

Producing a....

college HE Scholarship blog or newsletter

It is often the case that there is plenty happening in colleges in terms of scholarship but that a lot of it is not recognised, shared and/or celebrated. If you are just starting on your scholarship journey, or feel that you are not doing enough about 'going public', producing a regular newsletter or blog posts is a good way to gather and maintain momentum.

Your decision about what means of communication to use will be influenced by who will be responsible for its production, and by what will best suit your audience. Blogs feel more contemporary than a traditional newsletter but need regularly updating if you are to expect people to keep coming back to them. Of course, you can publish contributions from a range of people but will need someone in an 'editing' role.

A newsletter, electronic or paper-based, distributed at intervals throughout the year is a good way to demonstrate a range of activity happening across the college. Again, you can invite contributions or allocate responsibility for various sections to different people. Special editions can focus on particular activities, for example, following a conference you could include abstracts of presentations, photographs, and perhaps links to video/audio recordings in an e-newsletter.

PROCESS

AUDIENCE

Think about your audience. Will your readers be staff only or students too? And will you share beyond the college, for example, with employers? Think about involving your reader by inviting comments on blog posts or letters or reviews for newsletters. Don't forget issues around moderating comments, though.

CONTENT

The aim of this type of blog/newsletter is to give staff and/or students opportunity to 'go public' so they might write about their own activity or for a consistent voice you might choose to have one or two people writing about the scholarship activity of others. Whichever, someone will need to take editorial responsibility (and remember copyright/plagiarism issues).

FORMAT: BLOG

Blogs are inexpensive or free and they are current and invite interaction with the reader but, as a result, need a great deal of attention. If you can post regularly then it's easier for readers to get into the habit of checking, for example weekly. It's helpful to collect a bank of articles that you can then post to a schedule.

FORMAT: NEWSLETTER

Needs less immediate ongoing attention but plenty of content. They may also feel impersonal with no opportunity for readers to respond in real time. However, you might feel more confident of a readership if you're producing something that you can put in front of people - either as a physical object or email.