

Guidelines for Writing a Post for the Changing Education Blog

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Changing Education Blog Team

This document contains instructions to guide you in the process of writing for the Changing Education blog. This document should be used in combination with the form for submission called “Changing Education Blog Post Submission Form”.

The blog aims to gather and publish information on the topic of education, with a specific aim to promote research-based education innovation and development. To fulfill this objective, the blog needs you! With the diverse group of students in this degree, the Blog Team hopes that each of you will combine your personal expertise, knowledge, and interests into content for the blog. Together we can make the blog a multi-media platform for anyone interested in education. Readers will be able to gain a better understanding of research as well as current trends and developments in the field of education.

The most important thing to keep in mind is that each post, regardless of whether it is about educational psychology or global education policy, should incorporate an element of “changing education”. This can be done in a multitude of ways: suggesting a solution, a new policy or project, analyzing how changes historically have come about, posing a question for the future of education, examining existing projects, interventions, products etc. in the field of education, and many more. **Simply put, the idea that education is a dynamic construct which can be changed, transformed, and improved should be present throughout all posts.** Try to keep that in mind no matter what you write about, and avoid writing posts that are strictly descriptive. Encourage the reader to think!

Submissions (the filled in form for submissions) should be sent to:

changingeducation1blog@gmail.com

We appreciate your input and contributions! If you have any questions about the blog, please contact Miki Nyyssönen (mihaela.nyyssonen@helsinki.fi).

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Who can write a blog post?

Anyone! If you are interested in contributing to the blog and have an idea of what you would like to publish, we are happy to receive it! We hope that many of you will want to do so, because not only will you help make the blog better, you will also get to publish your work for others to enjoy.

What should the blog post be about?

In short: education. The blog will reflect the diversity of fields and subjects of study in education, just as the degree. In other words, you can write a blog post about a social justice issue in education, sustainable education, motivation, test anxiety, about educational policy in Finland or any other country, educational projects, early childhood education, teacher education, adult education, sexual education, the politics of education, and anything else related to education. The important thing to keep in mind is that the connection to education is clear and that you communicate effectively what your approach or perspective is (i.e. if you are referring to early childhood education specifically, make sure to make that clear).

Although we are not aiming to create a blog that functions as a news platform, we are eager to cover current developments and news related to education. Whenever possible, consider the current circumstances and forces which influence education in different ways. For example, the pandemic is something that has had and continues to have a profound impact on how education is delivered and experienced. The pandemic is also likely to be relevant to numerous specific subjects, e.g. students' and teachers' mental health, motivation, learning, academic performance, friendships, equity etc. We want the content of the blog to always be up to date, so try to incorporate an element of current news in your writing!

Finally, we know that having a wide range subjects covered in one blog requires a clear red thread (a central theme or connecting aspect between content). As the name of the blog (for now) will be "Changing Education", we would like that red thread to be the changing characteristic of education. By this is meant two things: firstly, education as a construct that is dynamic and that has and will continue to transform, and secondly, the act of changing education with innovations and reforms. Therefore, we strongly encourage you to incorporate either or both or one of these ideas into your post. You can do this in many different ways, and it's up to you to decide which is most appropriate for your content. You can propose a solution for addressing a problem in education, analyze a new policy or project, discuss how historically changes have come about, pose a question for the future of education, examine existing projects, interventions, products etc. in the field of education innovation, and many more.

What should the blog post look like?

The blog post should be easy to read, to the point, and effectively communicate the subject at hand. The idea is to provide content that is educational and attention grabbing for people interested in education. The posts should be long enough for the writer to be able to make their point effectively, but short enough to maintain the reader's attention. The word count ranges from 500 to 1500 words, but more important than the numbers is that you keep the text compact and clear. If your post communicates the point or argument you want it to communicate without a lot of unnecessary details, that is perfect for the blog. But don't worry, we will have a team of editors who will be able to help in this process. Images are encouraged as well, so feel free to include relevant images (perhaps conceptual schemes you have created yourself to better communicate complex arguments). Just make sure to attach them to the email with the filled out form, and include the sources of those images so we can credit them appropriately on the blog!

While your post should be based on facts and existing research to the largest extent possible, make the language accessible instead of too academic or scientific. Remember, one of the aims of the blog is to promote education research in a more digestible way. Avoid using too much jargon, and be diligent with defining concepts that might be difficult to understand or ambiguous. Include the information that helps the reader understand the main point, and eliminate irrelevant or overly detailed information. Do not include in-text references, but refer to the authors and/or the name of the study in the text. Do include all the sources in a bibliography at the end of the post.

Below is a brief list of what should be included in your submission (the form has individual boxes for each component):

1. Title – should be clear and concise, relevant to the content and grabbing the reader's attention.
2. Lead – a short introduction (one or two sentences) communicating the main idea of the post.
3. Your name and a short (1-2 short sentences) description about yourself.
4. Date
5. Text (with relevant graphics, and source of images) – the main text should follow a clear structure, for example introduction, main, and conclusion. If needed, include sub-headings to clearly divide the post into manageable chunks.
6. Bibliography
7. A sentence or two summarizing the main point or key question, used to promote the post on our social media platforms.
8. Key words (for the creation of tags, making up categories of subjects on the blog) – add a small number (2-4) of relevant key words we can use to categorize your post.

Some of these components of a traditional blog post can be seen in the screenshot below. As mentioned, there will be a form for submitting posts to the blog, where each component will have an individual box where you can copy and paste it (see section “How do I submit a post?” for more information).

Example of a blog post

EDUCATION TRENDS

What Educators Are Learning During the Pandemic

Many school leaders and teachers are focusing on whole child education, an idea that seems likely to grow in prominence in the future.

By Becki Cohn-Vargas
December 9, 2020



Dave Zajac/Record Journal via Associated Press

In 2020, educators have faced pandemic-driven remote schooling and also widespread inequities in education and society that have been made obvious by the virus. As schools were forced to switch to distance learning overnight, huge disparities became undeniable: We witnessed children, especially children of color, facing poverty, hunger, mental health issues, lack of computers and internet access, and consequent fears of falling behind. The pandemic led educators to confront these inequities and redouble their ongoing efforts to meet not only the academic but also the physical and social-emotional needs of students.

What we have learned enables us to imagine a more equitable education. I have recently been speaking with educators and students in California, and I've learned of many innovative practices that can continue when all students and teachers are back in their classrooms full-time. I will focus on the power of relationships, innovative curriculum, and wraparound services. While the idea of **whole-child education** isn't new, more educators now recognize the necessity to embrace it.

STRONG RELATIONSHIPS ARE THE HEART OF LEARNING
With distance and hybrid learning, educators work harder to forge relationships

How do I submit a post?

To contribute to the blog with a post (in the format of an article), please fill out the form provided by the Blog Team. We have created the form as a template so that each submission is streamlined in terms of components, making it easier to edit and post everything directly onto the website. The form requires you to include the components listed in the section above. Once you have filled in the form, email it to (preferably as a Word document):

changingeducation1blog@gmail.com

We will read through all the submissions, edit if necessary (together with you if you prefer) and publish it!

What if I want to contribute with another type of media?

We welcome other types of media as well! If you want to create a video essay for example, or another type of visual media, we are happy to receive your submission. We are aiming to make the blog a dynamic platform that contains much more than just text. As long as the format of your choice makes sense with the content, feel free to be creative!

Summary of the most important guidelines

Length of post: between 500 and 1500 words long. However, try to keep your post as compact as possible, and beyond 1000 words, consider the value added of writing a longer post. If you feel like you would need considerably more words, try first to think about whether you can divide that post into multiple pieces. However, if you can justify writing a post that is considerably longer than this, say 2000 words, let one of the Blog Team members know! For example, if you want to do an in-depth examination of a current event or happening, and it would not make sense to split it into several posts.

Topic of post: education. There are no restrictions on what level of education, whether it is informal or formal education, or which specific subject related to education you can write about. If you feel unsure about the subject of your intended post, please feel free to discuss with us!

Media: we welcome content of different types. If you're good with videography and editing, and feel like making a short video essay, feel free! The most important thing is that the format and the content are aligned. If you submit a text, please include graphics, images, photographs, or schemes where relevant. They could help grab the reader's attention or help the reader understand a complex argument or concept.

Language: the post should be written in English. Furthermore, the language should strike a balance between formal and informal. In other words, the blog should be more accessible than scientific articles, but still communicate research findings and arguments effectively.

References: no in-text references like in APA, but instead, mention clearly the study or research by using the name of the author or the name of the paper. Include the references in a reference list (bibliography) at the end of the blog post.