

## Brand guidelines

These guidelines are here to help us communicate clearly and consistently about St John's College, Durham. They apply to all external marketing and communications, and we encourage everyone to use them as good practice for internal communications too.

### Organisation name

Our official name is **St John's College, Durham**.

While it is grammatically correct to add a full stop after **St.**, we do not do this as a stylistic choice. Please always be sure to remember the apostrophe on **John's**.

### Tone of voice

We subscribe to the [Durham University identity guidelines](#)

See specifically sections 2.3 (Plain English).

St John's College is known to be a welcoming place and we as staff members should always aim to reflect this in our writing.

English is not always the first language of the people we talk to, so whatever we say or write must be clear and accessible to anyone within our global community. We always use plain English and write in a personable manner as if we are face-to-face with one person. We don't use jargon or complicated terminology to get our point across unless we know for sure our entire audience fully understands it. Neither do we use words that have a different meaning in common use than they do in a specific field.

### Plain English (adapted from Durham University guidelines)

Our audiences are many and varied. We should aim to write clearly and concisely using everyday language. Writing in plain English has a few golden rules:

- Write as if you are having a face-to-face conversation with your reader.
- Don't refer to St John's College as a third person organisation. Wherever possible say 'we'.
- Use language your reader will understand.
- Use the active voice. 'David took the test', not 'the test was taken by David'.



- Don't be afraid to use contractions like 'we're', 'we've', etc. This helps create a more personable, approachable writing tone.
- Avoid using buzzwords and jargon.
- Don't use pompous, overly formal or long words if there's a shorter, more human alternative (use 'buy' instead of 'purchase', 'help' instead of 'assist', 'about' instead of 'approximately' and 'like' instead of 'such as', 'while' and 'among' instead of 'whilst' and 'amongst').
- Keep sentences short – 15-20 words is ideal.
- Don't repeat yourself.
- Keep to your subject – don't waffle.

### Job titles

We use capitals with & for job titles e.g. Alumni & Communications Officer.

### Dates and times

We use UK formats for all dates and times. This keeps our communications clear, consistent, and easy to follow.

#### Dates

Write dates in the order day–month–year, without “th” and commas.

✓ *14 March 2025*

✗ *March 14, 2025*

#### Times

Use the 12-hour clock with am/pm in lowercase, no space before am/pm, and no leading zero.

✓ *3:30pm*

✗ *03:30 PM*

#### Combined

For events, write the day of the week, date, and time together.

✓ *Monday 14 March 2025, 3:30pm*

#### Decades

✓ *1950s*

✗ *1950's*

✗ *50's*

✗ *fifties, 'fifties*

#### Academic year

✓ *2025-26*

✗ *2025/26*

#### Centuries

Century numbers are usually spelt out (the fourteenth century or fourteenth-century if used as an adjective); in tables or headings, figures may be used (14th century or 14th-century).

### Titles and headings

We use sentence case for all titles and headings. That means capitalising only the first word and any proper nouns. Using sentence case keeps our tone approachable, modern, and easy to read. Consistency across all materials also helps people recognise and trust the College's voice.

✓ *Student life at St John's*

✗ *Student Life At St John's*

### Exceptions

Use capitalisation as it appears for official names, publications, and job titles (e.g. *Cranmer Hall*, *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, *Assistant Principal*).

### Style guide

When it comes to font, we encourage the use of Century Schoolbook or Garamond, size 12. Aptos and Calibri, size 11 can be used when a sans serif font is desired.

### Logos

These are the four main variations of the St John's College logo:

A)



B)



D)



C)



### Choosing the right logo

Use the logo version that works best for your document. For example:

- The **long, thin logo (A)** works well at the top of meeting minutes.
- The **full crest (C)** has more impact on letter heads.
- The **crest alone (D)** (without “St John’s”) should **only** be used in limited cases where other identifiers make it clear it’s St John’s College. Our **preferred option** is always the crest with text (A, B or C).

### University branding

You may sometimes see the below St John’s logo alongside central University communications. This reflects the University’s consistent branding across all colleges. For St John’s College materials, however, please continue to use our official College logo as outlined above.



### Old logos

These are no longer in use and should not appear on any documents or communications.



### External use

Don't share the logos externally without permission from the Alumni & Communications Team. If you know of any external partners still using an old logo on materials, please contact them and ask that they switch to the correct St John's College logo.

### Where to find them

Logos are available in the MS Teams Staff Channel in the Comms Folder and are also uploaded to CANVA.

### Resizing logos:

Always keep the logo's proportions intact. If it looks stretched or squashed, start again and **hold down the Shift key** while resizing—it keeps the logo in proportion.

**Clear space**

Leave a minimum area of clear space around the logo so text, images, or other elements don't crowd it.

**Updating old logos**

Please check your documents and replace any older or alternative versions of the logo that are still in use.