

GUEST BLOGGER'S GUIDE TO THE LTDS BLOG

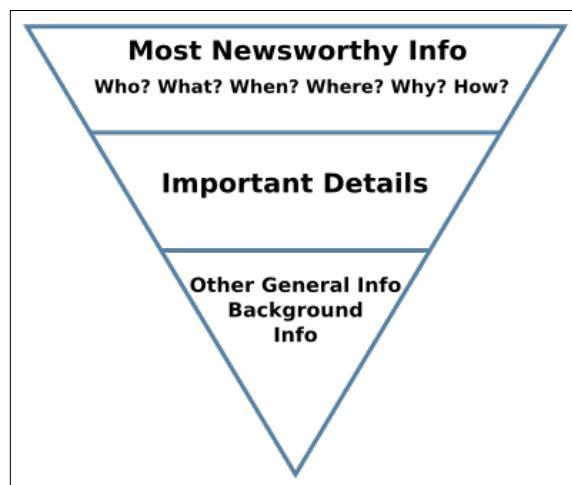
This is a brief guide to writing a Guest Blog for the LTDS Website. It's by no means exhaustive or unassailable, it's simply a few hints and tips to help Guest Bloggers to get started.

The name of the game is really to keep everything clear and concise, without overly relying on jargon or acronyms.

Most importantly we're happy to help. If you want someone to check over your post, or to help you to write it, just contact katherine.cooper@ncl.ac.uk.

If you're writing a post for the blog, even if it's just about a new version of a technology or a list of workshops, try to have a think about some of these.

- 1) Think about what makes the post interesting, what would you say to someone to get them to read more? What is the hook? That is your first line. Perhaps it's a question, or a statement like: 'Do your students complain about the feedback they receive on assessments? Are you interested in a more efficient marking process, which engages students and increases student satisfaction?' or a simple statement which encompasses all that the piece will be about, such as: 'Lecturers in the Law School are making use of industry professionals to teach students about 'real-life' as a legal professional.' What is the essence of your post and what will pull readers in?
- 2) Put that in the first paragraph and the title. Use the inverted pyramid, crucial information at the top, tapering to more technical/specific information at the bottom.



- 3) Keep it short – 400 words is sufficient for a blogpost and if you need more why not attach an additional link or information sheet?
- 4) Short and interesting title – aim to pull people in or at least describe exactly what your piece will do. Questions are good, eg: 'Want to learn about e-portfolio?'

- 5) Keep paragraphs and sentences short – a paragraph should only contain one sentence. People should be able to scroll through and extract information quickly and easily without wading through reams of text.
- 6) Expand acronyms in the first use. Not everyone reading will know what ULTSEC, FLTSEC or UKPSF is!
- 7) Break up text with bullets and sub headings – make sure that people can navigate through easily to extract the information they need, they may only look at it for a couple of minutes, make it easy for them and they'll come back!
- 8) Include a contact email and telephone extension number on the end, and think about linking to other resources or parts of the website. 'Eg: 'For more information see the Career Service webpages' or 'Sign up for this event...' and include a link to the registration form.
- 9) Ensure the person writing the blog/web page is the person who puts it on the blog to make sure that their name appears as author
- 10) Always try to use a picture, it makes the whole thing far more alluring. Newcastle University have their own image library for snaps of the campus or of people crowded around a PC, you can take your own or get one with a Creative Commons license. It's really important to find who owns the copyright and cite them accordingly.
- 11) Think about including real humans where possible. They make the whole thing seem more...human. Eg: 'Emma Robson from CEGS said that she really hoped to be involved with more educational partnerships in the future'. This applies less to website updates, but could be a great way of livening things up. Even if you just ask someone you know to be your "Gob-on-a-stick" and endorse or comment on what you're writing about, another voice will always help break up long or complex text.

Once you've finished your post do send it through to us and we will upload it for you.

Useful Links:

The [Hemingway app](#) is fabulous for seeing your writing through new eyes! It highlights sentences which are too long or complex and shows you how to make your writing more accessible.

Lauren Laverne's blog on The Pool is a great example of how to tackle something quite complex in a concise and informal fashion but without losing too much of the nuance: <https://www.the-pool.com/news-views?filter=Lauren%27s+blog>