For the fourth objective of Dimension 2, only the written features of punctuation and spelling, as identified in the standards descriptors for the dimension, are described.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Textual feature</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>These are shortened forms of words, and never use the apostrophe of omission. There are four forms:</td>
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</table>
|                       | • one or more letters of the full word with a full stop if it begins with a lower case letter  
|                       | • one or more letters of the full word with a full stop if it begins with a capital letter  
  Example: Mon (Monday), Aug. (August), Vic. (Victoria).                                      |
|                       | • one or more letters ending with the same letter as the full word, and no full stop  
  Example: Dr (doctor), dept (department), Qld (Queensland), Ave (avenue), St (street), Rd (road). |
|                       | • initialism – initials that stand for words have no full stop  
  Example: NSW (New South Wales), ACT (Australian Capital Territory).                         |
| Acronym               | This is a word formed from the initial letters of other words.  
  Example: ANZAC, QANTAS, UNESCO, NATO, scuba.                                                 |
|                       | They are pronounced as if they are words themselves. They are never written with full stops unless they are used as the last word in a sentence.  
  Popular and well-known acronyms may be written with a capital letter only, e.g. Qantas, Anzac. |
|                       | Some acronyms have been developed from more than initials.  
  Example: radar (radio detection and ranging), sitcom (situation comedy),  
  laser (light amplification by stimulated emission of radiation).                          |
| Affix                 | A general term for prefixes and suffixes. Correct use of these should be encouraged.  
  Example: inter/ intra, anti/ante, il/ir, tion/sion, able/ible, un/in.                      |
| Anagram               | Rearranging the letters in a word to make another word, not always related in meaning to the original.  
  Example: cheat and teach.                                                                  |
| Apostrophe - omission | The apostrophe (‘) is used for omission. It shows that a letter or letters have been left out of a word. The resulting word is called a contraction.  
  Contraction are widely used in spoken English dialects but are discouraged in formal written English.  
  Example:  
  I’m for I am  
  Joan’ll go for Joan will go  
  didn’t for did not  
  might’ve for might have  
  all’s well for all is well  
  it’s for it is.  
  Contraction and all kinds of shortened forms are used in SMS and other digital text messages. |
| **Apostrophe** - possession | The apostrophe is also used to show **possession** (ownership).  
- Possessive singualrs, e.g. *Peter’s boat, the woman’s shoe*.  
- Possessive plurals, e.g. *three teachers’ friends, several girls’ cars*.  
- Singular nouns ending in “s”, e.g. *Dickens’s novel*. For biblical or classical words ending in “s”, e.g. *Jesus’ teachings, Archimedes’ principle*.  
- Joint ownership — use of one or two apostrophes depends on the shared or separate ownership expressed in the sentence. Example: *My uncle and aunt’s holiday* (both owned the holiday); *Maugham’s and Huxley’s writings* (each owns his own writing).  
- Expressions of time — singular uses an apostrophe, e.g. *a month’s leave*, plural does NOT, e.g. *six hours start*.  

Possessive pronouns (*yours, his, hers, its, ours, theirs*) do NOT have an apostrophe with one exception — *one’s* as in *one’s book*.  

Apostrophes are now rarely used in titles of institutions and organisations. |
| **Asterisk** | The asterisk (*) is used for emphasis or as a reference for further comment. Example: * see below. |
| **Brackets (see parenthesis below)** | *Angle brackets* < > are used exclusively to enclose email and web addresses, but only if stated inside other text. Example: *For details of the program, contact Radio National* <abc.net.au/sport>.  
*Curly brackets* (braces) { } are rarely used in normal text, and remain for use in specialist scientific and mathematical texts.  
*Round brackets* ( ) are the most common form of parenthesis to enclose information in written text, information that is not immediately essential to a sentence, but which may clarify or add meaning to the sentence. They are used judiciously in report writing and other non-fiction texts. They are also known as parentheses.  
*Square brackets* [ ] are used to show that someone other than the original writer has inserted material into a text such as comments, explanations, notes, words of clarification. Example: *In 1998 the then president of the USA [Bill Clinton] announced that the legislation had been passed by Congress.* |
| **Bullet** | A mark (●) commonly used in business and technical writing to introduce items in a list or series. It is not necessary to use “and” before the last item in a bulleted list. Example:  
*Students need to know about:*  
- school rules  
- subjects  
- transport arrangements  
- timetables  
- uniforms. |
| **Colon** | The colon (:) is used in a sentence after an introductory statement and indicates that a list follows. Example: *In my mother’s cupboard I found the following things: scissors, string, old shopping lists and a jar of jam.* |
| **Comma** | The comma (,) operates as a boundary marker for clauses, phrases and words within sentences. It is also used to show the relationships between the different parts of sentences.  
It should be used in compound sentences where:  
- the subject of each independent clause is different, e.g. *The children had a lovely time, and the visitors were enchanted.*  
- the subject of each independent clause is the same but the clauses are long, e.g. *The children had a lively time at the party that day, but they were very tired after playing so long.*  
It should also be used after:  
- an introductory dependent clause (periodic sentence)  
  *As there were very few sales, the item was taken off the market.*  
- an introductory adverb  
  *Quickly, he threw the evidence in the river.*  
- an introductory phrase  
  *Before starting this venture, might I congratulate everyone here.*  
- an introductory circumstance.  
  *Knowing all about it this time, I was able to succeed.* |
| **Dash** | The dash (–) is used for:  
- elaboration of information (extra information is closer than would be used for brackets)  
  Example: *We were all there — family pets included — to meet him.*  
- abrupt change in the structure of a sentence  
  Example: *I want to go that — Never mind, let’s head in this direction.*  
- gathering up, amplifying, explaining (adding to what has been written).  
  Example: *The station platform was crowded with people — mothers, fathers, band members, children from nearby schools, councillors, well-wishers.* |
| **Diacritics** | Marks, such as the cedilla or acute accent, added to a letter to indicate a special phonetic value, e.g. *façade* or to distinguish words that are otherwise graphically identical, e.g. *resumé, resume.* |
| **Ellipsis** | Three equally spaced points (…) used in writing or printing to indicate the omission of words (also known as ellipsis points, plural, ellipses).  
Only three dots are used for ellipsis. At the end of a sentence, the full stop is one of the three dots.  
Example: *Among the many bird reports was one concerning bantams … and there were references to pigeons.* |
| **Hyphen** | The hyphen (-) is used to join two or more words to show an association of ideas, e.g. hard-boiled sweets, south-west, three-quarter time. It is also used with a prefix to avoid ambiguity, e.g. reform and re-form. |
| **Italics** | Writers use *italics* for words used in a special sense or way, e.g. “Never do that!” they cried. Italics are now used widely instead of quotation marks. Computers have made them easy to insert. They are used for: • titles of books and periodicals, plays and long poems • music compositions • films, videos, TV and radio programs • works of art • legislation and legal cases • names of ships and aircraft • scientific names of animals and plants • technical terms and their definitions • foreign words and phrases not yet absorbed into English. |
| **Parenthesis** | Parentheses are used to enclose expressions or statements that are not essential to the immediate meaning of the sentence. Writers use commas, round brackets and dashes as boundary markers for parenthetical statements. Example: She drove well, in spite of her father’s fears (and her brother’s insults), to the station to meet her grandmother — who had been in Europe since the war. The choice of which marker is a matter of style, and depends on “the distance” of the added information to the point of the sentence, and the effect that the writer wishes to produce. |
| **Quotation marks** | Double quotation (“”) marks are used to enclose the EXACT words of a speaker, regardless of whether the words form a complete sentence or not. The punctuation associated with the quotation is also included inside the quotation marks. Example: He said, “Dana does not want to be treated that way!” It is incorrect to use quotation marks for paraphrased speech. This is because a paraphrase is not a direct quote. A paraphrase is a restatement in other words, usually simpler and shorter, of what was written, said or overheard. Use single quotation marks (‘) for quotes within quotes. The full stop goes inside all quotation marks. Example: “Did the judge mean it when he said ‘I hope he never sees the light of day’ after passing sentence?” asked the reporter. Titles of books, films, vessels and so on are now italicised in print. If used in handwritten text they are given single quotation marks. |
| **Semi-colon** | The semi-colon (;) is used to separate parts of a sentence when the required break is longer than a comma but when a full stop is not warranted. Often the semi-colon is used to separate two clauses instead of using a conjunction. It also provides a different style and effect. Example: The music in southern Spain is different from that of Germany; the traditions, rhythms and instruments are quite distinct. |
| **Slash** | Also known as solidus, forward slash or oblique (/) this symbol is used to indicate alternative, e.g. he/she, rule/principle. It is also used in certain abbreviations and in mathematical notation, e.g. a/c, c/-. |