

# Capitalisation of the Word 'braille'



## Background

As the organisation responsible for setting standards for braille within the UK, UKAAF is occasionally asked about the protocol for capitalising the word 'braille'.

Most agencies and organisations in the blindness field across the world follow the practice that the word is only capitalised when it is referring to the name of Louis Braille or to a proper name such as 'Braille 'n' Speak' (a product name) or 'The Rules of Unified English Braille' (a book title).

Even though the tactile reading system was named after a specific individual, it does not necessarily follow that the word be capitalised. There are many examples of these eponyms, such as hoover, sandwich and fahrenheit. The words are now just nouns and verbs spelled without a capital letter, their lower case status having been acquired due to their everyday role in the English language.

## Position

UKAAF recommends that when referring to Louis Braille, the inventor of the tactile reading system, the initial letter should be capitalised. And when referring to the braille code itself, the word should be written with an initial lower case letter.