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» HOW TO... Write a Policy Submission

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When you make a written submission, you don't need 20 pages of comments. Sometimes a few bullet points may be enough to get your views across. Don't pad out your policy submissions – it will only waste your time and the reader's.

You want your submission to be timely and to have an impact, so note any deadlines and leave yourself enough time to analyse the policy, write the submission and send it.

Use the policy analysis template in [How To... Do Policy Analysis](#) to develop a strong and comprehensive position.

» Writing your submission

- In your introduction state who you are and what you do. Remember to outline who you represent, for example, members or client groups.
- Write clearly and avoid jargon. Spell out the names of groups or policies and don't use long lists of initial letters in the text.
- Stick to the sequence of the policy document on which you're commenting. Be careful with response booklets that may come with consultation documents and that ask you to answer specific questions. They may avoid dealing with the more controversial parts of the consultation document. Don't be afraid to add additional comments and observations.
- Number your paragraphs. This helps you keep track of what you are saying. It also means you can refer back to certain points rather than having to repeat them.
- Make sure your submission or response is consistent with the position you have taken in the past. If you have changed your position, say why.
- Always give evidence, where possible, to support your position. Give brief examples or illustrations, where you can, to back up your points.
- If you are referring to statistics or comments from other documents make sure you put a reference to them at the end of the document or in a footnote at the bottom of each page, giving the full source of the information.

- Finish with a strong conclusion that will act as a summary of your main points.
- Give your contact details and say that you are happy to be contacted to discuss any of the matters you have raised. Be sure to include the name of the appropriate contact person.
- Ask to be kept informed of further developments.
- Check your submission very carefully before you send it – mistakes, even in grammar or spelling, can undermine your credibility.

» What else should you do?

- If you have time, you could circulate a draft response to colleagues or committee members or members of client groups. Their feedback may help to show you where you have missed additional points or where parts of the document may be unclear.
- Check if your response will be published. Sometimes government will publish a summary of consultation responses, so be sure to check that your comments have been adequately reflected. Even if it is not published, someone may ask to see your response under Freedom of Information legislation. Always keep this in mind when you are writing.