

FAQ: Submissions

Why should I submit to OnSET?

1. It will improve your communication skills. Good written communication skills are an asset in any field. In science, being able to communicate your ideas to non-scientists (e.g., venture capitalists, human resource managers) can make or break your career.
2. Your writing will always be edited, regardless of the field you choose to go into. Getting used to the process can make life easier for you later on. Being edited also makes you a better writer, as it teaches you what works and what does not.
3. You can showcase your own research and achievements (i.e., free publicity!)
4. You can get your writing published by a reputable journal, an achievement that makes you feel terrific and looks great on your CV.

Who may submit to OnSET?

All undergraduate, honours, masters and PhD students are invited to submit material for publication in OnSET.

Who is OnSET's target audience?

Our audience is senior high school students and undergraduate university students. Always assume that the reader does not have a scientific background.

Your goal is to direct the attention of the reader to scientific developments and information that they may not have come across, or been able to fathom if they did see it, if they were written in technical format.

What style of article should I submit?

Articles should not be too formal and should not contain too much scientific jargon. Keep in mind that most readers are high school and university students who may have no prior knowledge of your field. Articles should not be colloquial, but they can be relaxed in style. Think of *New Scientist's* style rather than *Nature's*. First and second person usage is acceptable, as is the style commonly used for assignments. Contractions are not acceptable (use 'do not' rather than 'don't,' etc).

All articles should present factual information in an interesting and coherent way. You should reference your sources and acknowledge anyone who helped you. Please proofread your article and run a spell checker over it. However, grammatical errors are easily fixed, so do not be shy if you think your English is not good enough. We will fix the mistakes, and you will not lose any marks! Everything submitted to OnSET gets edited.

Acceptable article types are listed below. Word limits are a guide for the maximum length of the article. Remember we are using the web to publish your article, which gives us some flexibility with layout and formatting. So contact us if you feel that an article needs to be longer or shorter than the specified word limit for its type. We can also, for example, place footnotes and definitions of terms behind 'hyperlinks', so that the article reads quickly for the non-technical reader.

- ◆ **Feature Article**
 - *What is it?* A feature article addresses current developments in science. These articles do not have to be based on the author's own research. Feature articles can examine the interplay between science and society, including controversial topics such as human cloning, government policy towards a scientific issue, the history of an aspect of science, or an ethical issue such as bioterrorism.
 - *Format:* A straight-forward, narrative piece with a clear introduction and conclusion, in the style of longer newspaper features or editorials.
 - *Word limit: 1000 words.*

- ◆ **Research Article**
 - *What is it?* A research article aims to showcase scientific research (your own or others'), preferably within the University of New South Wales and its affiliated institutions (e.g., Prince of Wales Hospital).
 - *Format:* The article should be in narrative format, not divided into formal sections (introduction, methods, results and discussion). Provide enough background information to give the context of the research to a non-scientific reader. Detailed experimental protocols are not necessary. Technical terms must be explained in brief rather than providing dictionary type definitions. Use figures and tables to make the article more understandable (copyright guidelines on illustrations must be observed); ask the OnSET staff for help with such illustrations if you need it. In the conclusion, discuss the outcomes of the research and the broader significance of the research.
 - *Word limit: 750 words.*

- ◆ **UNSW Research Wrap or News**
 - *What is it?* A short report that addresses cutting edge scientific research within UNSW or affiliated institutions. Such an article may cover research being conducted by academics or PhD students. These articles will highlight activities not currently gaining media attention.
For example, the School of Chemistry gains funding to start a Commonwealth Research Centre or a PhD student attains a prize for their research.
 - *Format:* A short, newspaper-style report.
 - *Word limit: 250 words.*

- ◆ **Career Profile**
 - *What is it?* Brief articles written about science graduates (yourself or others) and what they have done after completing their degrees, for example marketing, journalism, etc. The person interviewed does not need to be a notable scientist. They should include 'regular' people, someone whom most readers can relate to.
 - *Format:* Career profiles can be written in **narrative interview format** (a feature article where you describe the interviewee's statements and include quotes) or a **biographical format** (a description of the interviewee's career path, without quotes). Question and answer format is not acceptable. It is preferable to include a small photo of the person interviewed, either an action photo or a portrait. Please include the contact details of the interviewee (with their permission).
 - *Word limit: 400 words.*

- ◆ **Interview**
 - *What is it?* This section is different to career profiles. The main aim of the interview should be to attain the opinion of a distinguished member of the

scientific community or UNSW. Suggested topics include: Australian science, ethics, or the future of their field.

- *Format:* Articles should be presented as a narrative rather than in a question/answer format. For a detailed guide on how to conduct an interview, please see <http://www.nytimes.com/learning/general/specials/weblines/461.html>. Please include the contact details of the interviewee (with their permission).
 - *Word limit: 500 words.*
- ◆ **Book Review**
- *What is it?* Any books relating to science may be reviewed. Suggested books for review may be found at <http://www.bookshop.unsw.edu.au/words/index.htm>
 - *Format:* This should include a brief description of the content of the book as well as the author's opinion of the book. Consult online book reviews and book review guidelines. Book reviews can be brief recommendations, where you succinctly describe the book and state your opinion on it, or longer reviews, which should include more detail. Please include the complete title, the author's name, the publisher and the cost of the book.
 - *Word limit: 100-200 words* for a brief recommendation, **400-500 words** for a detailed review.

What format should I submit my article in?

- ◆ **Titles** should be in bold. Do not include numbers, acronyms or abbreviations.
- ◆ **By-line:** the version of your name you would like the article to be published under (for example Joan Doe, J. Doe, Johnny Doe).
- ◆ **Text.** When you submit your article in the following format, it makes it easier for us to edit and publish.
 - All text must be submitted as an MS Word file (.doc) or in Rich Text Format (.rtf).
 - 12 point font size.
 - Times New Roman, Arial or Courier New font.
 - Double line spacing.
 - 2.5 cm margins (all sides).

What else do I need to include with my article?

- ◆ **References** are excluded from word count. They must be listed at the end of an article in alphabetical order. There are many different styles of referencing. Please be consistent within your article. Guidelines for citations can be found on the web, e.g., type 'APA format' into Google.
 - Example of journal references:
Watson, J.D. and Crick, F.H.C. (1953) Molecular structure of nucleic acids. A structure for deoxyribose nucleic acid. *Nature*, **171**: 737-738.
 - Example of book references:
Gilbert, S.F. (2000) *Developmental Biology*, Fourth Edition, Sinauer Associates, Massachusetts, p 55.
 - Example of a web document reference:
Nye, David (1998) A Physician's Guide to Fibromyalgia Syndrome [online]. Available: <http://www.muhealth.org/~fibro/fm-md.html>. [accessed 20.3.00].
 - For more information on referencing, please consult the UNSW Learning Centre's guide to the Footnote/Bibliography method of referencing, available at <http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au/onlib/refbib2.html>.

- ◆ **Acknowledgements** should be brief, and should follow the reference list. Acknowledge anyone who helped you write your article, including interviewees, lecturers and fellow students.
- ◆ **Tables** should be included at the end of an article or submitted as a separate file (.doc or .rtf). Table legends should be placed above the table. They should include text the same size as the rest of the article. Symbols and abbreviations should be defined below the table, followed by essential descriptive material. If you have trouble formatting a table, let us know, and an OnSET staff member can help.
- ◆ **Figures** should be included at the end of an article or submitted as a separate file. Figures should be saved in a standard image file format (.gif, .jpg or .pdf). Figure legends should be placed under the figure and should contain a short description of the figure and any of its symbols. Again, if you have trouble with formatting or file types, an OnSET staff member can help.

How and when should I submit my article?

Submit your work to onset@unsw.edu.au. In the email, please provide your full name; student ID; course (and major, if applicable); year; and an email address and phone number with which we can contact you easily.

Articles may be submitted at any time, however bear in mind that articles submitted by the end of May will probably appear in the National Science Week issue of OnSET (August), while articles submitted by the end of October will be most likely be published in the Orientation Week edition (February).

What will happen to my article after I submit it?

Each article submitted to OnSET will be read by at least two editors. One editor will be in a field related to the topic of the article, to check on the scientific accuracy of the article. One editor will be in a different field to ensure that the 'non-technical' reader can understand the piece. Both editors check to see that the piece reads well.

Interviews will be sent back to the person whom you interviewed, after editing, to ensure that they feel adequately represented.

Editors will be asking themselves these questions:

- ◆ Is it easy and interesting to read? Are technical terms explained?
- ◆ Are facts referenced? Are these references valid?
- ◆ Are grammar and spelling correct?
- ◆ Is the writing style engaging, and is the sequence of topics logical?
 - Is there a particular angle that the article is trying to present?
 - Is there a good 'hook' to start with? Is the conclusion clear?

If you have questions about the editing process, or if you would like to become an editor yourself, please contact – onset@unsw.edu.au. Present your question, or outline your experience and qualifications for editing.

What about copyright and ownership?

By submitting an article to OnSET, you are guaranteeing to us that you wrote it. Articles should be original and should not include other peoples' work, apart from short quotations that are properly cited. If you are having trouble expressing an idea gleaned

from another source or stated by someone without copying the exact words, an OnSET staff member will be glad to help you rephrase and cite it appropriately. All co-authors must be listed as such, and they must consent to publication in OnSET. All sources must be properly referenced, and we can help you with referencing formats.

OnSET requires first publication rights only. Please contact us if your article was published previously. You may republish an article that you published in OnSET provided that you state in the article that it was originally published in OnSET.

What if I want to get more involved in OnSET, or if my question is not answered here?

Please email us at onset@unsw.edu.au.