELECTED - NAVIGATION 3**

**DEFAULT**

- **FONT**
  - 14px Roboto Regular
  - Sentence case
  - Tracking 10pt
  - HEX 222222

- **BUTTON SHAPE**
  - HEX FFFFFF

**HOVER**

- **FONT**
  - 14px Roboto Regular
  - Sentence case
  - Tracking 10pt
  - HEX 222222

- **BUTTON SHAPE**
  - HEX EBEBEB

*Width size must be the same than the above button area*
Breadcrumb | Overview

A breadcrumb is an effective tool that helps users navigate a website. At-a-glance, visitors can see how their current page relates to the rest of the website, and can more easily retrace their steps. See guidelines below for creating breadcrumb navigation.

Breadcrumb Navigation

Default
14px Roboto Condensed Normal
Sentence Case
Tracking 0px
HEX 5E6A71

Selected/Hover
14px Roboto Condensed Normal
Sentence Case
Tracking 0px
HEX 7A003C
Global Footer | Overview

A footer is a key element of your website, a tool for visitors to further navigate the site or find your contact information. It’s important for this element to be as clear and easy to scan as possible, see guidelines below.
Site Footer | Departments

Below, see guidelines and examples to use for departmental or faculty site footers. These departmental and site footers must always be anchored by the global footer.

ENGINEERING
Department of Engineering Physics

LOCATION DETAILS
1280 Main St. W
John Hodgins Engineering
Building Room A215
Hamilton, Ontario, Canada L8S 4L7

UNDERGRADUATE OFFICE HOURS
Monday - Friday 8:30am to 4:30pm

GRADUATE OFFICE HOURS
Monday - Friday 8:30am to 4:30pm
Offices closed daily from 12:00 pm to 1:30 pm

CONTACT INFORMATION
Phone: 905-525-9140 Ext. 24646
Email: name@mcmaster.ca

FACULTY LOCKUP
ENGINEERING
Department of Engineering Physics
HEX FFFFFF - Maximum width size 200px

BACKGROUND COLOUR
McMASTER HERITAGE GREY
HEX SE6A71

SOCIAL BUTTONS
Default
Stroke Line / icon HEX FFFFFF
Hover
Fill HEX FFFFFF  Icon HEX 22222

Table of Contents
Introduction
Responsive Design
Visual Elements
Navigation
Voice
Social Media
Accessibility
5.0

VOICE
Voice and tone

McMaster University speaks with a consistent voice across all print and digital communications — from websites to e-newsletters to advertising. This voice is the embodiment of McMaster’s distinct identity, as expressed in Patrick Deane’s “Forward with Integrity” letter, combined with the Brighter World vision and University Purpose Statement. Our tone, however, may vary depending on the audience. For example, a more conversational tone is used for social media; vivid adjectives and verbs for promotional copy; a direct, straightforward tone for web copy; and a more formal tone for official documents.

Voice elements

Smart and purposeful, but never condescending: Speak from a place of knowledge and authority, yet remain open to new ideas and new ways of thinking or approaching a situation. Inform rather than dictate.

Optimistic
Focus on solutions more than problems. Frame subjects from a positive perspective rather than a negative one.

Direct
Get to the point. Avoid unnecessary wordiness or hyperbole.

Team-focused
Where possible, put individual accomplishments in the context of a team effort. Avoid a “hero worship” approach and, instead, acknowledge the efforts of the group, community or faculty that helped make the accomplishment possible.

Clear and straightforward
Avoid jargon or wordiness. The most concise wording is often the most powerful.

Warm and student-focused
Use first- and second-person language (“we,” “you,” “us”) and contractions when appropriate.

Impact-focused
When sharing specific McMaster research stories, where applicable, make reference to the impact, or potential impact, of the work in contributing to a better world.
Writing for the web

The way users read on a screen is different from the way they read printed pages. Users generally scan the page until they find information that interests them, and then they read further.

When writing web pages, emails, e-newsletters, or other digital communications, please follow these best practices:

**Be brief:**
Put the most important information up front, and keep paragraphs and sentences short and to the point.

**Be scannable:**
Break up large chunks of text with informative subheads, bolded keywords and bulleted lists, where appropriate.

**Be relevant:**
Focus on the user’s needs, and try to anticipate what they need to know.

**Be helpful:**
Try to include a “call to action” on each page, or a clear guide to the next logical step users can take.
SOCIAL MEDIA

6.0
Social media | Overview

Social media has become an integral part of today’s communications and these guidelines will help ensure all social media sharing on behalf of McMaster will maintain consistency for our brand, values and mission. Use these guidelines when creating posts or assets for social media.

LANGUAGE:
The same writing guidelines for digital apply to social media.
Make sure you are authentic. Remember to represent yourself and the institution accurately and be transparent about your role in the institution. You are using a channel provided by McMaster University, therefore conversations should be respectful and bring value to users.

ENGAGEMENT:
You are representing the institution, so avoid confrontations online and make sure to manage any issues accordingly.
Be careful when engaging with users, be respectful to others, and know the right moment to intervene. Opposing opinions are common and discussions may happen, but do not engage in arguments that may bring harm to the institution’s image.
Mediate discussions with responsibility and do not tolerate disrespect, acting at the right moment to diffuse any situation.

PROTECT INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY:
Before posting anything, confirm if you own the rights of the pieces posted. From a photo to a quote, be sure that you own the right to share it, respecting copyrights, trademarks and other legal rights.

CHANNEL GUIDELINES:
It’s important to check each social media channel’s requirements for posting on a regular basis, as they change frequently.
Social media | Logos and avatars -- Square

See below for guidelines on using the McMaster University logo in profile pictures or as a social media avatar. (For full logo and mark guidelines, see the McMaster Brand Standards Manual.)

IMPORTANT:
Small logo usage is explained in detail in the McMaster Brand Standards Manual, however due to the nature of responsive design and social media platforms, we need to consider some unique cases that are listed here. These are the smallest possible use scenarios and are only allowed in digital platforms. For the same reason, measurements are written in pixels and should not be replicated in print.
Social media | Logos and avatars -- Circle

Instagram and Twitter have introduced round images as profile avatar formats. Please follow these guidelines when creating circular avatar images.

**DIMENSIONS**
- Height: 180px
- Width: 180px
  = standard Instagram & Twitter profile picture
Social media | Logos and avatars -- The shield

The McMaster shield can be used alone ONLY on McMaster University profiles, because it will always be paired with the full name of the institution beside it. This should never be done for any faculty of department profiles. It is important to remember that a profile picture should help users identify the profile owner and the department it is representing. For those cases, always use the lockup with the complete logo design.

**DIMENSIONS**

**Height:** 180px  
**Width:** 180px

**DO:**
Always use the lockup with the complete logo version.

**DO NOT:**
Use the single shield on any faculty or department social media profile. Always use the lockup with the complete logo version.

**SQUARE**

**CIRCLE**

10 pixels margin
Social media | Snapchat and Instagram videos

Here are some considerations when managing a profile and posting videos on Snapchat and Instagram.

1. **Shoot vertically** – This saves user from having to keep rotating their phone to watch a story.

2. **Start by introducing yourself** – Name, event, position.

3. **Mention why are you taking over the account.**

4. **For videos and interviews** – Either create a slide to first tell viewers to turn audion on, or add the speaker emoji to indicate audio is being used.

5. **Be mindful of where you place text.**

6. **Carefully consider text colour.**

7. **Emojis should add to story, not distract from it.**

8. **Make the end of obvious.** Example: “Thank you for watching Marauders!”

9. **Do not open snaps from followers in the chat section.**

10. **When you are done, save story to Memories.**
Social media | Post length

Here are some considerations when creating a social media post. Regulations for maximum possible characters can change often, please consult the requirements for each platform before posting.

FACEBOOK:
Short is sweet on Facebook. Opinions vary on the specific length, but generally, copy should be less than 80 characters. Keep videos to under two minutes. Use hashtags, where appropriate.

INSTAGRAM:
Since it is primarily a visual platform, text should be kept to the minimum on an Instagram post. Only add hashtags (to a recommended maximum of five) if they’ll be useful in getting your message to a certain audience.

LINKEDIN:
Try to limit yourself to about 25 words. Make sure to include a URL that sends users to a place where they can get more information about your post’s topic.

SNAPCHAT:
Snapchat is another visual channel. If you select the text bar after taking a snap, it will give you space for one line of copy.

TWITTER:
The current limit for tweets is 280 characters, but try to stay under 200 for maximum effect. Twitter is currently testing 280-character tweets with a small group of users. You can include photos, GIFs, or videos in each post.
Accessibility

McMaster University is committed to advancing the culture of accessibility, equity and human rights. The Equity and Inclusion Office works with campus and community partners to promote, develop and support equity, diversity and inclusion initiatives. For more information, please visit: http://equity.mcmaster.ca/about-us

McMaster University strives to create an inclusive community for all. How information is presented, and the technologies that are used to share information, greatly shape a person’s experience. Promoting a communications infrastructure that takes the needs of persons with disabilities into account is a priority for McMaster and a priority in our goal to create a Brighter World.

The McMaster Brand Guidelines have been created with accessibility in mind to foster a clear and consistent information-scape across campus. For more information on accessibility at McMaster, please visit: http://accessibility.mcmaster.ca.
Digital accessibility standards are a requirement in Canada. These standards were created to ensure that all users can navigate online without limitations, and can access the same level of information.

The standard used in Canada for accessibility is known as Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0. You can find the guidelines at https://www.w3.org/WAI/guid-tech.html

It's important to remember that all McMaster websites have to follow Level AA standards of accessibility. Here is a short list of important things to consider when creating a new design.

**Keyboard navigation**
The navigation through keyboard is very important. Some users use keyboards to navigate online and it’s an important consideration while organizing links and elements on a page.

**Contrast**
All elements should have enough contrast. That is achieved by using appropriate colour combinations and minimum sizes for fonts. You can use this tool to test colours and font sizes https://contrastchecker.com

**Alt-text**
Remember that all images and videos should have alt-text, so screen readers can describe what is being displayed on screen appropriately.

**Closed captioning (CC)**
Hearing-impaired users rely on CC to understand videos with audio.

**Full requirements**
To ensure you fully comply with Ontario government website accessibility requirements, visit https://www.ontario.ca/page/how-make-websites-accessible
If you have questions or feedback, or want to learn more about the digital assets available for download, please email brandmarketing@mcmaster.ca.