

QPR's Guide on Criteria

Aim

This short guide provides general guidance on what the Committee of the Queen's Political Review is looking for and common mistakes to avoid.

1. Features we're looking for

- Clarity.
- Concision.
- Structure: adequate paragraphing, headings and sub-headings.
- Appropriately referenced.
- Interesting and original content.
- Evidence of independent critical thought.
- Topics with broad appeal.
- Evidence of wide reading – extensive bibliographies.

2. Features to avoid

- Aimless meandering – lack of structure.
- Writing in the first person, e.g. 'I argue that. . .'. Avoid personal pronouns, keep it impersonal, 3rd person and detached, e.g. 'This article argues that. . .'.
- Bullet points.
- Inadequate or incomplete referencing - particularly for factual assertions.
- Unexplained academic jargon. Expect an informed generalist audience. Where unavoidable, jargon should be explained in the text or footnoted.
- Sweeping generalisations – e.g. 'all scholars know that. . .'.
- American English.
- Repetition. Repetition.
- Clichés.
- Long sentences and unnecessarily complicated writing style.
- Over-sensationalising conclusions.

- Use of vague language, e.g. “corporate social responsibility schemes are a *force for good*”.
- Excessive use of quotations.

3. Structure

- Clear aim in the introduction.
- Main body of the text is logically structured.
- Headings and sub-headings are used to help guide the reader.
- Concise conclusion which summarises the argument.

4. Checklist before submitting article

- i. Spelling and grammar check.
- ii. Abbreviations. Please use the full form first followed by bracketed abbreviation, e.g. “Queen’s Political Review (QPR)”.
- iii. Meets QPR formatting criteria.
- iv. Referencing adheres to the ‘Harvard’ referencing style.
- v. Footnotes follow punctuation.
- vi. Bibliography meets QPR criteria.
- vii. No indentation of paragraphs.
- viii. Quotations: uniform use of double quotation marks (“ ”), no single quotation marks (‘ ’).
- ix. Italicise and indent block quotes.
- x. Justify the text.
- xi. Please purge your articles of mysterious extra spaces between words.

5. Sources of Academic Writing Advice

Bryan Garner, *The Elements of Legal Style* (2002, 2nd Edn, OUP), written primarily for legal writers but also includes plenty of good general writing tips.

George Orwell, ‘Politics and the English Language’ (1946) – classic essay on writing style - available [here](#).