

To: RDA Appendices Group

From: Joint Steering Committee for Development of RDA

Subject: RDA Part B abbreviations

The JSC thanks the RDA Appendices Group for their report regarding the use of abbreviations in preferred access points for persons, families, corporate bodies, places, and works, etc. (issued as 5JSC/Chair/9/Chair follow-up/4). The JSC considered the arguments the Group has advanced in favour of abbreviations in specific circumstances, and offers specific comments on the report's recommendations below.

As a general principle the JSC prefers to avoid the use of abbreviations because they may not be generally understood. The JSC therefore does not wish to introduce any new abbreviations to RDA.

The RDA Appendices Group's Report recommended that abbreviations be used in the following circumstances:

Preferred access points for persons, families, corporate bodies, and places – abbreviations

Preferred access points for works, etc. – abbreviations:

Those that are integral parts of the name;

The JSC agree with the Appendices Group's recommendation as it supports the principle of representation.

Distinguishing terms added to names of persons, if they are abbreviated in the source from which they are taken.

In the December 2007 draft the question of abbreviations used as additions to names no longer occurs in the following circumstances:

- Terms such as "Mrs" and "Dr" are now covered by the instructions on treatment of these as an integral part of the name (RDA 9.2.5).
- Terms of address (e.g., "Rev.", "Sir") and academic degrees (e.g., "Ph.D.") are no longer to be used as distinguishing terms. Terms indicating the profession or occupation can be given in full (RDA 9.17).
- The 9.7 instructions have been revised to specify the terms to be used (i.e. Saint and Spirit).

However, abbreviations used to denote a Christian religious order (RDA 9.5.0.8) may be added to their title if they are regularly used by the person, or appear in resources associated with the person.

Certain names of larger places added to the name of another place, a corporate body, or a family (see [section of appendix on abbreviations of place names]);

The JSC have decided that the abbreviation of place names is not desirable. However, RDA's instructions for first release will allow for the use of abbreviations for place names per AACR, and so please do retain these abbreviations for the appendix.

Certain names of larger places added to the name of another place, used in additions to a name

The JSC have decided not to introduce new cases where abbreviations may be used.

Months or seasons used in dates added to the name

The JSC have decided not to continue the practice of abbreviating the names of months, and not to introduce new abbreviations for seasons.

Terms used with numbering unless a particular instruction specifies otherwise

See comments under Related recommendations number 4 below.

Those that are specified in a particular instruction (e.g., _____).

The following instructions have been identified as referring to abbreviations:

The instructions on recording identifiers for persons, families, corporate bodies, works, and expressions, all specify using abbreviations as instructed in appendix B when recording the name of the agency, etc., responsible for assigning the identifier.

The JSC request that the Appendices Group review which abbreviations in B.9 might apply, and whether they are justifiable.

The instruction at 11.2.0.8.1 allows an abbreviation indicating incorporation, etc., associated with the name in the sources to be recorded even if it is not an integral part of the name, if it is needed to make it clear that the name is that of a corporate body.

This instruction will be retained; however it does not refer to the Appendix.

The instruction at 6.21.0.3c.1 specifies using a generally accepted abbreviation preceding a thematic index number.

The JSC agreed to retain to this instruction per our decision regarding "abbreviations in specific instructions for preferred name for works, etc." mentioned below; however it does not refer to the Appendix.

The instruction at 6.26.2.3.1 specifies using an abbreviated form of the month when recording the date of signing of a treaty, and references appendix B.

Consistent with our decision not to continue the practice of abbreviating the names of months in additions to names, the JSC have decided not to allow the abbreviated forms of the names of months in these circumstances.

Related recommendations:

(1) The lack of “certain terms used with dates” in the persons, etc., recommended list reflects the Appendices Group’s positions that:

-- The abbreviations “b.,” “d.,” and “fl.” should not be included in dates recorded for these element sub-types

-- The word “century” should be spelled out rather than abbreviated as “cent.”

-- The Latin abbreviation “ca.” should be replaced by English word “about.”

The JSC agree with the Appendices Group’s recommendation to no longer use “b.,” “d.,” “fl.,” “cent.” or “ca”.

The JSC considered the suggestion to replace “ca.” with “about”. For consistency with other RDA instructions, and for greater clarity, the JSC would prefer to use “approximately”. This decision is tentative and subject to re-evaluation in the light of the instructions on recording dates being drafted by the LC representative, and on the outcomes of the constituency review.

(2) The JSC did not address the use of “etc.” in the access point for a conference held in three or more locations (11.4.1.3.6) [noted in 5JSC/Restricted/LC rep/2]. Because the instances of such a situation are few, the Appendices Group recommends revising the instruction to say to list all the locations.

The JSC agree with the Appendices Group’s recommendation to revise the instruction to say to list all the locations (see 11.1.1.8.4 in the December 2007 draft of Sections 2-4, 9).

(3) The JSC did not address the use of “etc.” in the instructions for collective titles “Laws, etc.,” “Treaties, etc.,” and “Protocols, etc.” (15.2.1.1.1a.1, 15.2.2.1.1, 15.2.2.2.1a.1, and 15.2.2.3.1 in the Sept. 2007 draft) [noted in 5JSC/Restricted/LC rep/2].

The JSC agree with the Appendices Group’s recommendation to seek the constituencies’ advice on the use of “etc.” in these access points. See the cover letter for the December 2007 draft of Sections 2-4, 9.

(4) The category “terms used with numbering unless a particular instruction specifies otherwise” is recommended to cover the situations in RDA where the instruction says to use a term without specifying if it is to be given in full or as an abbreviation; the term is shown as a full word in the examples for some instructions and as an abbreviation in the examples for other instructions.

The JSC have not made a final decision on whether to allow a general exception for terms used with numbering.

The JSC request that the Appendices Group review which abbreviations in B.9 might apply, and whether they are justifiable.

(5) Re: abbreviations in specific instructions for preferred name for works, etc.:

The JSC agree with the Appendices Group's recommendations to use "arranged" in 14.1.2.1 (now 6.17.3.1.2); "accompaniment" and "unaccompanied" in 14.4.0.12.1 (now 6.20.0.12); and "manuscript" in 16.1.3.1 (now 6.28.4.1) rather than abbreviations of those words.

The JSC also agrees with the Appendices Group's recommendation to retain the instruction in 14.5.0.3.1c.1 (now 6.21.0.3c) to use a generally accepted abbreviation for a thematic index number. In this case we note that the thematic index number is familiar to both users and cataloguers, and is not abbreviation in the ordinary sense.

(5) [again] The wording "designations of parts of a work as instructed in a particular rule" from AACR2 was not included ...:

The JSC agrees with the Appendices Group's recommendation.

Issues related to these recommendations:

Has the JSC made a decision about the continued presence of "U.K." in the listing of geographic abbreviations despite the practice of some libraries to use "Gt. Brit"?

Consistent with the general decision not to introduce new abbreviations, an abbreviation for Great Britain should not be added to the Appendix.

Consistent with the decision that RDA's instructions for first release will allow for the use of abbreviations for place names per AACR, the abbreviation for the United Kingdom should remain in the Appendix.

The JSC note that Great Britain and United Kingdom are jurisdictional names that have been legitimate at different periods of history, but that both are subsumed in some authority files under the form Great Britain. In order to prevent the confusion that might result if RDA gave examples of works entered under one name that are represented in authority files under the other name, only examples which legitimately use Great Britain will be given in RDA. An explanation will be added to those examples to indicate that this was the name of the jurisdiction in the period covered by the work.