

Writing Manuals

R51050

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/01

WM-3

I n t r o d u c t i o n t o W r i t i n g M a n u a l s

This manual is intended to tell you everything you need to know about writing a manual for a software package for the ICL ONE PER DESK. The manual defines the Housestyle for printed manuals including physical details, typefaces, style of writing and terminology. The manual also describes the typical production cycle for an ICL OPD manual.

C o n t e n t s

This manual is divided into two sections, which are introduced below. The quickest way to find information on a particular topic is to use the comprehensive index at the back of the manual.

1	Housestyle	7
	Details the Housestyle for typeset OPD manuals.	
2	Manual production cycle	17
	Describes the production cycle of a typical ICL manual.	
	Appendix 1	19
	Examples referred to in the text.	
	Appendix 2	23
	Gives the complete style specification, including page layout.	
	Index	31

1H o u s e s t y l e

There is a specification of the style for OPD manuals in Appendix 2, page 23.

PHYSICAL DETAILS Typeset ICL manuals have the following features:

- Size is $2/3$ A4 set portrait
- Manuals are Wiro bound, using a white Wiro. Smaller manuals of only a few pages (up to about 35) are stapled through the spine. The size of the Wiro depends on the number of pages in the manual, use the smallest Wiro that will take the required number of pages
- Text is black on white paper. The second colour is Pantone 220c. For information on use of colour see below
- Covers are ICL beige. The front cover shows the ICL OPD logo and the manual title reversed out. The I has an orange flash as shown on page 20. The front cover also shows a full colour photograph. The back cover has the manual R number reversed out in the bottom left hand corner in 10 point type

STRUCTURE

Long manuals with a great deal of information should be divided into Parts which are lettered, ie Part A, Part B etc. These Parts are further divided into Sections, which are numbered within each Part. However, most software manuals will not fall into this category.

Smaller manuals are simply divided into numbered Sections.

Each Part, Section and Appendix, as well as the Contents and other special pages (see First few pages, page 9), starts on a right hand page, it may be necessary to leave the last page of the preceding section blank to allow for this.

LANGUAGE

Write in an informal, friendly style, but don't get too chatty or use slang expressions. Use abbreviations, dashes and bracketed phrases and sentences wherever they seem natural.

Always write in the present tense and in the second person. Use the imperative form for giving instructions, ie "Plug in the monitor" rather than "You should plug in the monitor".

Neutralisation

The name of the product (ie OPD) should not be used.

In general this is done by referring to an application doing something rather than the machine itself. Where it is not possible to avoid referring to the workstation, use a general term such as machine, workstation or computer.

HEADINGS

There are four main types of heading that you can use. Details are below:

Section Headings

These are in upper and lower case, 24 point Megaron bold, set solid. The number of the section appears in the left hand margin, set in 60 point Megaron bold and visually centred.

Section headings are used at the beginning of Parts and Sections and as titles for Contents, Index and other special pages.

On the first page of an appendix, the words "Appendix n" (where n is the number of the appendix) appear in 18 point bold, visually centred in the left margin. If there's only one Appendix, there's no need to number it. The title of the appendix is set in upper and lower case, 14 point Megaron bold.

Weight 1 headings

These are in upper and lower case, 14 point Megaron bold. They appear in the left margin.

Weight 2 headings

These are in upper and lower case, 12 point Megaron bold. They appear in the margin.

Weight 3 headings

These are in upper and lower case. They appear in the text area. The heading for this paragraph would be a weight 3 heading in a typeset manual.

FIRST FEW PAGES
Title page

Each manual has a title page as the first page. In ICL manuals this is black on white and shows the ICL OPD logo and the manual title in the same positions as the front cover.

Imprint page

This goes on the reverse of the title page. Check what is needed on this page by way of copyright statements and acknowledgements.

The Title and Imprint pages are not numbered but are counted when numbering other pages.

Page 3

This is the first proper page of the manual and is numbered 3. The title on this page is "Introducing xxxxxx" as a section heading, where xxxxxx is the subject of the manual (eg "Introducing Messaging"). There is no section number in the left margin.

This page gives general introductory material about both the manual and the product. The text must not take up more than one page.

Page 4

This page should be left blank except for hardware manuals, where it should contain a set of safety instructions in the form of Dos and Don'ts.

Contents page

This is the fifth page of the manual. The Contents page lists the contents of the manual by Section, including any Appendices and the Index. Where a manual has Parts the Contents page lists the contents by parts rather than sections.

The title "Contents" is a section heading, the headings of the various sections should be in 14 pt Megaron bold.

Where a manual has Parts they are referred to as, eg

Part D Computer facilities

113

Sections are referred to as, eg

7 Using VT-Link

25

The title of an appendix is given as just "Appendix n" where n is the number of the appendix. No number is needed if there is only one appendix.

Below each section title is a brief description of the contents of that part of the manual in note form, eg "Gives details of the character sets available" not "This section gives details...".

The Contents page is introduced by a short paragraph as follows:

This manual is divided into four sections, which are introduced below. The quickest way to find information on a particular topic is to use the comprehensive index at the back of the manual.

When counting sections for this paragraph, don't count any Appendices or the Index.

Parts

Parts are only required for long manuals where there is more information than can be structured by the use of sections. As we are aiming for short manuals, there should be little need for the use of Parts.

Each Part is introduced by a part page. This is similar to the contents page, the main difference being the inclusion of the Part letter in the left margin in 60 point bold type as for a section number.

The rest of the page gives the contents of the part by section, in a similar way to the contents page. The reverse of the contents page or a part page is blank.

TYPEFACES

The text of the manual should be printed in 10/11 point Megaron light. There are two other typefaces you can use where necessary:

- **Bold.** Use bold for:

- Text that appears on the screen, for example:

INSERT ENTRY Displays the directory entry form so that you can put a new entry into the directory.

- Text that the user types, for example:

... For example you can provide a brief explanatory message like **These are last month's sales figures**

- To draw attention to differences between a one-line and a two-line OPD. Start a paragraph or a sentence with the phrase "If you have one line ..." or "If you have two lines ..." in bold.
- Emphasis, if necessary
- Italics. These are used to introduce special terms, they are represented in this manual by underlining. Use italics for:
 - The f symbol for function key combinations. Note that this is in Times Roman italic not Megaron
 - Manual titles in cross references, for example:

How to do this is described in the *Advanced Operations* manual.
 - Parameters, whose values the user will supply when using a particular facility, for example:

IFhhmdd.ifa
 - Special terms. The first introduction of a term that may not be familiar to the user, for example:

Applications are the facilities or programs you select from menus.

CROSS REFERENCES These fall into two categories.

Within a manual

Cross references to material in the same manual are by page number, eg (see page 95), or by title and page number, eg (see Call timing, page 106). Note that italics are used for the title.

To other manuals

Cross references to other manuals specify the manual title only. The title is given in italics with no mention of OPD or the R number. The reference should be given in the form "the Xchange manual" except in the case of the Handbook and any similar future titles.

HEADER AND FOOTERS

There are no headers in OPD manuals.

Footers should be used on all pages of parts, sections, appendices and indexes. Pages without footers are:

- Title page
- Imprint page
- Page 3 (Introducing xxxxxx)
- Page 4 (Proper use...)
- Contents
- Part pages
- Blank pages

In a manual with parts, the footer on a left hand page gives the part name and title, eg Part D Computer facilities. The right hand page footer gives the section number and title, eg 2 - Viewdata. When there are no parts both pages carry the section number and title.

The footer is centred on the text width and is printed in 9 point Megaron light.

TABLES

Use a standard format for tables. See page 21 for this format. If the table requires a title, use a normal weight 2 heading. Column headings are weight 3 headings. Note that tables are not boxed, and there are no lines separating columns.

DIAGRAMS

Keep diagrams as small as they can be while remaining clear and legible. Don't use unnecessary diagrams, and avoid nationally specific diagrams where possible, eg telephone connectors. Screens should be a standard size, this is 75mm wide by 56mm deep. Key symbols and warning icons should be a standard size, see page 21.

Always represent screens as black on white except where this doesn't illustrate the point you're making. Make sure that the typeface and point size used on screens is consistent with that on page 22. Screens should always show exactly what appears on the real screen.

There is no need to show the whole of the screen if what you're describing is located in one area of the screen, eg the noticeboard.

Screens should be centred on the text width in which they appear.

LISTS AND PROCEDURES

Lists should be unnumbered. Each list item should be preceded by a ten point open box. The text starts at the 5th character position and is left justified to this position. The list item should have an initial capital letter, and the final sentence of the list item is not followed by a full stop.

Second level lists are treated in the same way, except that the box is in the 5th character position and is 8 point. The text of the list item is indented to the 9th character position.

Procedures are sets of instructions. They are treated in exactly the same way as lists but are numbered instead of having a 10 point box.

WARNINGS

Use the roadsign icon in the margin to indicate a warning.

KEYWORDS

Some manuals may need pages defining keywords or commands. The pages of keywords should be introduced by a list of all the keywords. The keywords themselves should be treated as weight 1 headings.

TERMINOLOGY

This section gives the correct terminology for OPD manuals.

Actions

load from (a cartridge)	NOT	read from
save on (a cartridge)	NOT	write to
print (on a printer)	NOT	print out
display (on the screen)	NOT	print

Hardware

cartridge	NOT	tape, microdrive cartridge
capsule	NOT	ROMcapsule
display (what actually appears on the screen)		

handset	NOT	receiver
microdrive	NOT	drive
left or right microdrive	NOT	microdrive 1 or 2
numberpad	NOT	keypad, number pad
screen (the hardware item cf. display)		
store	NOT	memory

Other terms

digit (a single number)	NOT	number, figure
manual	NOT	publication
option (on a menu)	NOT	item, number
press (the X key)	NOT	depress
printed copy	NOT	printout, hard copy
type (the following text)	NOT	enter, key, type in
voice call	NOT	speech call

Keys

Always refer to keys as keys, eg "Press the START key" not "Press START". The first reference to a shifted key should add how to get it, eg "Press the HOLD key (SHIFT/numberpad 5). Always show key combinations in the format CTRL/A which means, press and hold down the CTRL key and press the A key.

The name of the key should appear exactly as it does on the key itself, eg CTRL, SPKR, B/TAB etc.

Represent the function key by f. This is not separated by a slash from the key it qualifies, eg press f4.

The key sometimes referred to as the RETURN key should always be represented by the symbol that appears on the key, ie .

USE OF COLOUR Headings

The four weights of heading appear as follows:

- Section headings: colour
- Weight 1 headings: colour

- Weight 2 headings: black
- Weight 3 headings: black

When Section headings are used at the beginning of a Part or Section, the Part letter or Section number appears in black.

The letter headings that introduce each part of the Index are 18pt bold and are in colour.

The heading of an Appendix is different to normal section headings. The word "Appendix" (together with the number if there is more than one) appears in black text; the title of the Appendix, eg "File types", appears in colour.

Other uses of
colour

Colour is also used for leader lines and arrows on diagrams.

The Warning roadsign icon is printed in colour.

The titles of each section on the contents page are in colour in the typeset manual.

2Manual Production Cycle

This section details the typical stages that an ICL OPD manual goes through in production. You may find it useful to adopt this procedure; however, if you already have established procedures for producing manuals, you can skip this section.

SYNOPSIS

The first stage is for the author to gather the information together and then prepare a synopsis of the manual.

The synopsis is an outline, detailing the content and structure of the manual. Typically, it is done in section headings, with details of the content of each section and some text to indicate the style of writing. It is useful to estimate the number of pages for each section. For example, a synopsis of this manual might begin something like this:

Introducing Writing Manuals (1 page)

Introduces the manual and explains what it's for and what's in it.

Contents (1 page)1 Housestyle (12 pages)

Explains all the features of the Housestyle for OPD manuals.

Includes information on:

- Physical details (size etc)
- Structure
- Typefaces
- Covers
- Use of colour
- Terminology

....

and so on.

The synopsis is circulated to the relevant contacts, eg marketing, technical development etc for comments and approval.

When the synopsis has been approved, the next stage is the first draft.

FIRST DRAFT

This is the author's first attempt at writing the manual. The text should be as complete as possible and laid out in a way that corresponds to how it will appear in the printed form. This manual is laid out in such a way.

The first draft is circulated to contacts for comments. Each contact is expected to make comments within his field, eg technical contacts are expected to comment on the technical accuracy of the draft.

When the author has received the comments on the first draft, they can be incorporated into the text to create the final draft.

FINAL DRAFT

This draft is issued to contacts so that they can check that their comments on the first draft have been correctly dealt with. There should be no major comments on this draft. The main purpose is for the contacts to approve the manual for publication. When the text has been approved, it can be marked up for the printers.

TEXT-TO-PRINT

This is produced by taking a clean copy of the approved text and marking it up so that the printers know how to typeset it. This includes marking weights of headings, different typefaces and any special symbols. When the text has been marked up and checked, it is sent to the printers.

PAGE PROOFS

These are photocopies of the made up pages. They are sent by the printer to allow the author to check for errors in composition. Any errors are marked on the proofs, which are then returned to the printer.

ADVANCE COPIES

These are copies of the printed manual, sent by the printer for a final check before bulk delivery of the manual. If the advance copies are satisfactory, the manual is signed off and can be delivered to the factory.

Appendix 1E x a m p l e s

The following pages contain examples referred to in the text of this manual.

The examples are:

- Cover
- Table
- Key symbol
- Warning icon
- Screen

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WM-20

Flash on
ICL orange

ICL

Reversed out

ONE PER DESK

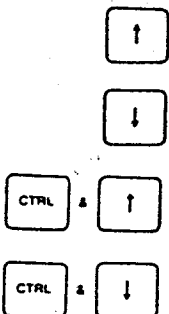
Background ICL beige

Box for colour photograph

Datalink - Table reversed out

Symbol Symbol name Comments

⋮	Start of message (SOM)	The start of message symbol marks the beginning of a message to be sent to the computer. The SOM appears to the left of the first character in the message. When you send a message to the computer, the message includes all the unprotected data between the SOM and the cursor.
⋮		The position of SOM is set by the computer initially, but you may be able to move SOM to the current cursor position by pressing ALT/S. SOM does not occupy a cursor position
└	Start of protected field	This symbol marks the start of a protected field
└	Start of unprotected field	This symbol marks the start of an unprotected field



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COMPUTER ACCESS

Select terminal type for new profile

- 1 Viewdata
- 2 Glass Teletype
- 3 ICL-Link
- 4 Termilink
- 5 VT-Link

/8 exit
/9 abandon printing

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Appendix 2

H o u s e s t y l e s p e c i f i c a t i o n

The following pages contain a complete specification of the Housestyle for OPD manuals.

Contents

24pt Megaron bold

3½

8½

10/11 Megaron Light

This manual is divided into eleven sections, which are introduced below. The quickest way to find information on a particular topic is to use the comprehensive index at the back of the manual.

1 Connecting to the computer

14pt Megaron Bold

Explains how the ICL OPD connects to the computer.

9

2 Plugging in the capsule

Tells you how to plug in the capsule

14pt
Megaron
Bold

11

3 Setting up a profile

2 lines space

Tells you how to set up a *profile* to simplify the process of connecting to a service. (A profile is a set of data that defines technical aspects of the method of connection. By using profiles, you avoid typing these technical details each time you connect to a service.)

13 4

4 Creating a directory entry

Gives details of creating a Computer Services Directory entry. Once you've set up a directory entry, you can connect to a service by simply typing a shortcode.

1 line space

23

5 Saving profiles and directory entries

Tells you how to save your profiles and directory entries on a microdrive cartridge.

25

6 Connecting to a service

Explains the different ways of connecting to a service and gives full details of connecting by shortcode.

27

Text width 30 right ragged

Text
depth
37

10pt Light

5

2½

Using Feeding Teletype

5½
3
8½
60pt
Megaron
Bold

10/11 Megaron Light
To use Feeding Teletype, you need to connect to a computer service. To do this, follow the instructions in Connecting to a service, page 19.

Megaron Light Italic
You can use your OPD as a normal glass teletype terminal, to exchange data with a remote computer service.

You can also use it to send files you have already prepared using, for example, Xchange applications such as Quill or Abacus. Before you can do this, you must create an Export file in Quill, Abacus, or Archive format on a microdrive. Consult the Xchange manual if you are uncertain how to do this.

While your OPD is connected to a computer service you may use any of these keys:

- ☐ Alphanumeric keys
- ☐ System keys
- ☐ Telephony keys
- ☐ Keys identifying stored key sequences
- ☐ Feeding Teletype function keys

The alphanumeric keys on the OPD are coded according to the UK version of International Alphabet No. 5. This is made up of 128 characters and control codes with coded values in the range 0 to 127.

Codes 0 to 31 are control codes, which pass control information rather than a character to the host computer. A list of these codes can be found in Section 5.

Codes 32 to 127 are the graphic (displayable) characters of the standard OPD character set. They are recognised by the majority of computer services.

To send text to a service, just type these characters in the standard way, using the SHIFT, CAPS lock and ALT keys where required.

Centred on text width
Footer: 9pt Megaron Light

3 - Using Feeding Teletype

10pt Light
35
2½

Centred on B plus

14/15 meg.
bold
Alphanumeric
keys

1 Line space

2 Lines space

30 right ragged

13

4

3½

2½

8½


3 Complete the fields in the Export Page form

10pt Megaron Light

The Export Page form looks like this:

EXPORT PAGE	
File name	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cartridge name	
Drive (L/R)	
Page (1-99)	
Format (Q/A/N) Q	
/1 accept /B abandon	

Text
depth
37

You must complete all the fields except Cartridge name, which is optional. Press the TAB key or the  key to move to the next field.

13

30 right ragged

4

Here is an explanation of each of the fields:

2 Lines
space1 Line
space

File name 3rd wt. 11pt Megaron Med. Italic

Specifies the name you want to give the file. It should not be a name which already exists on the microdrive cartridge you are sending the file to, or in store. The name has this form:

FILENAME.EXT

where,

FILENAME Can be twelve characters long

Note that if you want to export the file to Xchange it must have an extension so, to allow for the addition of an extension to the file name, it is recommended that you limit file names to eight characters.

Part C Export Page

Centred on text width

4

56

2½

Appendix 5 ICL-Link data validation

18pt Mag. Bold 14pt Mag. bold 8½

Data that you type into unprotected fields during an ICL-Link session may be validated by the DTCU (depending on the service you are using).

Data validation can do the following:


☐ Check that the data in an unprotected data field is one of the following:

- ☒ Alphabetic (spaces invalid)
- ☐ Alphanumeric (as alphabetic and 0 to 9, spaces invalid)
- ☐ Numeric (0 to 9, spaces invalid)
- ☐ Integers (0 to 9, spaces valid)
- ☐ Pure numeric (0 to 9 with mandatory decimal point)
- ☐ Full numeric (0 to 9 with +, -, or decimal point as options)

☐ Check digit information on integer fields


☐ Accumulator arithmetic to check the totalling of fields for accuracy

An unprotected field may be validated when you press one of the following keys:

- ☐ The ENTER key (or CTRL/I) or the  key (or CTRL/M), whichever has not been defined as the SEND key, or the TAB key. For the field to be validated, the cursor must be within the field; it can be in any position.

The field is not validated if:

- ☐ You use the cursor control keys or CTRL/TAB to move from one field to another
- ☐ You move the cursor out of the field before pressing one of the keys listed above

- ☒ The ENTER key (or CTRL/J) or the  key (whichever has been defined as the SEND key in the profile). All fields between SOM and cursor are validated, even if they've been validated before

Appendix 5

85

2½

2½

8pt
Box

Text
depth
37

Wt 2: 12/13 Mag. bold
When does
validation
happen?

10pt
Box

Glossary 24pt Megaron Bold

10/11 Meg. Bold
access pause

10/11 Meg. Light
A pause in a dialing sequence of about four seconds that allows time for lengthy telephone exchange operations. For example, on exchanges where you dial a single digit to get an outside line, you will probably need an access pause between dialling the single digit and dialling the telephone number, to allow time for connection to the outside line. You can build access pauses into telephone numbers held in your Telephone or Computer Services Directory.

1 line space
alphanumeric

A set of characters containing letters and digits, but no other characters or symbols.

application

A program, or set of programs, that let you use the OPD for a particular activity.

Auto-answer

The OPD's automatic answering service for voice and data telephone calls. This service cannot record a message from the caller.

2 lines space
background

A term used to describe an extended application which is running without the use of the display or keyboard (that is running in the background).

back-up copy Text width 30 right ragged

A copy of a file, or all the data on a cartridge, that is kept as a security copy for use in the event of cartridge failure or corruption of data.

BASIC

BASIC is a popular programming language in which you can instruct the OPD to perform tasks. When you have loaded the BASIC programming language from cartridge, you can load or type programs (sets of instructions) written in BASIC, and use these programs to instruct the OPD to carry out tasks. See the manual *OPD BASIC* for more details.

10/11 Meg. Light Italic

Centered on text
Glossary
2 1/2 width

241 ← 4

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dept:
37

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3½

5

A bold page reference indicates the best place to start reading.

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14½

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Ⓒ-18pt Meg. Bold

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depth
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13

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2½

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4

I n d e x

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Title : Telephone Handler

Reference : PSD 76.87.3.3

This document is available on request from ICL's Personal Computer Business Centre, Bracknell, Berks.

Telephone : OPD Support (0344) 486868 quoting the above title and reference