

Quick Guides For Staff With Digital Content Responsibilities

Blogging:

- Most blogs are performing to an adequate level, however the current emphasis is on relaying news and events rather than engaging content. If post frequency is a problem we recommend to set up a publishing schedule – this may not be appropriate for all blogs but some could benefit from e.g. student views, topical theme posts, brief subject articles relating to research areas, editorials and features etc. examples of which can all be found on other research blogs from universities around the world).
- Link all blogs to the main website/research category pages either in the menu (for news blogs) or with a button link at the bottom of the relevant pages to make sure they remain visible.
- Wherever possible enable sharing buttons in order to allow blog posts to be shared with ease across social media and other sites such as Reddit, Digg etc. This can be easily enabled by activating the Jetpack plugin and then configured by going to the site dashboard, going to ‘settings’ and then ‘sharing’ on the left-hand menu.
- Is your chosen blog template sufficient for what it is trying to convey? They should be visually engaging and have enough features in which to embed twitter feeds, sharing/follow buttons, videos, and have visible menu options if needed. As a starting point, research blogs should use the standardised College of Social Sciences research WordPress template.
- If there is a Twitter account associated with the blog? (either research or school level) Make sure it is displayed prominently on site.
- Make sure the pages are promoted regularly on social media. This could be as simple as just saying “Don’t forget to visit our blog! [Link] **#UniversityOfLincoln #Research**”
- Where posts are not as frequent, try to move the emphasis off the news from the blog front page and add a dynamic element instead such as a slideshow.

- Make sure ping tools being used such as pingomatic/feedburner/Feedshark. These tools automatically alert many other sites that your blog has been updated and help to build organic links back to the site which improve search engine rankings.
- Are the blogs easy to subscribe to – is there an RSS feed link or an email subscribe field? This can be enabled through activating the jetpack plugin and added as a widget in the customise section of your dashboard menu.
- Make sure the blogs listed on sites such as Best of the Web, Bloggapedia, Blogging Fusion, and Blogarama. These sites are usually free and will list your blog, its URL, and description in a directory to aid in link building and improving search rankings.
- Make sure that there are sufficient links back to the corporate site and/or the school logo displayed somewhere on the blog so people are able to follow it back to the university.
- Make sure blog pages and posts are using tags and alt text on pictures so that search engines are able to index them more easily. For example, if you add a picture, in the alt text section you can add 'University of Lincoln', 'Psychology', 'Conference', 'Research', '2016' which will help the search engine rankings of the picture. If you have written a blog post make sure you add tags in the same way in order to help its search engine visibility.
- Have the blogs been submitted to search engines? (Google, Bing, Yahoo etc.) Manually adding the blogs to search engines can help speed up their appearances in searches and provide you with useful tools. However, for an automated option, activate Jetpack and enable 'Enhanced Distribution' which will do this for you.
- Make sure marketing and school/college social media are informed of new posts so they can publicise them on other accounts. This could be through emailing or tagging them in a social media post.
- The visibility of older posts can be increased by including a 'See Similar Posts' section at the bottom of posts, or even a 'Random Posts' section in the sidebar or footer to keep the visibility of older posts up. This is usually a generic JavaScript code that can be pasted into the text widgets in the

customise section of the dashboard. However, by activating Jetpack you can also enable this feature as part of the plugin.

- Make sure the style of the posts is optimised for the blog format: Catchy titles, short paragraphs, 300-500 words in total (max), use visuals where possible, break up texts with lists and sub-headings, highlight keywords (as well as key points and links).
- Make sure the blog posts conform to basic search engine optimisation. Using titles, headings, keywords, tags to best effect and using pictures with alt text where needed.

For more tips and information please visit the [Online Media Development Team Website](#) and check out our blog posts:

<https://wp.me/p7PZ3g-1g> - Part 1

<https://wp.me/p7PZ3g-1o> - Part 2

<https://wp.me/p7PZ3g-1s> - Part 3

<https://wp.me/p7PZ3g-1w> - Part 4

<https://wp.me/p7PZ3g-1D> - Part 5