

Narrative CV Briefing Session - Facilitators Guide

A brief guide to running a Narrative CV Briefing Session

This guide is intended to support you through the process of facilitating a Narrative CV Briefing session and should be used in conjunction with the Narrative CV Briefing slides.

It provides a structure and outline of a Narrative CV Briefing Session that can be run at School or College level, to promote awareness of the Narrative CV and to support researchers in writing / developing their own, and includes further sources of support and resources to further learn more about Narrative CVs.

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What are Narrative CVs?

Narrative CVs (NCVs) are a format of CV that provides a structured written description of a researcher's contribution and achievements, reflecting a broad range of relevant skills and experience, moving away from the more narrowly focused performance indicators of traditional academic CVs.

NCVs are relatively new in academia and are rapidly replacing traditional CVs for many funding applications (e.g. [UKRIs Resume for Research and Innovation](#)) and other academic assessments. Unlike a traditional academic CV, they allow a candidate to tell the story of HOW they have had an impact on the field and the wider skills and experience that they have gained.

The NCV is intended to reward a wide range of contributions to research across a wide range of career paths and personal circumstances. This is different to a traditional CV, which focuses on WHAT has been achieved, often limited to narrow indicators.

Structure of a Narrative CV

A Narrative CV includes four modules on the following:

Module 1	Contributions to the generation of new ideas, tools, methodologies or knowledge.
Module 2	The development of others and maintenance of effective working relationships.
Module 3	Contribution to the wider research and innovation community.
Module 4	Contributions to broader research or innovation users and audiences, and towards wider societal benefit.

Narrative CVs are growing in usage across the sector; many funders are using them as part of the funding application process. Whilst it remains an individual's responsibility to write their own NCV it is important to provide researchers with support on how to go about writing such a document.

The IAD has a dedicated [Narrative CV webpage](#) and run a briefing session once per semester as well as a writing retreat dedicated to Narrative CVs.

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What can you do as a School/College?

- Signpost your researchers to IAD Narrative CV webpage
- Signpost your researchers to the IADs Career Development Workshops (particularly the online Narrative CV Briefing Session).
- Run a Narrative CV Briefing Session in your area or a Narrative CV Writing Retreat, to support researchers with the process of writing their individual Narrative CVs.

This document is a guide to support you to run a Narrative CV Briefing Session, and you can find further information about running a Narrative CV Writing Retreat in a separate guide.

We are not expecting you to provide individual CV advice but rather to encourage research staff to see the value in the Narrative CV as it can also be used towards professional development as well as funding applications.

What is the Narrative CV Briefing Session and who is it for?

Given the relatively recent introduction of Narrative CVs many researchers will need support to understand what they are and how their experience applies to the required modules.

The Narrative CV Briefing Session gives a 45-minute overview of the context and suggested format of the document with a clear focus on what could be included as content for the four key modules.

Participants will gain:

- an understanding of the context of Narrative CVs and the rationale for using them
- consideration of content and examples across the four modules
- gain more understanding of further resources to help write one

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What is my role as a facilitator?

As a facilitator it's your job to both arrange and run the Narrative CV briefing session. This includes deciding whether to run it online or in person, finding a venue if in person, advertising to potential participants (including providing participants with information about the set-up, structure and purpose of the briefing session), and managing and delivering the event on the day, this includes a Question & Answer session at the end of the briefing.

What to consider

- Who will be the audience? Will this be mostly postdocs or will academics be included?
- Will you request support from senior academics to help run the session?
- What kinds of questions are likely to come up?
- Will you invite a speaker or knowledgeable / experienced person to input into the session or help answer questions during the Q&A at the end? These could include experienced academics or professional service staff such as research managers or funding specialists.

During the briefing session

Begin with a brief welcome and share the expected key outcomes of the session. Set the context of the Narrative CV Briefing session by highlighting what they are, the typical structure and what content may go into the four modules. An invited speaker may also share their experience and knowledge here too.

Example Structure/timings for the one-hour Briefing Session:

- 5 mins to introduce the session & participants
- 40 mins to present the slides (including 5mins for a quick individual exercise)
- 15mins for Q&A

See also the slides notes pages for suggested discussion points

After the briefing session

The [final slides\[NC1\]](#) of the slide deck highlight further sources of support for individuals writing their own Narrative CV. These are a good way to end, allowing the participant to consider actions to take after the session.

Follow up with participants after the session with information on the [1:1 Career Development Consultations](#) offered by the IAD Research Staff Career Consultants, which will be useful for those who would like individual feedback on their [Narrative CV](#) or have further queries and concerns.

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Appendix

Suggested advertising text:

This briefing session will provide an introduction to the Narrative CV, outlining the structure and possible content as well as an overview of their use within the sector.

We will cover how the Narrative CV came to be, format and examples on the content that could be included in each of the modules within the CV. We will also examine how these CVs can benefit those with non traditional career backgrounds.

There will be a brief opportunity to ask questions at the end of the session and further sources of support in writing a Narrative CV will be provided. The session will last 45mins, followed by a 15min Q&A session.

Support in delivering the session:

- During the Q&A session it is likely that there will be plenty of questions so the following FAQ document is useful to have read and be familiar with ahead of delivering the session:
https://www.arrc.group.cam.ac.uk/files/media/narrative_cv_faqs.pdf
- The University of Sheffield also have an FAQ page and they have also included some specifically for Team Narrative CVs [Narrative CVs FAQs | Research | The University of Sheffield](#)
- For researchers that struggle with a punchy way to express what they have done and how to write persuasive and coherent examples this is a useful guide on how to structure your examples from the University of Leeds [Sharing Your Achievements with “CAR” Stories](#)
- The University of Leeds have also provided guidance for those reviewing Narrative CVs but this can be useful for applicants to read when crafting their own so that they have a clear picture what reviewers are looking for [A guide to reviewing narrative CVs](#)
- For those keen to see examples the University of Sheffield have provided several by module and also career stage / background of the applicant [Narrative CVs | Research | The University of Sheffield](#) It could be worth picking out a few for discussion within the Q&A if you wanted to.



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