AS ISO 24495.2:2026
ISO 24495-2:2025

Australian STANDARD®

STANDARDS Australia

Plain language

Part 2: Legal communication



AS ISO 24495.2:2026

This Australian Standard® was prepared by CS-117, Translating, Interpreting and Related Technology. It was approved on behalf of Standards Australia's Standards Development and Accreditation Committee on 04 September 2026.

This Standard was published on 18 September 2026.

The following are represented on Committee CS-117:

- Aboriginal Interpreter Services
- Australasian Association of Language Companies
- Australian Institute of Interpreters & Translators
- Australian Sign Language Interpreters and Translators Association
- International Plain Language Federation
- Multicultural NSW
- National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters
- Professionals Australia

This Standard was issued for comment as DR AS ISO 24495.2:2026

Status of this document

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ISBN: 978 1 76175 904 8

AS ISO 24495.2:2026
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First published as AS ISO 24495.2:2026.

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This page explains the meaning of the language and structure of this Standard.

Refer to Standards Australia's Standardisation Guide 006 for more details about drafting rules.

Australian and Australian/New Zealand Standards are voluntary unless they are referenced in legislation or called up in contracts.

Requirements

To conform to a Standard, all requirements in the Standard need to be met.

A requirement is any statement in the Standard which uses the word "shall".

Recommendations, permissions and possibilities

The following words are commonly used in Standards, but statements using them do not have to be followed to conform to the Standard:

(a) "should" means that something is recommended.

(b) "may" means that something is permitted.

(c) "can" means that something is possible.

Structure of Standards

A Standard always has the following parts:

(i) The Preface states who developed the Standard, what the Standard is aiming to do, and how it relates to other documents.

(ii) The Scope states what the Standard is about, what it covers and what it does not cover.

(iii) The Normative references clause lists other documents that are referenced in the Standard as part of requirements.

(iv) The Terms and definitions clause defines important terms to help with understanding the Standard.

A Standard may also include other parts, such as the following:

(1) A normative appendix sets additional requirements that need to be conformed to.

(2) An informative appendix provides additional information or guidance. They usually do not contain requirements. If an informative appendix does contain requirements, the Standard will explain when those requirements apply.

(3) A Bibliography lists documents referenced in the Standard but not as part of requirements.

Many Standards include notes. Notes provide recommendations and/or guidance only. They never contain requirements.

Preface

This Standard was prepared by the Standards Australia Committee CS-117, Translating, Interpreting and Related Technology.

The objective of this document is to deal with legal communication and build on the foundation for plain language in AS ISO 24495.1. It establishes guidelines and techniques to help authors make sure that readers can readily understand legal communication and exercise their legal rights and obligations.

This document explains how to apply principles from AS ISO 24495.1 in legal contexts that require authors to —

(a) reach multiple audiences with different needs;

(b) adhere to legally required structural and design requirements;

(c) explain complex and nuanced legal concepts; and

(d) explain processes that readers must navigate to exercise legal rights and obligations.

This document is identical to, and has been reproduced from, ISO 24495-2:2025, *Plain language — Part 2: Legal communication*.

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Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular, the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO document should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see www.iso.org/directives).

ISO draws attention to the possibility that the implementation of this document may involve the use of (a) patent(s). ISO takes no position concerning the evidence, validity or applicability of any claimed patent rights in respect thereof. As of the date of publication of this document, ISO had not received notice of (a) patent(s) which may be required to implement this document. However, implementers are cautioned that this may not represent the latest information, which may be obtained from the patent database available at www.iso.org/patents. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights.

Any trade name used in this document is information given for the convenience of users and does not constitute an endorsement.

For an explanation of the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT), see www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html.

This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 37, *Language and terminology*.

A list of all parts in the ISO 24495 series can be found on the ISO website.

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at www.iso.org/members.html.

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Introduction

This document helps authors communicate in plain legal language so that even complex legal information can be expressed clearly, effectively and accurately. Plain language makes information accessible to both legal professionals and non-expert readers.

This document builds on international recognition of the benefits of using plain language in legal communication.

The ability to understand legal information helps individuals and organizations protect their rights. For individuals, these include the ability to earn a living, obtain housing, make sound medical and financial decisions, and pursue and defend legal rights. Understandable legal information also makes it easier for individuals and organizations to meet their legal obligations and participate in legal processes.

Good legal communication reduces costs, increases efficiency and improves effectiveness and compliance (see Reference [2]). Other benefits include increased trust, reduced litigation as well as easier digitalization and translation.

Legal communication practices vary widely, from author to author, across legal systems, within legal specialities and within segments of the profession. But too often, the profession communicates in ways that can unintentionally leave the most important stakeholders on the outside and interfere with the communicators' goals. While many legal professionals communicate effectively within their own area of practice, the profession lacks consistent standards to also communicate effectively with clients, the public and other professionals.

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Australian Standard®

Plain language

Part 2: Legal communication

1 Scope

This document deals with legal communication, and it builds on the foundation for plain language in ISO 24495-1. It establishes guidelines and techniques to help authors make sure that readers can readily understand legal communication and exercise their legal rights and obligations.

This document explains how to apply principles from ISO 24495-1 in legal contexts that require authors to achieve these goals:

— reach multiple audiences with different needs;

— adhere to legally required structural and design requirements;

— explain complex and nuanced legal concepts;

— explain processes that readers must navigate to exercise legal rights and obligations.

This document applies to legal documents in all sectors, including the legal, governmental, non-governmental and health sectors. Similarly to ISO 24495-1, it aims to work for most languages, but it provides examples only in English. It reflects research on plain legal language and the experience of experts in the field (see Reference [3]). To the extent possible, this document allows for differences in legal systems.

Although this document applies mainly to written communication, it can apply to oral communication in some contexts, such as discussions with clients and explanations in court proceedings.

2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes requirements of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO 24495-1, *Plain language — Part 1: Governing principles and guidelines*

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO 24495-1 and the following apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminology databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

— ISO Online browsing platform: available at https://www.iso.org/obp

— IEC Electropedia: available at https://www.electropedia.org/

3.1
plain legal language
legal communication (3.2) in which wording, structure and design are so clear that intended readers can easily

— find what they need,

— understand what they find, and

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