

GUIDANCE MATTERS



GUIDELINES FOR EXTERNAL CONTRIBUTORS - NCGE - GUIDANCE MATTERS

Next Issue Date: **17th May 2021**

Content Deadline: **9th April 2021**

Thank you for considering contributing an article to the next issue of **Guidance Matters**. We don't underestimate the time and efforts involved and are very grateful that you are prepared to assist in keeping the Guidance community informed.

Previous editions:

Past 'Guidance Matters' and 'NCGE News' publications can be viewed [HERE](#).

Guidelines:

Guidance Matters has the spirit and tone of a magazine. It, therefore, requires a style of writing that is neither academic nor business-like but, rather, conversational in tone.

We are anxious to provide useful, interesting, lively and informative articles to our readers; **to exchange and share practical information and ideas about best practice in Guidance.**

The professional needs/interests of the reader are central to our editorial philosophy. The following recommendations are intended as guidelines and are not prescriptive:

Content can include articles related to:

- guidance case studies highlighting innovative and good practice
- research
- projects
- initiatives

Content should fit roughly into one of the following categories (sections):

- primary education
- post-primary education
- further education and training (FET)
- Higher Education
- Europe in practice
- research
- special educational needs (SEN)
- a review (book, online tool etc.)
- a 'day in the life' (of a practitioner)
- general guidance delivery related information

Style Guide

Make your tone welcoming, conversational. Imagine you are talking to your reader across a table, enthusiastically sharing some new idea.

- readers want to learn something new.
- don't write from your position, write **to** their position.
- choose material that you know will be **useful**.

Stick to one main idea per sentence and use words economically. Don't be afraid to give instructions. Often this can be the only direct and easily understood way of communicating something. Readers will not take offence. Don't be afraid to use 'you' and 'we'. Avoid graphs, tables etc. where possible.

Personal pronouns:

- help to avoid abstractions and to use more concrete and everyday language.
- keep sentences short.

Where possible, use the active voice (subject/verb/object) with strong verbs:

- readers understand sentences in the active voice more quickly and easily because it follows how we think and process information. Use the passive voice only when you have a good reason for doing so.
- strong verbs will liven up and tighten any sentence.

When formatting text please:

- use word (.doc/.docx) only
- use double line spacing with a 1" margin each side
- provide a headline for the article proportionate to its length, e.g. one to two words for 50-200 word pieces to 4 words max for 1000 words.
- use descriptive headers and sub-heads to break the text up into manageable sections.
- keep sections/paragraphs short.
- use bulleted lists where possible for splitting up information.
- avoid graphs (unless images)
- include links to any relevant referenced websites / resources
- include a bibliography and / or references (where appropriate)

Please note:

NCGE will write a short introduction to each article, including the name of the author. The introduction will provide a context for readers, before moving to your content.

In the interests of professionalism and best practice, NCGE asks that contributors do not give permission for their article to be reproduced in a publication that has a similar client group to NCGE - Guidance Matters.

The following checklist is designed to make your task a little easier. When submitting FINAL content please ensure that you provide all the information listed by the content deadline.

Article Checklist:

Section / Category:	
Article content/title:	
Word count:	
Images	If you have, or know of, a quality photograph or illustration that would complement the article please include as separate attachments.¹
Biography	Please give a short description of your professional background at the end of the article and include a photo.²
Return to NCGE	Please return to the provider of this brief and /or ncgeinfo@ncge.ie

¹ *We cannot promise to use supplied images. If the quality isn't up to a certain standard, we would be letting the publication and our readers down. 'Stock Shots' will be used where appropriate.*

² *All contributors must provide a **high quality 'passport type' headshot** and a few lines **about themselves**; where they are working currently, their past / unique experience etc.*

As advised, NCGE will write a short introduction to each article, including the name of the author and picture. **For collaborated content and content submitted by another Irish Government agency - this is not required.**

Word count guide (for info only)

500 words	1 x Page (incl. images)
1000 words	2 x Pages (incl. images)
1500 words	3+ Pages (incl. images)

For any queries in relation to 'Guidance Matters' e-mail: ncgeinfo@ncge.ie or call +353 1 8690715