**Story template**

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| **Headline** |
| **Introduction** |
| **Quote** |
| **Further information** |
| **Photos, other media and links** |

**Guidelines**

We’ve prepared this template so different members of a departmental team, including individual academics, can prepare a news story either for the website or for other external outlets.

If you are developing a news story please talk to the central Communications team. This means we can offer support and advice to make sure authors are comfortable.

If you have any questions please email the central Communications Team at: comms@essex.ac.uk or speak to your Faculty Web Officer.

**Headline**

**Guidance:** Try to keep your headline short and direct using wording which will grab the attention and highlight the relevance of the story to your audience.

**Introduction**

**Guidance:** The first paragraph should summarise the story and emphasise why the story is relevant/important/helpful to the reader. Think about why this project is important, the potential impact, how it will change our understanding of an issue, how it will change people’s lives. Try to keep your first paragraph concise – you can add in more information as you develop your story.

**Developing your story**

**Guidance:** After your introduction you can start telling your story. Please try to include quotes from those involved as that increases engagement. You can also start introducing other important pieces of information:

* Include quotes
* More details about the project
* Academics involved - Please include lead and other team members
* Student involvement
* Partners or funder – we should always credit partners if possible
* Key dates (publication, performance, speech)
* Important documents – links to publications

**Photographs and video**

**Guidance:** Don’t use photographs if you don’t think they are strong enough.

* The story will look better without a photograph if you only have a poor quality one.
* The preference is to use professionally taken photographs, but we recognise this isn’t always possible.
* Mobile phones can take brilliant pictures and you might love photography so if you have a really good image then talk to us about whether it is appropriate. If you need advice from the central Communications Team please email us or give us a call.
* If you have video you would like to embed please let us know. If you can link to content on our Vimeo channel that is ideal.

**Other things to think about**

**Guidance:** Thinking about your audience should be the first thing you think about and there are a couple of other things which will really make a difference.

* Think about who your target audience is? We want our content to engage multiple audiences and, of course, particular stories might have a specific target.
* Imagining your story is for a well-informed prospective undergraduate student is a good starting point.
* How will you promote it via social media? People will not automatically find your story – you need to use your social media channels to support engagement. Useful links – link out to publications, web pages where you are featured etc.

**More advice and support**

Please email the central communications team at: comms@essex.ac.uk or call 2400.