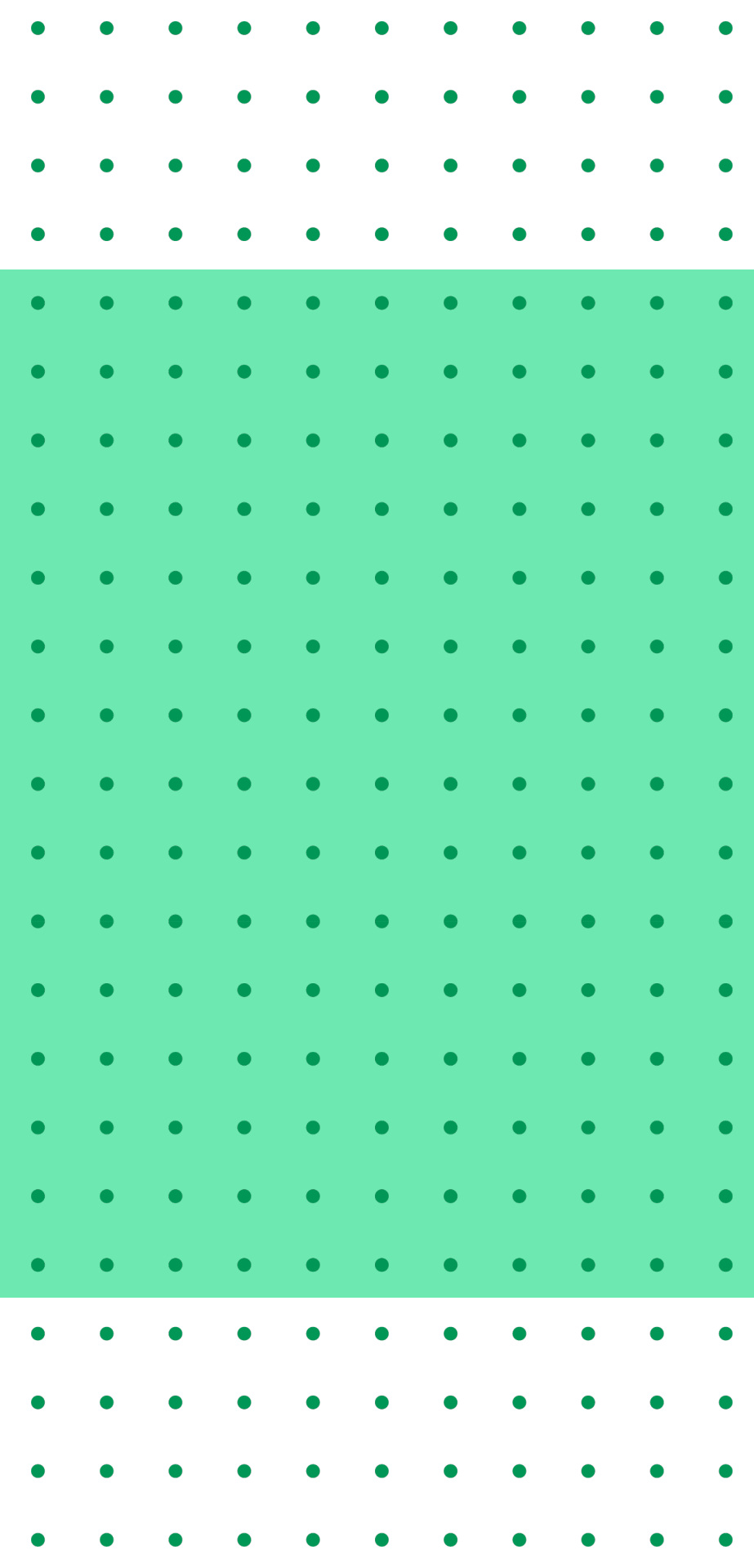


Writing articles for Wonkhe

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WONKHE



Why publish?

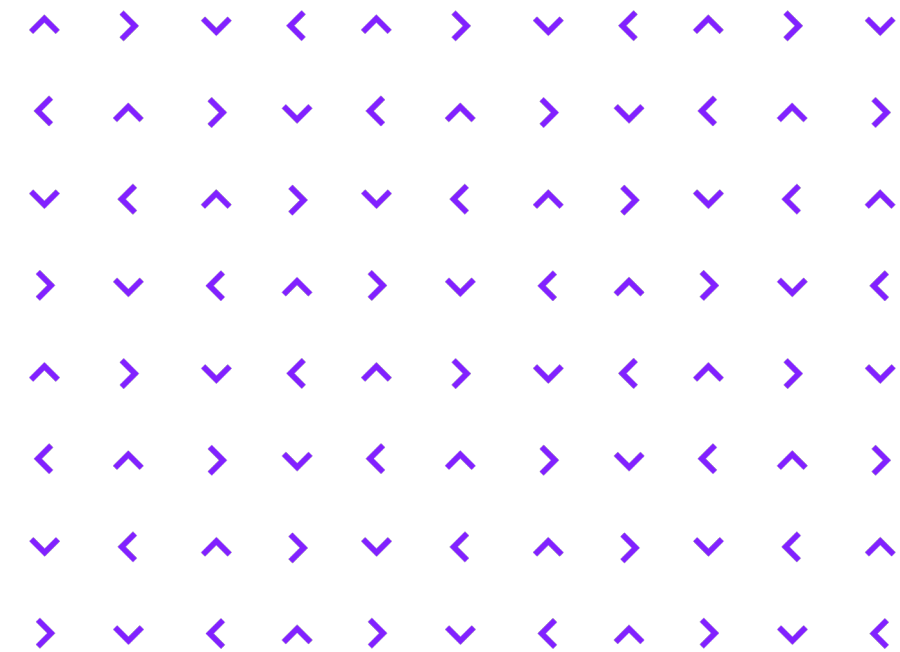
Contribute to the debate!

- Leadership is important – not telling people what to think, but role modelling open thinking to those coming up the ranks
- Energise the sector – keep alive the hope of productive discourse
- To promote or demonstrate important values

As a dynamic HE professional who is going places...

- Be a part of innovation and trend identification
- Influence – publishing as part of a wider strategy of shaping thinking
- Brand - for knowledge organisations the brand isn't in the logo, it's in the people
- Networks - connect with others with similar concerns and ideas
- To find out what you really think about things

Ask yourself: does it feel authentic for you? Do you find yourself frequently in intense conversations with colleagues? Are you curious about why things are so? Do you care about the future of HE? Do you think publishing articles about it can make a difference?



What makes a good article?

Why should someone other than you care about this?

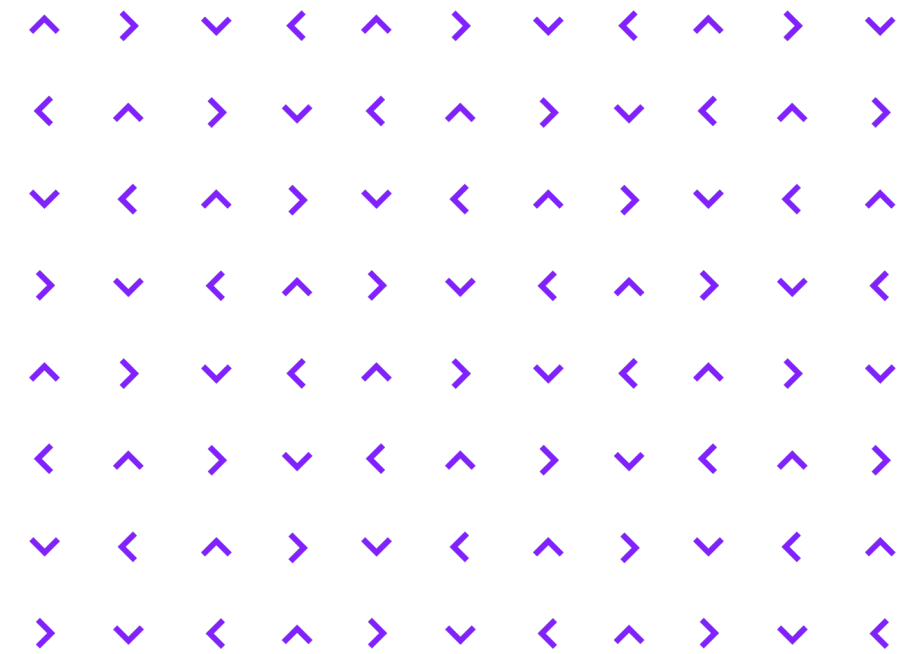
- “we’ve done a project/run an event/had a nice experience” – why is that useful?
- Does it have analysis, learning, overcoming challenge, “story”?
- Too much out there is bland, descriptive, and promotional
- Show, don’t tell!

Can the reader follow the thread of the argument?

- What do they already know and what do they need to know?
- Is it too neat and tidy? One-sided? Does it stand on its own merits or rely on dismantling someone or something else?
- Is it organised like an argument or by some other (more annoying) logic? Eg “first this happened, then that happened”

Have you found a credible voice?

- knowledgeable, experienced, doesn’t need to hedge about with extraneous links and evidence (unless the piece is about evidence), or blind you with acronyms and jargon or attempts at humour or studied informality – be real (including recognising your limits)



Overcoming obstacles

Finding topics, or, there's no such thing as "thinking time"

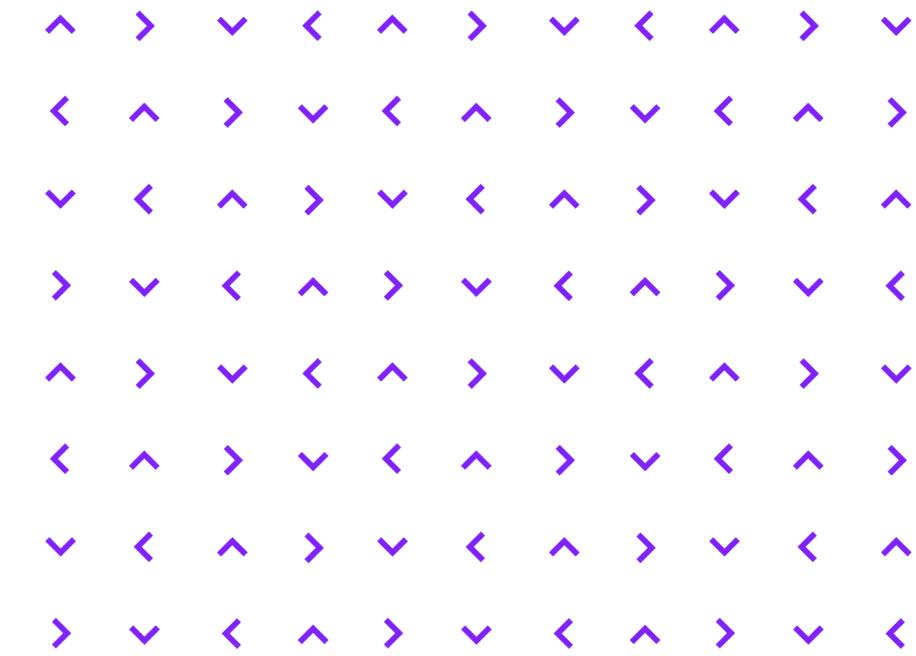
- Read inside and outside HE (media commentary, social media, Wonkhe, obviously)
- Jot a note, discuss with colleagues, be curious, generate hypotheses, question your own responses
- Connect with interesting people for coffee, even if it feels like you don't have time

Keep it manageable, or, there's no such thing as "writing time"

- 800 words = brief intro, two-three key points, triumphant conclusion TOPS
- Focus on what ONE THING you want to say right now - this won't be your final word
- Imagine you're explaining what you think to an informed friend or colleague, not the serried ranks of the HE professoriate, or your university's academic board
- Don't try and write it all at once – two or three short bursts of 30 mins or so over the course of a day or two can be far more productive than trying to find half a day to set aside (but do give yourself a deadline)

Get a first draft down, step away for a day, then EDIT

- Check for: argument, purpose, readability, effect – ask for feedback from a trusted colleague
- Once it's published read it a month later and give yourself notes for the future



Thoughts and questions

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