

Writing for The Peterborough & Trent University Independent Press **Arthur**

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What can I write about?

A: Arthur is your community newspaper and therefore you can write about anything you want. Whether its news, opinion, a manifesto, a rant, or a review, try to find something you're passionate about. Arthur also has weekly story meetings through the year, which are a place for writers and volunteers to meet and discuss topics and ideas.

Q: Does that mean you will publish anything?

A: Arthur's mandate is to provide informative, provocative, and accurate accounts of the issues and events relevant to Trent students and the Peterborough community. This doesn't mean it that articles have to be about Trent University or Peterborough. As long as you find something interesting or provocative chances are others will too.

However, Arthur reserves the right not publish submissions that are defamatory, libellous, racist, homophobic, or other-wise oppressive. Another aspect of our mandate is to participate in redressing historic injustices and oppressions in all aspects of what we do. Republishing hateful perspectives hardly fits that.

Q: When and where are the story meetings?

A: Every Wednesday at 4pm in the Arthur (751 George St N, Room 104) office unless otherwise advertised.

Q: How long should a submission be?

A: A typical half page news article is approximately 650-850 words. News briefs are generally shorter: 300-400 words. Letters to the Editor are normally 200-300 words. Don't compromise quality for length, however, as a hundred or so words longer or shorter is really no big deal.

Q: How can I submit my piece?

A: All submissions should be sent to editors@trentarthur.ca. Make sure to include a name for the byline within the document itself.

Q: What's the weekly submission deadline?

A: The Wednesday before publication at **Noon**.

Q: Is that a firm deadline?

A: Yes...(-ish.) If you know a piece will be submitted late, let the editors know **BEFORE** the deadline so that they can reserve space for you. Also, try to read it over a few extra times before you submit it.

Q: Should I title my piece or leave that to the editors?

A: That's up to you! However, the writer generally knows their piece best and can usually think of the best headline. If you're not 100% set on a title, give it a shot and then tell us in your submission email. We might have a stroke of brilliance during editing.

Q: Should I set my word-processor to British spell-check?

A: Set it to Canadian English if possible. If not, then British is preferable. Remember: it's colour, harbour, favour, labour, etc.

Q: Should I use Oxford commas?

A: When it makes sense to do so!

Q: Wait ... what the hell is an "Oxford comma," anyway?

A: It's when you insert a comma before the word "and" in a series that contains three or more distinct subjects. Example: "this Arthur FAQ is well-written, informative, and fun!"

Q: In an article, when should I spell out numbers?

A: The numbers one through nine are written as words. Any number above nine should written in digits. Examples: four. 16. 56,000.

Q: How should I write the date?

A: If you're talking about something that happened in the current calendar year, use only the day and month. E.g.: The Trent University Senate met on August 3 to discuss ... Or: On June 30, President Groarke stated definitively that he appreciates Arthur's in-depth reporting of campus events.

If you're referring to something that happened in a previous year, insert a comma followed by the year. E.g: On April 13, 1966, something relatively cool happened.

Q: When quoting someone, does the punctuation go inside or outside the quotation marks?

A: Inside. E.g.: "This is how quotation should be written," said the editor. "Make sure you're doing it correctly."

Q: When should someone's title be capitalized?

A: A formal title should always be capitalized when it appears before someone's name. However, it should be lower-case if it follows the name and is separated by a comma. Example: "Trent University President Leo Groarke said..." vs. "Leo Groarke, president of Trent University, said..."