

**Teesside University**

# **blogs.tees User Guide**

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## Introduction

WordPress is an online application that gives you a space to publish content online including [blog posts](#), documents, images and other media. As well as posting content you can optionally invite users to comment on and discuss it.

You can use your blog space for whatever you want, examples include publishing research material, posting additional module content to promote discussion by your students or a private reflective journal.

WordPress is managed through an online 'Dashboard' where you can create new content in an easy to use online text editor, similar to many word processing applications. You can categorise and display content in a variety of different ways to suit your audience.

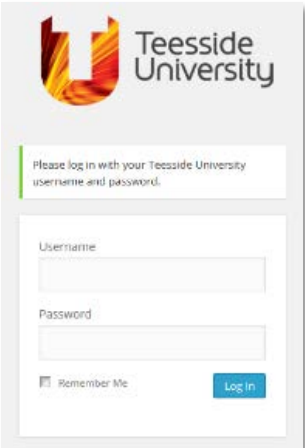
If you have an idea for a blog but are unsure about how you would visualise the content or would like more information on how you can use this system to achieve your goals please don't hesitate to get in touch with the [e-learning team](#)!

## Section 1: Creating an account

blogs.tees can be used by all staff and students with a valid University login ID.

Before a user can create a blog or be added to an existing blog they need to create an account on blogs.tees by doing the following:

- Go to <http://blogs.tees.ac.uk>
- Click **Create Account**.
- Enter your University login ID, password and click **Log In**.
- You now have an account on blogs.tees, if you need access to an existing blog on the system you can let the blog owner know you now have an account and they can add you to it.



## Section 2: Creating a blog

Blogs can be created by staff and students, currently there's no limit to the number of blogs you can have but if you don't create any new content on your blog for 90 days it may be archived. Don't worry, we'll always ask you first.

To create a blog do the following:

- Go to <http://blogs.tees.ac.uk>
- Click **Create Blog**.
- If you're not already logged in enter your University login ID, password and click **Log in**.
- **If you haven't already done so, please familiarise yourself with the University [Guidance for the use of Social Media](#)'.**
- Choose an address for your blog and enter it in the **Blog Address** field. This could be a module code, your name or subject title. Try and make it unique, only lower case letters and numbers are allowed. **(Please note this cannot be changed after you create the blog)**

- Choose a title for your blog and enter it in the **Blog Title** field.
- Click the **Create Blog** button.

### Get a blog in seconds

Hi Richard, by filling out the form below, you can add a blog to your account. **There is no limit to the number of blogs you can have, but if you've not created any new content in your blog for 90 days we'll archive it.**

**Before we get started...**

- Please ensure you have read the '[Guidance for the use of Social Media](#)'.
- If your blog breaches any of the above guidance it may be removed without warning and you could be blocked from using this service.

**Blog Address:**

Your blog address starts with <http://blogs.tees.ac.uk/> and ends with what you type in the box below. **(Only lower case letters and numbers allowed)**

**Blog Title:**

**Privacy:**

Allow search engines to index this blog (If you're not sure what this means, leave it set to 'Yes').

Yes  No

**Please remember, by default everything you upload to your blog will be available on the public Internet.**

**Create Blog**

## Section 3: Accessing your blog Dashboard

Now that you've created a blog on blogs.tees you can add, edit and remove posts and pages, manage comments, categories, tags, links and customise various aspects of it. To do this you need to access the blog Dashboard.

When logged in to blogs.tees, click the **My Sites** link in the toolbar at the top of the screen. On the next page click the **Dashboard** link displayed underneath the title of your new blog, you'll be taken to a screen similar to the one below. If you see the message **"Welcome to your new WordPress site!"** click the **Dismiss** link in the top right corner first.

The screenshot shows the WordPress Dashboard interface. On the left is a sidebar menu with options like Home, My Sites, Jetpack, Posts, Media, Pages, Comments, Feedback, Appearance, Plugins, Users, Tools, Settings, and Collapse menu. The main content area is titled 'Dashboard' and includes several widgets: 'At a Glance' (4 Posts, 2 Pages, 1 Comment), 'Site Stats' (a bar chart), 'Storage Space' (1.024 MB Allowed, 48.54 MB Used), 'Activity' (Recently Published posts), and 'Quick Draft' (a form to create a new post). The user's name 'Hi, Richard' is visible in the top right corner.

The left pane of the Dashboard contains a menu linking to the main areas of your blog:

- Posts
- Media
- Pages
- Comments
- Appearance
- Users
- Settings

The central area contains modules such as 'At a Glance' (number of posts, categories, comments and your remaining storage space), 'Quick Draft' (a way to quickly author posts), 'Site Stats' and 'Activity'.

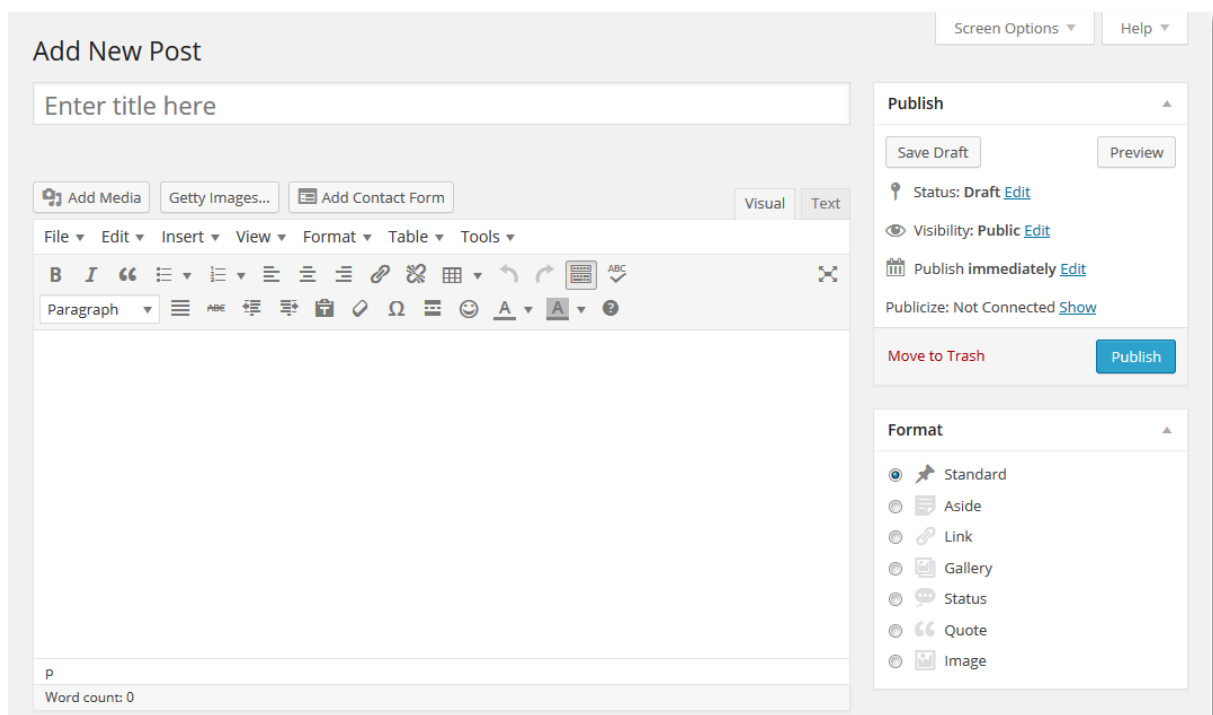
It's possible to rearrange the Dashboard modules by clicking on their title and dragging them to different parts of the central Dashboard area. You can also toggle individual modules off and on by clicking the **Screen Options** link in the top right corner of the Dashboard.

## Section 4: Posts, Pages, Categories and Tags

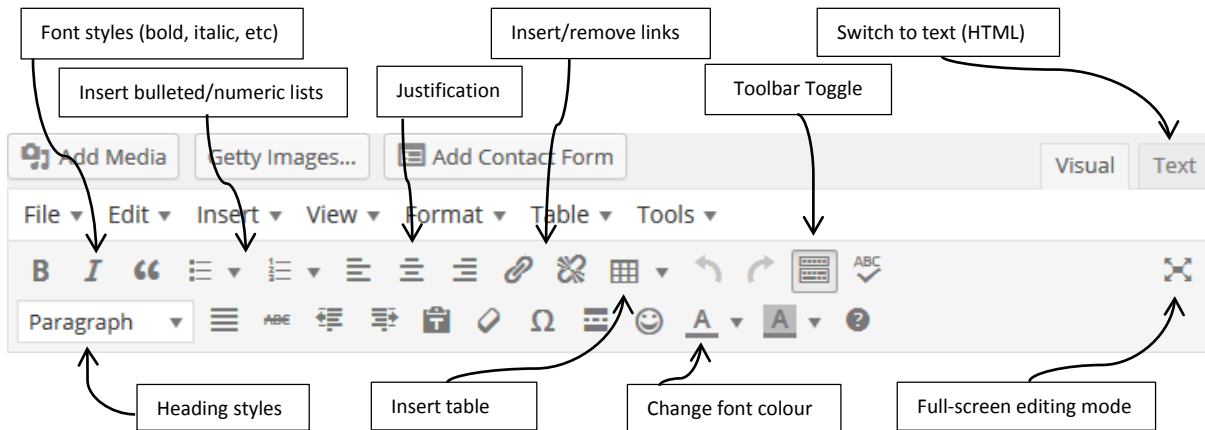
This section will show you how to create blog posts & pages and add semantic information such as categories and tags.

### Creating and editing blog posts

To create a new post, click the **Posts** link in the Dashboard menu followed by **Add New**. You will be taken to the **Add New Post** page where you can begin adding content.



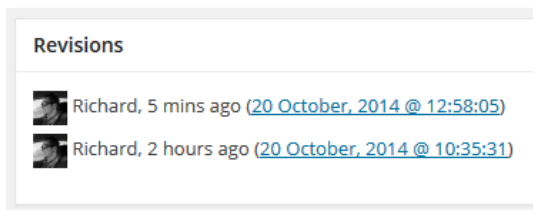
The **Add New Post** page gives you a Rich Text Editor which offers similar formatting tools to those found in word processing software. From the text editor toolbar you can change font styles, create bulleted lists, insert links, images and more. Some commonly used options are shown below, if you don't see all of the icons, click the **Toolbar Toggle** icon on the toolbar.



Whilst you're writing, WordPress will automatically save a draft every 2 minutes. If you should lose Internet connectivity or experience a problem with your web browser a recent backup of your post or page will be shown in the Posts/Page list appended with the word **Draft**.

When you have entered a title and content, you can use the options on the right of the text editor to preview your post/page, save a draft or publish it.

WordPress keeps a revision history of each of your posts/pages, allowing you to move back to an earlier version if necessary. If you need to move back to an earlier version, go to **Posts/Pages** in the Dashboard, click **Edit** below the post/page title, click **Screen Options** in the top right and click **Revisions**.

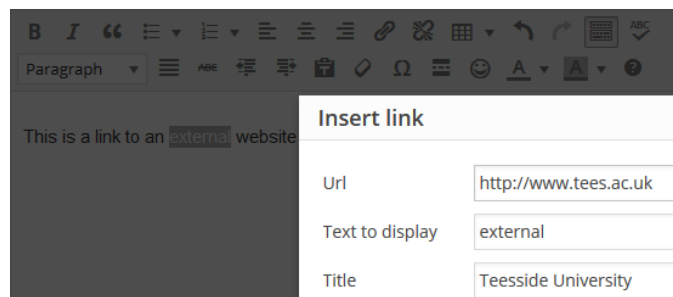


You should now see a list of all previous versions below the text editor.

## Inserting links

You might want to insert links to other web sites, blogs or posts/pages within your blog. The text editor allows you to easily insert web links.

To insert a link, type in some text and highlight it with your cursor. Click the **Insert/Edit Link** icon on the toolbar, type a web address in the **URL** box and a title in the **Title** box.



## Inserting images

It is possible to add images and manage large groups of images from within WordPress. You can upload directly from your computer, import from another website or insert existing files from your **Media Library** (covered in Section 6) into your posts.

To insert an image into a post, in the text editor place the cursor where you would like the image to appear and click the **Add Media** button above the text editor.

- To upload files from your computer click the **Select Files** button, navigate to and select the image you'd like to insert. Alternatively, if you're using Firefox, Safari or Google Chrome as

your web browser it is possible to drag and drop files from your computer into the **Upload New Media** window, this currently isn't supported in Internet Explorer.

- Once the image is uploaded you can change the attributes such as title, alignment and image size. Finally, to add the image click the **Insert into post** button.
- To add an existing image from your Media Library, click the **Media Library** tab, select the image you want to insert (select more than one image by holding down shift) and click the **Insert into post** button.

You can also display a gallery as thumbnail that will link to the larger versions, to do this click the **Create Gallery** link on the left after you have uploaded some images.

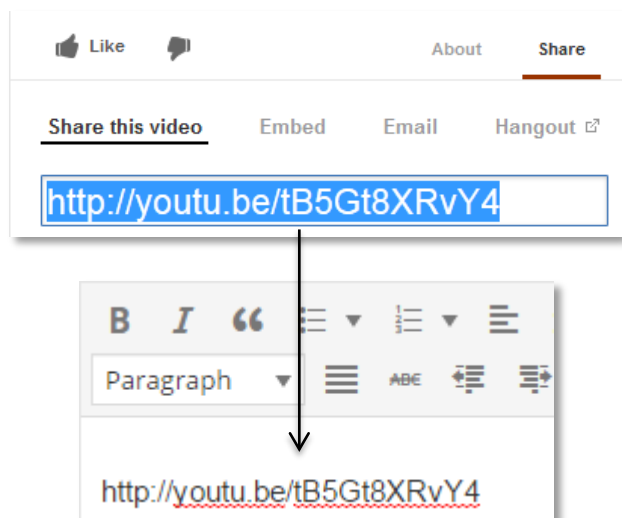
- Choose the images you want to include in your gallery (select more than one image by holding down shift) and click the **Create a new gallery** button in the bottom right.
- You can drag and drop the images to change the order they'll appear in and add a caption to each image.
- In **Gallery Settings** you can change where the image thumbnails link to, the number of columns to display the gallery in and the option to display the images in a random order.
- Finally, click **Insert gallery**.

**(Please note all images uploaded to blogs.tees will be resized to a maximum of 1024 pixels on their longest edge)**

## Embedding video and other media

In most cases it is possible to add embedded video and other media to blog posts and pages by simply copying and pasting the URL of the media into the text editor, this is known as auto-embedding. Media from the following services are automatically embedded when you paste a link into the editor.

- Flickr
- Imgur
- Instagram
- Flickr (both videos and images)
- Instagram
- Photobucket
- PollDaddy
- Scribd
- SlideShare
- SoundCloud
- Spotify
- TED
- Twitter
- Vimeo
- YouTube (only public videos and playlists - "unlisted" and "private" videos will not embed)



A full list of supported embedded media is available here: <https://codex.wordpress.org/Embeds>

If your media is hosted elsewhere you will need to obtain the **Embed** code for the media from the provider and manually insert it into your post or page. Once you have the embed code click the **Text** tab above the text editor and paste the embed code at the top of the page. Now click the **Visual** tab to return to the text editor, reposition your content by dragging the outlined container to where you want it displayed.

## Adding Categories and Tags to your posts

Categorising and tagging your blog posts makes it easier for visitors to navigate your blog and find related information. This is especially useful for blogs with large amounts of content covering a diverse range of topics.

### Categories

Categories are used to list the general topics covered by your blog and allow users to filter by these areas. It is good practise to categorise your blog posts as you create them, reusing existing categories wherever possible. For example a blog about IT may contain posts split into categories such as Hardware, Software and Networks etc.

On the right side of the text editor screen you'll see the **Categories** panel, where you can select existing categories or create new ones. You can manage (add, edit and delete) your categories by selecting **Posts** and then **Categories** from your blog **Dashboard**.

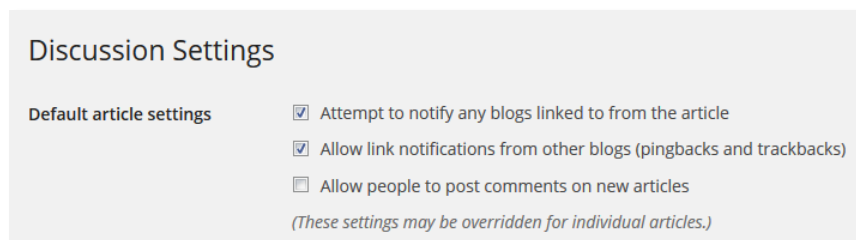
### Tags

Categories describe the general topics covered by your blog, tags highlight keywords of a specific topic within a post. For example, a post categorised under Software might have tags such as WordPress, Drupal or Edublogs. On the right side of the text editor screen you'll see the **Tags** panel, where you can enter comma-separated tags that are relevant to your post content. You can manage (add, edit and delete) your tags by selecting **Posts** and **Tags** from your blog Dashboard.

## Section 5: Commenting

Post commenting encourages active debate on the topics discussed in your blog posts. By default comments are turned off on new blogs to combat spam but to allow comments do the following:

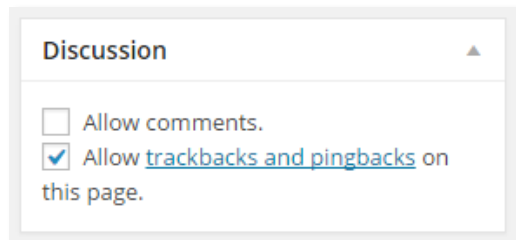
- From your blog **Dashboard** click **Settings** and then **Discussion**.
- Click the box next to **Allow people to post comments on new articles** so that it is enabled.
- Finally, at the bottom of the page click **Save Changes**.



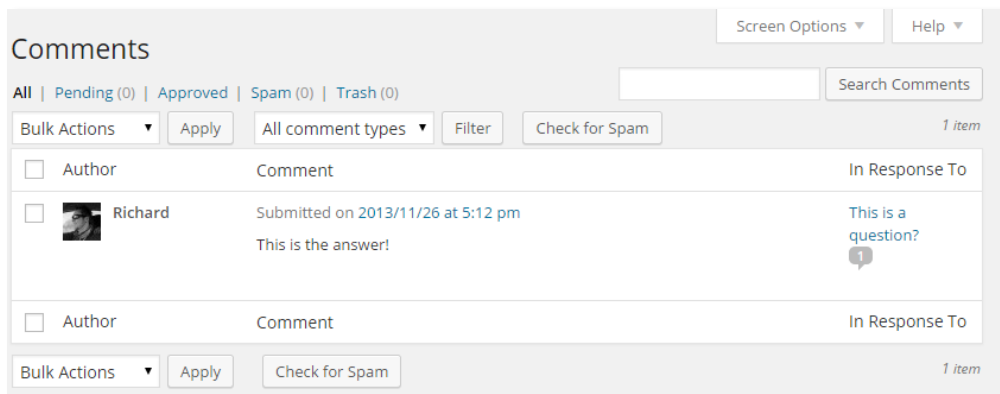
Comments can also be turned off and on for individual posts and pages. You can do this whilst you're editing a post or page:



- Look for the **Discussion** widget on the **Edit Page/Post** page.
- If it's not there click **Screen Options** in the top right corner and tick the box for **Discussion**.
- In the **Discussion** widget click the **Allow comments** tick box.
- Update or Save your Page/Post.



By selecting the **Comments** item on your blog **Dashboard** you can see the list of submitted comments left in response to your posts, as shown in the example below:



If you move your mouse over any of the comments in the list you will have the option to **approve**, **reply**, **edit** (to remove unsuitable words), **mark as spam** or **delete** the comment. By default all comments must be approved by an administrator before they appear on your blog. When a new comment is made you'll receive an email letting you know there is a comment waiting for moderation.

Comment spam is a common problem with blogs and all blogs on blogs.tees are protected by a service called Akismet. Akismet reduces the amount of spam comments that get through to your blog but we would still recommend checking the content of each comment as even innocuous looking comments can be spam!

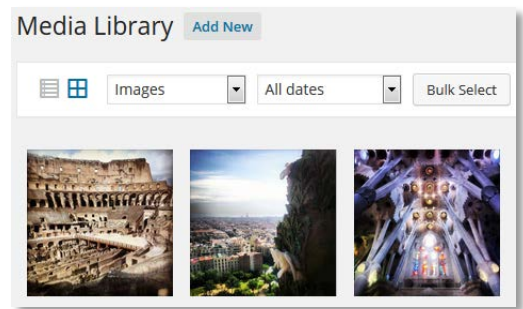
## Section 6: Media Library

The Media Library is a central place to manage your uploaded content, which can include images and documents.

Each blog is provided with 100MB of storage space. To avoid using up your storage allowance too quickly please try to ensure that images and document file sizes are kept to a minimum, also note that all images uploaded to blogs.tees will be automatically resized to a maximum of 1024 pixels on their longest edge to reduce their file size. We do not encourage uploading large media files such as video and audio as these will very quickly consume your available space and would be better hosted externally using services such as YouTube, SoundCloud, etc.

Content can be uploaded to your Media Library directly or when adding a new post or page (as described in Section 4). To upload a file through the Media Library do the following:

- From your blog **Dashboard** menu choose **Media**.
- Click **Add New**.
- Click the **Select Files** button, navigate to and select the file you'd like to insert. Alternatively, if you're using Firefox, Safari or Google Chrome as your web browser it is possible to drag and drop files from your computer into the **Upload New Media** window, this currently isn't supported in Internet Explorer.
- Once the file or files have uploaded you can click on any of the thumbnail images to edit the title, from there you can also choose **Edit Image** where you can crop, resize and rotate image.



Files that you upload through the Media Library will be available to use when clicking the **Add Media** button from a post or a page, just choose the **Media Library** tab to show all items already in your library.

## Section 7: Themes and Widgets

### Themes

You can change the look and feel of your blog by changing its theme. Themes are essentially a way of changing the appearance of your blog, each theme has different layouts and displays elements of your blog in different ways.

Teesside Theme is our recommended theme, mainly due to its ease of use. If you've used WordPress already you may be familiar with Twenty Eleven, which is one of the default themes provided with the application.

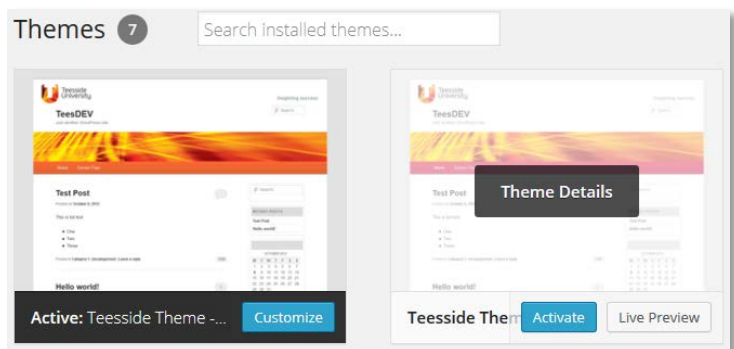
We have created separate themes based on TwentyEleven for each school within the University, you can upload your own header and background images and change many of the options for it.

Themes can be changed by doing the following:

- From your blog **Dashboard** click **Appearance**.
- In the **Themes** section move your mouse cursor over a theme and click **Activate** for the theme you want to apply to your blog, you can click **Live Preview** to show a preview of your blog without activating the theme on it permanently.

To change the header image that is shown at the top of your blog do the following:

- From your blog **Dashboard** click **Appearance**.



- Click the **Header** link.
- You can upload your own image by clicking the **Browse** icon and choosing a file on your computer. **(Please note header images should be 1000 x 288 pixels)**
- You can remove the header image completely by clicking **Remove Header Image**.
- Finally, click **Save Changes**.

To change the background image or colour do the following:

- From your blog **Dashboard** click **Appearance**.
- Click the **Background** link.
- You can upload your own image by clicking the **Browse** icon and choosing a file on your computer.
- Instead of using an image for the background you can choose a colour to use by clicking **Select Color**.
- Finally, click **Save Changes**.

## Widgets

Widgets are small blocks of functionality or content which usually reside in either the sidebar or footer of a blog. Examples of standard widgets available to you in WordPress include a calendar, search box, tag cloud and recently posted comments. You can add or remove widgets from your blog by going to the **Widgets** section within the **Appearance** section of your blog **Dashboard**. On this page simply drag and drop Widgets to or from your sidebar or footer areas.

## Section 8: Users and Privacy Settings

### Adding users to blogs

You can add other users to your blog and give them different roles that control what they can and cannot do on your blog.

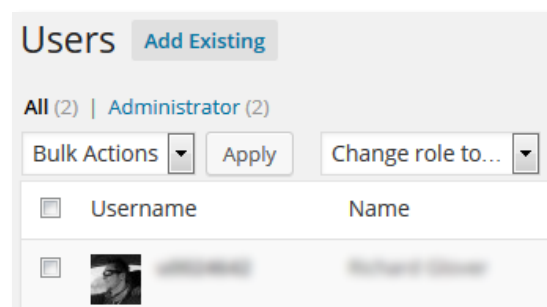
The roles are:

- **Administrator** – Someone who has access to all the administration features of your blog.
- **Editor** – Someone who can publish and manage posts and pages and well as other users' posts, etc.
- **Author** – Someone who can publish and manage their own posts.
- **Contributor** – Someone who can write and manage their own posts but not publish them.
- **Subscriber** – Someone who has "read only" access to your site.

You can only add users to your blog who already have an account on blogs.tees. Users can create an account by following the instructions in Section 1.

To add a user to your blog, do the following:

- From your blog **Dashboard** click **Users**.
- Click **Add Existing** at the top of the page.



- Enter their email address in the **E-mail** field and select the role you want to give them from the **Role** dropdown.
- Click **Add Existing User**.

The user you have added will receive an email letting them know they've been invited to access your blog, the email contains a link that they simply need to click on to confirm the action.

You can return to the **Users** page to view a list of users who have access to your blog, see the role they have and the number of posts they have made.

## Blog Privacy

You can change the privacy settings of your blog by going to **Settings** in your blog **Dashboard** followed by **Reading**. From there you can ask search engines not to index your blog (it is up to search engines to honour this request) or make you blog available only to the following:

- Registered users of blogs.tees
- Specific users that you have added to your blog
- Users with the role of Administrator

Site Visibility

Allow search engines to index this site

Discourage search engines from indexing this site

*Note: Neither of these options blocks access to your site — it is up to search engines to honor your request.*

I would like my blog to be visible only to registered users of blogs.tees.

I would like my blog to be visible only to [users I add to this blog](#)

I would like [this blog](#) to be visible only to users with the role of Administrator.

**Please note:** By default new blogs will be visible to the public and search engines will be allowed to index it. You can change this when creating your blog or at any time via the Dashboard.

## Troubleshooting

### Blog Dashboard not displaying correctly

In a small number of cases your blog Dashboard may not display correctly. If you're using **Internet Explorer** from a computer on campus you need to turn **Compatibility View** off by doing the following:

- In Internet Explorer click the **Tools** menu.
- From the menu choose **Compatibility View Settings**.
- Ensure that **tees.ac.uk** isn't listed in the **Websites you've added to Compatibility View:** box.
- If it is, click **tees.ac.uk** and click the Remove button.
- Untick the box next to **Display intranet sites in Compatibility View**.
- Click the **Close** button.

## Additional Support

If you require any additional support please visit your local IT Service Desk in the first instance.