

The Masters of Educational Content

How institutions can communicate with precision and impact

part 1.

From Information to Narrative – Turning Dry Academic Data into Engaging Content

How structured content increases
engagement, impact, and prestige in higher
education



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The Structural Content Problem



Many internal messages in organisations go unread
(sources: ZipDo 2024; Oak Engage 2023).

Academics generate extraordinary knowledge.

Institutions often communicate it... poorly.

- Updates are informational, not meaningful
- Research is described as data, not impact
- Internal content overwhelms instead of guiding
- External audiences receive noise rather than clarity



Why It Matters for Universities & Schools



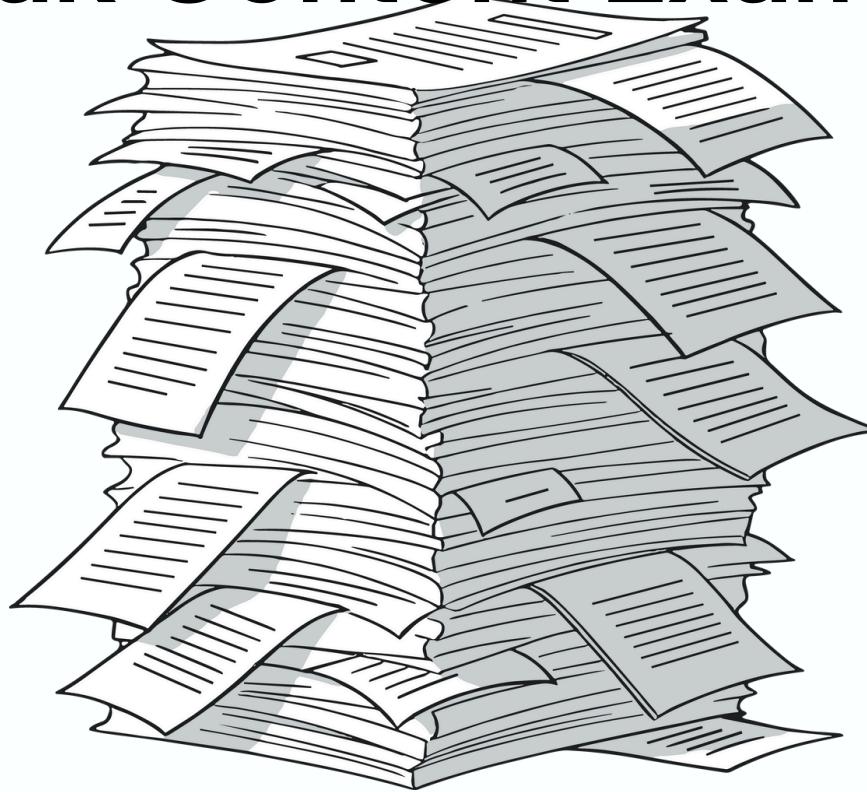
High-quality content extends the institution's intellectual authority outward — and strengthens internal alignment.

When content lacks structure, institutions lose influence.

- Research impact becomes invisible
- Staff don't understand institutional priorities
- Partners overlook key achievements
- Students remain disengaged from institutional life
- Funders fail to see the strategic value of initiatives



What Usually Happens (Weak Content Example)



A real pattern across the sector:

“We published a report on sustainability.
Link attached.”

Outcome:

- Low engagement
- No understanding of relevance
- No amplification
- Administrative
- Uncontextualised



What High-Impact Content Looks Like



Same fact, different content thinking:

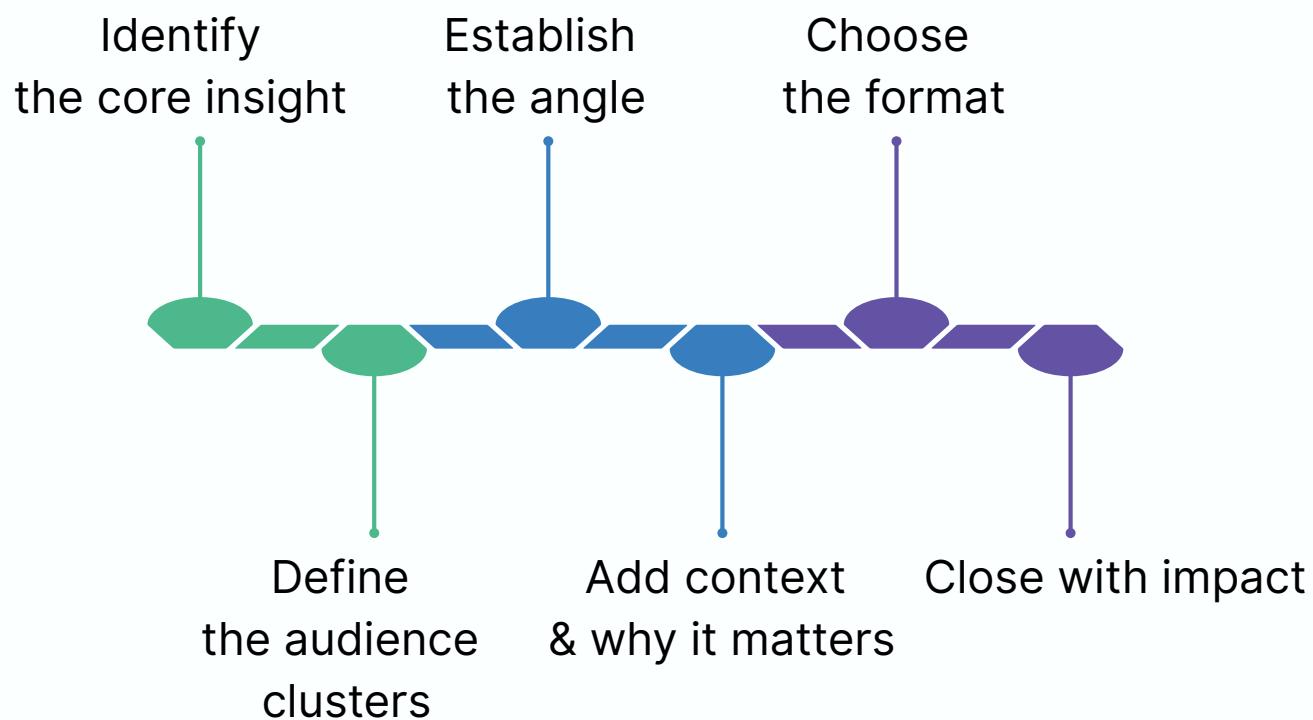
“Our latest work on sustainability reveals three findings that could inform policy across urban campuses. Here’s what this means for students, partners, and our region.”

Outcome:

- Clear relevance
- Audience-specific framing
- Potential for media, partnerships, student engagement
- Reputation and visibility increased



The Narrative Mapping Framework



A simple structure to elevate academic content without oversimplifying it.

- Identify the core insight

What is the essential contribution?

- Define the audience clusters

Students / Colleagues / Funders / External partners / Media

- Establish the angle

Academic, societal, practical, institutional, policy-driven

- Add context & why it matters

What is the real-world consequence or value?

- Choose the format

Newsletter, intranet, LinkedIn, briefing note, web article

- Close with impact

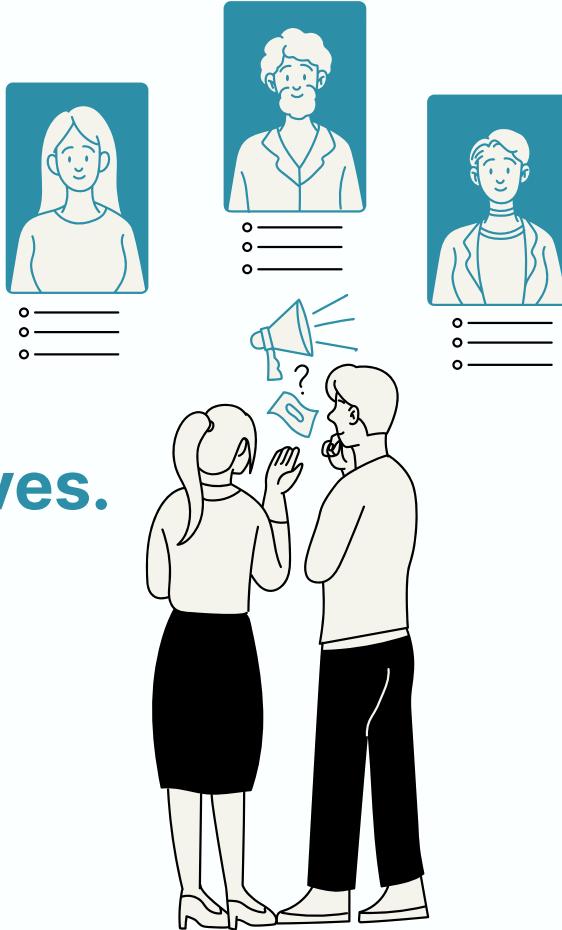
What changes because this research exists?

This is research storytelling for academic environments, not marketing spin.



Micro Case Study

Same data.
Three strategic narratives.
Zero simplification.



One research fact → Three audience narratives

FACT: The department releases a study on AI ethics.

Students:

“Why these findings matter for your future in AI-driven workplaces.”

Funders / Alumni:

“How institutional research is shaping the next generation of safe AI standards.”

Academic peers:

“Three methodological insights that advance global AI ethics debates.”



Key Takeaways



- Good content ≠ decoration; it is an interpretive lens
- Academic institutions don't need “more content” — they need better-structured content
- Narrative-driven content increases internal clarity and external influence
- When institutions explain impact, audiences respond

*(sources: ZipDo 2024; Oak Engage 2023;
IBIMA 2022 — organisational communication research)



Next Tuesday (25 Nov)

Episode 2: Making Complex Content Accessible Without Losing Academic Integrity

This series builds on two earlier mini-courses:

- The Ultimate Guide to Educational LinkedIn Posts
- Tone of Voice in Academic Content

Links available in the first comment.

