

Presiding Officer's Determination on Proper Form - Public Bills for Acts of the Assembly

Version 9.3, May 2015

The Presiding Officer has determined, under Standing Order 26.3, that the proper form for a Public Bill for an Act of the Assembly ("a Bill") is as follows:

Structure

- 01.** The text of a Bill must be set out in numbered sections, supplemented where appropriate by numbered schedules.
- 02.** A Bill may be divided into numbered Parts and Chapters (as may schedules).
- 03.** Each Part, Chapter, section and schedule of a Bill must have a brief descriptive heading.
- 04.** The sections of a Bill (or the paragraphs of a schedule) may also be grouped under italic cross-headings as a guide to the structure of the Bill (or the schedule).
- 05.** Sections must be numbered. A section may:
 - a. contain a single block of text, styled and defined for the purposes of this Determination as a subsection but without a number attached to it; or
 - b. be divided into numbered subsections.
- 06.** Subsections may be divided into paragraphs identified using the English alphabet. Paragraphs may be divided into sub-paragraphs numbered using lower-case Roman numerals.
- 07.** Schedules may contain no more than one single unnumbered paragraph or may be divided into numbered paragraphs. Paragraphs may be divided into numbered sub-paragraphs. Sub-paragraphs may be divided into sub-sub paragraphs identified using the English alphabet. Sub-sub paragraphs may be divided into sub-sub-sub paragraphs numbered using lower-case Roman numerals.
- 08.** A Bill must include page numbers, with lower case Roman numerals for pages containing a list of contents and Arabic numerals for other pages.
- 09.** A Bill must include a contents page or pages.
- 10.** A Bill must include provision for a short title by which the Act is to be known.
- 11.** A Bill must include a long title beginning "An Act of the National Assembly for Wales to ..." describing the purposes of the Bill. The long title must appear on page 1 of the Bill, and must follow the descriptor of the Bill's status.
- 12.** Both the short and long titles should be in factual, neutral terms and must not contain material intended to promote or justify the policy behind the Bill, or exaggerate its effect.



Llywydd
Presiding Officer



13. A Bill must include words of enactment, which must follow the long title. The agreed words of enactment are as follows:

Having been passed by the National Assembly for Wales and having received the assent of Her Majesty, it is enacted as follows:

14. Preambles to a Bill are not permitted.

Style and presentation

15. A Bill must be introduced on the approved template.¹

16. The styles of all Bill components, including spacings between components, must equate to those contained in the approved template.

17. The text of a Bill (long title, words of enactment, sections and schedules) must be printed in Book Antiqua font, font size 11, fully justified.

18. A descriptor of a Bill's status must appear under the short title at each stage of the Bill's scrutiny e.g. As introduced; As amended at Stage 2.

19. Section headings, incorporating the section number, must appear in bold directly above the text of the section to which the heading relates. Units of text within sections and schedule paragraphs must appear as indented blocks of text with straight left margins.

20. The English text of a Bill must not use gender-specific language unless the meaning of the provision cannot be expressed in any other way (e.g. the provision is one that relates only to persons of a particular gender). The Welsh text of a Bill must not use gender-specific language unless this is required by the grammar of the Welsh language.

21. Text may be presented as a definition within a particular subdivision. Definitions may be subdivided into definition paragraphs, identified using the English alphabet. Definition paragraphs may be further divided in definition sub-paragraphs, numbered using lower-case Roman numerals.

22. Text may also be presented in list form, for example to list provisions of an Act, activities or items.

23. Information may also be presented in a Bill using the following formats:

- a. tables;
- b. algebraic formulae;
- c. maps, diagrams or images.

24. All tables, other than those forming part of an amendment to an existing enactment (in which case the numbering or other identification convention of that enactment must be followed) must be identified as: 'Table [number]' and consist of at least two columns.

¹ "The approved template" means the version of the Legislative Workbench being used by the National Assembly for Wales Commission. The Legislative Workbench is the Bill Drafting and Bill Management Software supplied to the National Assembly for Wales Commission and the Welsh Government under licence from Propylon Limited.



- 25.** Where it is appropriate for repeals and revocations to be listed in tabular format in a schedule, the table must consist of at least two columns. The first must give the short title and number of each statute or instrument affected, in chronological order. The second must list the provisions to be repealed or revoked, in the order in which they appear in the statute or instrument. Further columns may be added as necessary.
- 26.** Where an algebraic formula (other than those that are comprised within single lines of text) a map, a diagram or an image is included in a Bill, it must be identified as: 'Figure [number]'. The exception is where an algebraic formula, map, diagram or image forms part of an amendment to an existing enactment. In that case, the numbering or other identification convention of that enactment must be followed).
- 27.** Each page of the English language and Welsh language version of a Bill must start and finish with the same numbered or lettered provision, at the same place in the text. The exception is where a provision lists definitions alphabetically, resulting in differences between the ordering of English and Welsh texts.

Line Numbers

28. A Bill must include line numbers.

29. Line numbers are to be applied to every line of text except:

- a. the contents pages;
- b. the short title and the descriptor of the Bill's status;
- c. algebraic formulae other than those that are comprised within single lines of text;
- d. maps, diagrams or images.

