



## Writing blogs

### How to write

Remember that writing for a blog is different from traditional academic writing.

- **Friendly, chatty style:** Use first person and try to include reference to your own context and teaching experience – think about your readers and what they can learn from you. Spell out acronyms and explain subject-specific jargon – imagine the reader is coming to your topic of discussion for the first time. Be yourself!
- **Have an opinion:** Take a stand and make your thoughts known.
- **Be concise:** Between 600-800 words, preferably.
- **Use short sentences:** Use sub-headings to help structure content, if necessary.
- **Focus on one topic:** A post should deliver one main message. Try to describe rather than tell e.g. instead of saying you thought a conference was great, try to explain why you enjoyed it and what you learned from it.
- **Critical friends:** Have someone else critically read your post before publishing.
- **Judgement:** Knowing what to say and when to stop.

### What to write

It's always best to write about something you know and are enthusiastic about.

- **Reflections:** On your week as a teacher/ trainer/ lecturer/ researcher. Write about what you have done with your students, any new ideas you have tried out, any problems you have had and how you resolved them, any insights you gained and good resources you have used.
- **Recommendations for articles, books, websites:** That you have read or found useful. You could include information about how you use these and how they helped with your teaching, including any possible problems that occurred.

- **Reflections on projects and research:** You could describe the project and its aims and how it has helped your students, what you've learned from the project and what the next steps are.
- **Useful tips or activities:** That you have used in your lectures. You could describe activities you have tried in your classroom, describe the reactions of your students, what worked well/ didn't work and what you learned from using these activities.
- **Reports from conferences:** You could outline what you learned from the conference/ seminar and what new insights you have gained, what activities or theories you heard about and how the training will influence the way you teach.
- **Perspectives on topical events where you have expertise:** Includes latest news/ research/ policy/ politics.

## Other thoughts

- **Blog as a team:** Think about having more than one blogger/ contributor to share the burden of posting.
- **Be respectful to all parties:** Consider good 'netiquette' and professional appropriateness. Be polite and respectful of other cultures and opinions. It's important to raise issues, but don't try to impose your beliefs on others.
- **Don't publish anything which may be commercially sensitive:** e.g. Minutes that have not been agreed/ potential partnerships/ bids in progress/ funding situations etc. If an item/ area/ announcement is already public it is probably okay to discuss it, but seek advice if you are unsure.
- **Protect your intellectual property and that of your collaborators:** Ensure you do not disclose proprietary information about your research or that of a third party without their permission. Never give specific names, places, addresses or contact details without authorisation.
- **Social media:** Think about what online tools you could use to promote your blog post – and how to build an audience.

***"You don't write because you want to say something. You write because you have something to say." F. Scott Fitzgerald***