

Questions

If you are turning an already published article into a blog post, would you need to cite the article in your blog post?

You should – and link to it, too! That way if a scholar in your field reads it, they can find the original research.

I don't have any published articles. Is it worth blogging about other people's papers?

Yes it is! Check out a blog site like [fanhackers](#) for an example of how to do this. Blogging about the work being done by others is a way for you to join the conversations going on in your field.

In terms of blogging for another blog, or just blogging about other content, would you have any recommendations about blogging about book reviews (where you include a link to the book review)?

This is common practice in many blogs: you read something of interest to you, and you write about it. It may not be just a review: a book or article that you found useful or challenging in your work, an essay in a publication like the *New York Review of Books*, a debate taking place in your field, a conference you attended or a conference paper you heard. All of these can be the subject of a blogpost. The trick, though, is not to summarize what you read/saw/heard, but to bring your voice and your perspective to the conversation. If you want a good example of this kind of blog, check [brainpickings.org](#).

And remember: whenever you write about the work of others, link to it so that your readers can see the original for themselves.

Is it worth writing for *The Conversation*, especially as a graduate student?

Yes, definitely. *The Conversation* is, in their own words, “an independent source of news and views, from the academic and research community, delivered direct to the public.” If your pitch is accepted, professional journalists will work with you to make your op-ed or news story ready for the media. Not only will your piece be skilfully edited, you'll gain public exposure as an expert in your field.

Participant comment: A friend of mine (grad student, philosophy) just published something in *The Conversation* and his piece got a lot of attention within a very short period time.

Are multiple authors typically recommended/discouraged for blog entries like *The Conversation*?

You see many articles in *The Conversation* with multiple authors. They've done the research together and published in academic journals together, so it makes sense for them to publish in other venues together. It's perfectly acceptable to do.

Could you discuss the advantages of different host platforms?

- Multiauthor blog (MAB): Share the writing load with other bloggers; make sure you share communication values (and rhetorical situations!)
- Institution blog: Access to an existing audience, increase your professional network; less freedom to write in your own style/voice
- Medium.com: Very popular blogging site that already has lots of people there, well-known, get a new 'stumble-upon' audience; you have to do the work of sharing the post OUTSIDE of Medium
- Personal blog: Build your voice/presence and make your own choices about topic/tone; need to direct audiences to your website and maintain it
- Wordpress/blogger: Built-in support/tools for running many kinds of blogs; need to distinguish yourself and make it your 'own' blog.

What are the advantages or disadvantages of having your own blog versus writing for other blogs?
What do you consider best for grad students?

Writing for others is a great way to write blogs without worrying about the expectation that you must regularly produce blogposts. It also comes with a built-in audience, which is great. It ALSO comes with expectations about tone, topic, style, etc, limiting your choices in voice and style.

What's best for grad students? It depends - on your goals, your capacity for writing, the type of audience you're trying to reach. And remember, there's no law prohibiting you from doing both - writing for your own blog and contributing to a group blog.

Is co-authoring a blog a good idea?

If you work well with your co-author, then go for it! But you'd need to make sure that you're both on the same page regarding the audience/purpose/setting/message, otherwise things will get confusing. In some disciplines, it's very common to conduct research with others and co-author papers, so why not co-author blogs, too?

Another option is to consider posting to a multi-author blog, which is a blog site that many people contribute to. Share the load with other scholars and widen the conversation!

Participant comment: "Make sure that you're both on the same page regarding the audience/purpose/setting/message, otherwise things will get confusing!" is a very important point, Elise! Thanks!

Should you be consistent in choosing a blog? Does writing exclusively in one blog help build your credibility?

Do you want to reach a new audience? Then publishing on different blogging sites (MABs, professional networks, medium.com, etc) gives you access to diverse readers. It's worth it, then, linking to them all on your website, though, so that someone can find them all.

Is it okay to repeat content on different platforms?

Reposting is a thing! But usually folks link back to the original location or source. You want to be transparent about your ideas and sources.

I appreciate writing blogposts is a skill requiring development. How can we best determine whether our writing is developing in the right/best way?

Getting feedback! Come to the Writing and Communication Centre (WCC) at the University of Waterloo (or the equivalent on your campus), get friends and colleagues to read it, ask for feedback from your readers.

If you aren't getting engagement online, either with people commenting or letting you know they've read it, etc., then revisit your approach to the blog: think about who you're trying to reach and re-assess from there.

How would I go about including or talking about qualitative interviews that I used in my thesis? I'm thinking of turning my thesis into a blog.

This is something to talk about with the ethics review board that approved your study as well your participants. It's definitely something that people have done, but should be addressed in the consent that you get from participants and through the ethics approval process on your campus.

A number of students have documented their thesis writing in a blog. Many of these focus on the mechanics (and often the pain!) of writing a thesis. But some focus on their research and use the blog as a way of talking through and refining their ideas.

How do we deal with the pressure to publish posts regularly? My biggest fear is having a lot to say for a few months and then letting things dry up. Should I time, plan, and space out my posts? Or just not worry about it? (I have the same problem on Instagram :P)

This is an issue for many bloggers. It's human nature: we start something with great enthusiasm, and then that energy wanes over time. Some tips for dealing with this:

- Consider posting on medium.com or a group blog instead of a personal website - this takes the pressure off you to be producing regularly.
- Don't make a big deal about starting a blog (because then you're trapped by the commitment), just share the first post(s) and see where that takes you.

Is it a good idea to have sponsorship for your blog?

If by sponsorship you mean selling ads or using webcommerce on your blog site, our general advice is to avoid that if at all possible. Ads will take away from your content and may not even be appropriate for the material you're dealing with. Moreover, it may discourage some academics and scholars from reading your work.

If by sponsoring you mean paying for it to show up in social media feeds, that's something I'd have to think about. I don't think it's necessary, especially if you ask friends/colleagues to share it on their feeds. If blogging is something you really want to get into more seriously, targeted ads to

extend the reach of your work might be a good idea once you know who's reading your (and who isn't).

So in my Wix portfolio I can create a section and call it a blog, right?

Absolutely! Make a blog section on your personal website. Lots of people do that.