

IRFAN RULEBOOK

FOR TRANSLATING OMANI LEGISLATION

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INTRODUCTION

The objective of this rulebook is to improve the quality and ensure consistency in the translations of Omani legislation by setting language, style, and formatting rules. This rulebook is not intended to be used as a dictionary. The rules in this rulebook are also not necessarily definitive, and context might require deviation.

When translating any legislation, we highly encourage translators to follow the following three key principles:

1. **Consistency:** If there is one principle that you must follow, it should be consistency. If you translate a certain Arabic term into English, then use that same English term throughout the document unless there is a good reason not to. For example, if you translate مخالفة as “violation”, you must consistently use that term and not switch between “infraction”, “offence”, and “violation” arbitrarily. However, certain Arabic terms have different meanings depending on the context. For example, the term ساعة in Arabic can mean “watch”, “clock”, or “hour” depending on the context, and you must obviously distinguish between these translations.
2. **Retain Structure:** Retain the structure of the original text as much as possible. If the original Arabic text has one paragraph under an article, do not split it into two even if that might make the text more understandable. This is important because a law may refer to a specific provision on the basis of the structure of the text (e.g. it might make reference to “the second paragraph under Article 2” - despite the fact that relevant the paragraph is not numbered). For the same reason, do not merge two paragraphs into one in an effort to make the text clear and cohesive. However, adding more commas to a sentence and, in exceptional cases, breaking a sentence into two sentences using a period to improve readability is acceptable.
3. **Avoid Legal Jargon:** Simplicity is key. The objective of a translation is to make the law accessible to as many people as possible. Therefore, do not use complicated language or legal jargon to make the text sound “fancy” or “legal” when the same idea can be communicated using simpler language. If, however, a certain concept is universally known by a Latin term, for example, *pro rata* or

force majeure, then you should use this universally accepted term even if it is not an English term.

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1. GENERAL

1.1 Use standard British spelling.

1.2 Use the term “Royal Decree” and not “Sultani Decree”.

2. TITLE

2.1 Place the term “Royal Decree” alongside its number on a separate line from the actual text of the title of the decree.

2.2 Set title capitalisation using the Chicago Manual of Style standard (i.e. capitalise all main terms in the title). You can use the Title Case Converter <<https://titlecaseconverter.com/>> to automatically capitalise the relevant text or to confirm that you have used this standard correctly.

2.3 Set the formatting of the title to **bold**.

Good Example	Bad Example
Royal Decree 1/2019 Ratifying the General Budget of the State for Fiscal Year 2019	Royal Decree 1/2019 Ratifying The General Budget Of The State For Fiscal Year 2019

3. DECREE NUMBERS

3.1 Do not use the terms “Number” or “No.” in the title or in any other place where a royal decree number is referred to. Instead, immediately place the digits after the term “Royal Decree”.

3.2 Do not insert any spaces before or after the “/” when referring to a royal decree number.

3.2 Use the following format for the royal decree: [Sequence Number]/[Year].

Good Example	Bad Example
Royal Decree 1/2019	Royal Decree No. 1 / 2019

4. RECITALS

4.1 Do not set the formatting of any of the recitals to bold irrespective of how the Arabic version uses bold. This means that even “We, Haitham...” must not be formatted in bold.

4.2 Do not use “and” in the series of legal instruments cited in the recitals except for the last item in the series.

4.3 End the closing recital “and in pursuance of public interest,” with a comma, not a period.

4.4 Do not capitalise the opening statement “have decreed...”, but set its formatting to bold and centred.

5. ARTICLE NUMBERS

5.1 Use Roman numerals to number articles in the royal decree.

5.2 Use Arabic numerals to number articles in the law attached to the royal decree.

5.3 Use the Latin term *bis* as a translation for “مكرراً” and place it directly after the article number with no spacing.

English	Arabic
Article 10 <i>bis</i>	المادة (١٠ مكرراً)
Article 10 <i>bis</i> 1	المادة (١٠ مكرراً أ)

6. DEFINED TERMS

6.1 Contrary to common practice, do not capitalise defined terms. Capitalisation does not exist in Arabic and, at times, you will find that Arabic drafting combines two or more defined terms into one phrase in the body of the law. This makes it impossible to

consistently use defined terms in the form they appear in the definitions section. For example, the law might define “artisanal fishing” and “commercial fishing” as two separate terms, and then will refer to them as “artisanal and commercial fishing” instead of “artisanal fishing and commercial fishing”.

7. CAPITALISATION IN GENERAL

7.1 Avoid capitalisation unless a specific rule requires otherwise.

7.2 Contrary to common practice, do not capitalise the terms “article”, “agreement”, “decree”, or “paragraph” when they appear in the middle of a sentence. The only exception is when referring to the title of a document or a legal instrument. For example, if you refer to a specific royal decree, you should capitalise the reference: Royal Decree 1/2019.

7.3 Capitalise full titles of government posts and bodies (e.g. Minister of Education).

7.4 The following terms must always be capitalised:

(a) Sultan

(b) Sultanate

8. OMANI NAMES

8.1 Use a hyphen to connect names with prefixes such as “Al” (e.g. “Al-Waleed”).

8.2 Connect compound names such as “Abdulaziz” and “Abdulwahab”.

8.3 Capitalise the “A” in the prefix “Al” used in names.

8.4 Do not capitalise “bin” when used to connect the first name with the middle name.

Good Example	Bad Example
Mohamed bin Mazin Al-Tai	Mohamed Bin Mazin al Tai

9. HONORIFICS

9.1 Capitalise honorific titles such as “Dr”, “Sheikh”, and “Sayyid”.

9.2 Do not abbreviate the terms “Sheikh” or “Engineer” when used as an honorific.

9.3 Do not place a period after terms such as “Dr”.

9.4 Use the following list of translations for honorifics:

English	Arabic
Dr	الدكتور
Engineer	المهندس
Sayyid	السيد
Sheikh	الشيخ

10. NAMES OF PLACES

10.1 Do not include “Al” in the English name of a place (e.g. “Al-Rustaq” becomes “Rustaq” and “Al-Seeb” becomes “Seeb”).

10.2 Apply the previous rule to governorates as well as wilayat (e.g. “Al-Dakhiliya” becomes “Dakhiliya” and “Al-Batinah North” becomes “Batinah North”).

10.3 Use the structure of “the Wilayat of X” and “the Governorate of X” instead of the “X Wilayat” and “X Governorate”.

Good Example	Bad Example
Governorate of Muscat	Muscat Governorate

10.4 Rule 10.1 does not apply to compound names. For example, Al-Jabal Al-Akhdar should not be written as Jabal Akhdar. Such names are either written with “Al” or follow other phonetic spelling.

Good Example	Bad Example
Al-Jabal Al-Akhdar	Jabal Akhdar or Jabal Al-Akhdar

10.5 “Wilayat” is used in both the singular and plural form.

10.5 Use the UN website for the official names and spellings of other countries.

11. NAMES OF COMPANIES

11.1 Use the English name found on InvestEasy (business.gov.om) and follow the instructions in section 16 for abbreviations.

12. DATES

12.1 Do not use “AH” or “AD” when referring to the date using the Hijri or Gregorian calendar.

12.2 Use the following spellings for Islamic months:

- (a) Muharram
- (b) Safar
- (c) Rabi Al-Awwal
- (d) Rabi Al-Thani
- (e) Jumada Al-Awwal
- (f) Jumada Al-Thani

- (g) Rajab
- (h) Sha'ban
- (i) Ramadan
- (j) Shawwal
- (k) Dhu Al-Qa'dah
- (l) Dhu Al-Hijja

12.3 When referring to a specific date, refer to the day of the month in digits, the month in words, and the year in digits, irrespective of how the Arabic text refers to them, especially when referring to the first day of the month.

Good Example	
English	Arabic
This decree shall be published in the Official Gazette and comes into force on 1 January 2019	ينشر هذا المرسوم في الجريدة الرسمية ويعمل به من أول يناير ٢٠١٩م

Bad Example	
English	Arabic
This decree shall be published in the Official Gazette and comes into force on the First of January 2019	ينشر هذا المرسوم في الجريدة الرسمية ويعمل به من أول يناير ٢٠١٩م

12.4 In some circumstances, the months of Rabi Al-Thani and Jumada Al-Thani might be referred to as Rabi Al-Akhir and Jumada Al-Akhira in Arabic. In these cases, translate الآخر and الأخرة as “Al-Akhir” and “Al-Akhira”.

13. NUMBERING IN GENERAL

13.1 Do not surround numbers with brackets, irrespective of the Arabic.

13.2 If the Arabic text uses either numbers only or words only, use the same format of the original text. For example, if the Arabic text says ثلاث سنوات use “three years” for the English text. If the Arabic text says ه أشخاص use “5 persons”.

13.3 The rule above also applies to the number of parts and chapters in the law. If the law says الفصل الأول, use “Chapter One” and not “Chapter 1” or “Chapter I”.

13.4 If the Arabic text uses both numbers and words to refer to a number, put the number first without brackets, then follow this with the words in brackets.

English	Arabic
Provided the grievance is submitted within 60 (sixty) days	على أن يقدم التظلم خلال (٦٠) ستين يوما

13.5 Use commas as thousand separators in long numbers (e.g. 1,000,000). Use a hyphen for numbers spelled out in words between twenty-one to ninety-nine.

14. CURRENCY

14.1 The Omani currency should be referred to as Rial Omani and not Omani Riyal or any other variation. The references to the currency should be in most cases singular.

Good Example	Bad Example
1,000 Rial Omani	1000 Omani Riyals or 1000 Rials Omani

14.2 In cases where abbreviation as used, use OMR and not RO.

15. PUNCTUATION

15.1 Listing items in a sentence:

15.1.1 Use the Oxford comma, i.e. insert a comma before the final item when listing items in a sentence (e.g. apples, oranges, and watermelons).

15.1.2 If you list a number of items in a single sentence (e.g. apple, oranges, and watermelons), you can use a semicolon to separate the items only if one of the items itself has a comma in it.

English
<p>The following must be complied with:</p> <p>Conditions and procedures for granting, renewing, and transferring fishing licences, and licences for activities relating to aquatic living resources, and scientific research, studies, and experiments; their duration; and cases where it is administratively permitted to suspend, withdraw, or revoke the licences.</p>

Arabic
<p style="text-align: right;">يتطلب مراعاة الآتي:</p> <p>شروط وإجراءات منح وتجديد ونقل تراخيص الصيد وتراخيص الأنشطة المرتبطة بالثروة المائية الحية والبحوث والدراسات والتجارب العلمية ومددها والحالات التي يجوز فيها وقف أو سحب أو إلغاء التراخيص إدارياً.</p>

14.2 Avoid using apostrophes when showing a relationship of belonging between one thing and another, and use the phrase “of the” instead (e.g. use “the employees of the ministry” instead of “the ministry’s employees”).

14.3 Whenever it is required to use quotation marks in the translation, always use “double” quotation marks and not ‘single’ quotation marks. Make sure that you use “curly” quotation marks and not "straight" quotation marks.

14.4 In some cases, the Arabic text might use brackets as an alternative for using quotation marks to merely emphasise the word. In this case, use double quotation marks instead of brackets.

14.3 In contexts where the Arabic uses a dash as an alternative to commas or brackets, use the *em dash* (—) and not the standard dash (-).

15. BULLET POINTS

15.1 Avoid using dashes in bullet points.

15.2 Use a period as a postfix if digits are used to number bullet points.

15.3 Capitalise the first word of each of the items listed in bullet points.

15.4 Use brackets if letters are used to number bullet points, and use lowercase letters.

15.5 End your bullet points with a period (.) not a comma (,) or a semi-colon (;).

Good Example	Bad Example
1. The following items are banned: (a) Apples. (b) Oranges. (c) Watermelons.	2- The following items are banned: A- apples; B- oranges; and C- watermelons.

15.6 For multi-level lists, follow the Arabic structure generally, but utilise roman numerals if the list uses a combination of letters and numbers in the order of 1(a)(i).

English	Arabic
1. Item 1 in the list: (a) Item A in the second-level list. (b) Item B in the second-level list. (c) Item C in the second-level list: (i) Item 1 in the third-level list. (ii) Item 2 in the third-level list. 2. Second item in the main list.	١. العنصر ١ في القائمة الأساسية: أ- العنصر ١ في المستوى الثاني. ب- العنصر ٢ في المستوى الثاني. ج- العنصر ٣ في المستوى الثاني. ١- العنصر ١ في المستوى الثاني. ٢- العنصر ٢ في المستوى الثاني. ٢. العنصر ٢ في القائمة الأساسية.

16. ABBREVIATIONS

16.1 Do not put periods between the letters of abbreviated words (e.g. LLC).

Good Example	Bad Example
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Oman Oilfield Services LLC	Oman Oilfield Services L.L.C.
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16.2 Use the following abbreviations:

English	Arabic
LLC	ش م م
SAOC	ش م ع م
SAOG	ش م ع ع
SPC	ش و و

17. TITLES OF AGREEMENTS

17.1 In cases where the royal decree refers to an existing agreement, use the title of the agreement as found in the original English text, if such text exists, instead of attempting to create your own translation.

18. REPEALED TEXT

18.1 When translating consolidated versions of a law, a repealed paragraph is indicated by writing (*Repealed*) in italics.

19. GENDER PRONOUNS

19.1 When encountering gender-specific terms, use the gender set out in the Arabic text. Do not attempt to make the text gender-neutral by using “he/she” or using “they” instead of “he”.

19.2 As an exception to the rule above, if the Arabic text refers to a legal person such as a ministry or a company, use the pronoun “it” instead of “she”. This might not be very obvious in cases where functional terms such as the “operator”, but reviewing the definition should make it clear if the “operator” is a legal person and not a natural person.

ANNEX 1: NAMES OF WILAYAT

English	Arabic
Bidiya	بديّة
Bukha	بخا
Dema Wa Taieen	دماء والطائيين
Dhank	ضنك
Dibba	دبا
Jazer	الجازر
Khasab	خصب
Manah	منح
Qabil	القابل
Salalah	صلاة
Adam	أدم
Al-Kamil Wal Wafi	الكامل والوافي
Amerat	العامرات
Awabi	العوابي
Bahla	بهلاء
Barka	بركاء
Bawshar	بوشر
Bidbid	بدبد
Buraimi	البريمي
Dhalkut	ضلكوت

Duqm	الدقم
Haima	هيما
Hamra	الحمراء
Ibra	إبراء
Ibri	عبري
Izki	ازكي
Jalan Bani Bu Ali	جعلان بني بو علي
Jalan Bani Bu Hassan	جعلان بني بو حسن
Khabura	الخابورة
Liwa	لوى
Madha	مدحاء
Mahdah	محضة
Mahout	محوت
Masirah	مصيرة
Mazyunah	المزيونة
Mirbat	مرباط
Mudhaibi	المضيبي
Muqshin	مقشن
Muscat	مسقط
Mussanah	المصنعة
Muttrah	مطرح
Nakhal	نخل
Nizwa	نزوى

Qurayyat	قريات
Rakhyut	رخيوت
Rustaq	الrustaq
Sadah	سدح
Saham	صحم
Samail	سمائل
Seeb	السيب
Shalim and Hallaniyat Islands	شليم وجزر الحلانيات
Shinas	شناصر
Sohar	صهار
Sunainah	السنينة
Sur	صور
Suwaiq	السويق
Taqah	طاقه
Thumrait	ثمريت
Wadi Al-Maawil	وادي المعاول
Wadi Bani Khalid	وادي بني خالد
Yanqul	ينقل

ANNEX 2: NAMES OF GOVERNORATES

English	Arabic
Governorate of Muscat	محافظة مسقط
Governorate of Dhofar	محافظة ظفار
Governorate of Musandam	محافظة مسندم
Governorate of Buraimi	محافظة البريمي
Governorate of Dakhiliya	محافظة الداخلية
Governorate of Batinah North	محافظة شمال الباطنة
Governorate of Batinah South	محافظة جنوب الباطنة
Governorate of Sharqiyah South	محافظة جنوب الشرقية
Governorate of Sharqiyah North	محافظة شمال الشرقية
Governorate of Dhahirah	محافظة الظاهرة
Governorate of Wusta	محافظة الوسطى

ANNEX 3: MILITARY RANKS

Royal Navy of Oman

English	Arabic
Admiral of the Fleet	مشير
Admiral	فريق أول
Vice Admiral	فريق
Rear Admiral	لواء
Commodore	عميد

Captain	عقيد
Commander	مقدم
Lieutenant Commander	رائد
Lieutenant	نقيب
Sub Lieutenant-1	ملازم أول
Sub Lieutenant-2	ملازم
Midshipman	ضابط مرشح
Warrant Officer 1- (NCO)	وكيل أول
Warrant Officer 2	وكيل
Chief Petty Officer	رقيب أول
Petty Officer	رقيب
Leading Seaman	عريف
Able Seaman	نائب عريف

Royal Air Force of Oman

English	Arabic
Marshal of the A.F	مشير
Air Chief Marshal	فريق أول
Air Marshal	فريق
Air Vice-Marshal	لواء
Air Commodore	عميد
Group Captain	عقيد

Wing Commander	مقدم
Squadron Leader	رائد
Flight Lieutenant	نقيب
Flying Officer	ملازم أول
Pilot Officer	ملازم
Officer Cadet	ضابط مرشح
Warrant Officer 1- (NCO)	وكيل أول
Warrant Officer 2	وكيل
Flight Sergeant	رقيب أول
Sergeant	رقيب
Corporal	عريف
Aircraftman	نائب عريف

Royal Army of Oman

English	Arabic
Field Marshal	مشير
General	فريق أول
Lieutenant General	فريق
Major General	لواء
Brigadier	عميد
Colonel	عقيد
Lieutenant Colonel	مقدم
Major	رائد
Captain	نقيب
Lieutenant	ملازم أول
2 nd Lieutenant	ملازم
Officer Cadet	ضابط مرشح
Warrant Officer 1- (NCO)	وكيل أول
Warrant Officer 2	وكيل
Staff Sergeant	رقيب أول
Sergeant	رقيب
Corporal	عريف
Lance Corporal	نائب عريف