

EDITORIAL GUIDE: HOW TO WRITE FOR US

OPENLABOUR

Open Labour believes in open debate and tolerance, and our site is an inclusive platform. It exists for Labour members seeking to contribute to the debate for how we can build an open, socialist, politics which is relevant and powerful in impact.

Open Labour is grassroots-based. That means all our blogs, articles and publications are written by you and for you. They must therefore be accessible and respectful.

Before writing: questions to ask, questions to answer

1. What are your objectives?
2. Who are you talking to?
3. What do you want to contribute to Open Labour and the democratic left?
4. If you want to overcome a problem, what policies or strategies would you propose?

Use these 4 guidelines when pitching to us.

Do consider:

- The main audience is Open Labour members and readers.
- Other audiences may include councillors, policy-makers, and campaigners. This means we encourage you to write as though you seek to influence policy-making.
- We look for 'outward-looking' pieces that appeal to non-politicos and issues affecting ordinary people, and push Labour to consider them. While internal politics pieces can and will be accepted, issue-based articles are a priority.
- All our pieces should be concise and accessible to all audiences. Please avoid technocratic or academic elitism.

- If you can link to evidence or sources of news and debate, that will help to make your article engaging.
- Always be respectful – we are not here to be personal or sectarian. This is best summed up in our [code of conduct](#) – be active and positive, be open and outward looking, be kind.
- Be both a good storyteller and a good statistician when needed. Always reveal the human behind a number.
- Edit your copy for typos, paragraphs and punctuation to save us some time!
- To help us, include your name and Twitter handle if you have one.

Technicalities

- English (UK) spelling is required.
- Endnotes are preferred to footnotes, but links in the writing are preferred to both.
- Please include links as separate text in [square brackets].
- Use words in place of numbers, bar statistics.
- Open Labour encourages reuse and republication of posts with permission. You can contact admin@openlabour.org.

What to avoid:

1. Jargon: If you can, replace a technical term with something everyone will know.
2. Acronyms: The first time you use an acronym that is not widely known, spell it out in full with the acronym in brackets. For example, 'National Policy Forum (NPF)'.
3. Over-complication: Choose shorter words where possible.
4. Active over passive tense: Acting on the *subject* makes for punchier writing:

X Action should be taken by *Labour*
✓ *Labour* should take action.

5. Semi colons: unless you are sincerely confident it is correct, avoid semicolons. [Read this.](#)
6. Lengthy sentences: as a rule, sentences should not run over three lines.
7. Hedging: Readers will know you are setting out your position, so there is no need for hedgy words like 'we suggest'.

X *We suggest* Labour do this.
✓ Labour should do this.

How to pitch your article:

- Contact us at editor@openlabour.org.
- Tell us a little about yourself and any connection to the issue.
- Tell us about the subject you want to write about, the argument you will make, and why this would make sense for Open Labour to run.
- Be aware that we offer no guarantee that we will publish any piece – we will let you know.
- Read this guide in full before submitting your final article.



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