ANU REPORTER ARTICLES

ANU Reporter is looking for original, previously unpublished, creative non-fiction articles from staff, students and alumni. We are seeking evocative first-person works that would appeal to our audience. ANU Reporter is much more than a magazine for our students, alumni and staff. It is a magazine for a global audience of people who are curious and engaged in the world. Our audience is made up of individuals who want to find out what people at ANU are thinking, finding and doing.

Essays should be no longer than 600 words.

Write with passion. Write about something you care about, something you want to share.

Be informal. Write as if you are telling your story to a friend. Use simple, every-day language that is easy to understand. Keep in mind you are writing for a general audience that may not be as familiar with your subject as you are.

Use pictures if you can. If you have a terrific illustration, photo, video, audio or other asset that might accompany your article then send it through. We can also find images that can work with your piece.

Embrace your personal voice. Remember you are telling your story, as seen through your eyes. This isn’t an academic essay you don’t need references or other voices to back you up. It is about your experience.

Tell readers why they should care. Put yourself in the place of the busy person looking at your article. At the end of every few paragraphs, ask out loud: “So what? Who cares?” You need to answer these questions.

Think about who audience might be and what you want them to feel, learn, think or do. Who are they? Will they understand what you have written? What do they want to hear? How do they like to be spoken to?

Don’t try to cram too many ideas or themes in. You cannot solve all of the world’s problems in 600 words. Be satisfied with telling one story or sharing one idea clearly. If you cannot explain your essay in a sentence or two, you’re trying to cover too much.

Get straight to the point. The best paragraphs should be the ones at the top. You have no more than 10 seconds to hook a busy reader. Get to the point and convince the reader that it’s worth his or her valuable time to continue.

THE WORDS

Avoid jargon and acronyms. If a technical detail is not essential to your argument, don’t use it. When in doubt, leave it out. Simple language doesn’t mean simple thinking; it means you are being considerate of readers who lack your expertise.

Use the active voice. Don’t write: “It is hoped that [or: One would hope that] the government will …” Instead, say “I hope the government will …” Active voice is nearly always better than passive voice. It’s easier to read, and it leaves no doubt about who is doing the hoping, recommending or other action. You can read more about this here http://news.anu.edu.au/how-to/storytelling-writing-and-media/writing-style-guide/#activevoice

Use short sentences and paragraphs. Look at some newspaper opinion pieces or magazine feature stories and count the number of words per sentence. You’ll probably find the sentences to be quite short.
You should use the same style, relying mainly on simple declarative sentences. Cut long paragraphs into two or more shorter ones.

**We don’t ever use ANU’s.** If that apostrophe ever disappeared… you get the idea.

**ANU does not have a ‘the’ before it,** except when spelling out our entire name, in which case use a capital T for The: The Australian National University. E.g. “She studied at ANU” NOT “She studied at the ANU”.

**Numbers one to nine should be spelt out in letters,** 10 and above in numerals (except when the number begins a sentence in which case it is always spelt out in letters).