# Submission guidelines

Before submitting an article for *Journey* please contact the Cross-platform editor, [Rohan Salmond](mailto:journey@ucaqld.com.au?subject=Journey%20story%20idea%20pitch), and submit a brief outline of the proposed article’s content and angle. This should be done in the **first week of the month before publication**. That means, if you hope to be published in October, you should speak to Rohan in the first week of September. There is no guarantee your article will appear in *Journey,* however this chat before submission will greatly increase the chance of us being able to include your submission.

Submissions for *JourneyOnline* are accepted at any time, although there is still no guarantee of publication. Content for *JourneyOnline* is subject to the same rigorous standards as that which goes into the print edition of *Journey.* Every effort will be made to edit and post submissions to the website in a timely manner, although some delays may occur. Please familiarise yourself with the online story categories and style of writing before submitting an article. Contact us [here](mailto:journey@ucaqld.com.au?subject=Journey%20or%20JourneyOnline%20story%20submission) to submit a story or an idea.

Most content in *Journey* and *JourneyOnline* is editorial content, meaning it is written in a different style to that of hard news. We do run news stories however, and they should be written to the following guidelines.

# News stories

The purpose of a news story is to report on an event that has happened. The core idea of the story should be able to be summed up in an interesting headline with a subject, object and verb such as “Shalom College installs principal”, “Uniting Church launches census”, “Man bites dog”. Even though the headline is usually written last, it helps to think about this core idea before you begin as it will help focus the story and stay under the word limit. The story should be no more than **400 words** long. Final content is at the discretion of the editor and will not be sent to the original author for approval prior to publication.

**Inverted pyramid**

All new stories should be written in inverted pyramid style. This means the most important information is contained at the top of the story, with all subsequent information decreasing in importance as the story continues. You should be able to cut the article in half and still have the core information intact. The first line of the story should contain all the relevant information to understand the core idea behind the story. For example:

“The decision to add the Great Barrier Reef to UNESCO’s World Heritage in Danger List has been deferred to 2014.”

The first paragraph of the news story should stand on its own and be no longer than 35 words.

**Tense**

If you are writing about something that has happened, you should write consistently in past tense. All quotes should be referred to in past tense as well. For example, “News stories should be written in a certain style,” he said.

When writing about something that will happen in the near future, use present and future tense as appropriate.

**Third person**

A news story is not a personal reflection and it should be written in third person. The story should not contain the opinions of the writer**. Do not quote yourself** in the story if your name will appear in the by-line.

**Image**

All news stories should be submitted with a high-quality image (minimum 200 dpi) that represents the core idea of the story. Images of people are better than images without. Two or three people in an image works better than large crowds. People should be either looking at the camera or interacting with each other in a dynamic way. Images of people with their backs to the camera do not work. Original files from ordinary digital cameras or iPhones are usually large enough, just make sure they are in focus and bright. Dark, muddy images do not print well on the page. A caption with the full names and titles of everyone in the photo, how the photo relates to the article and the name of the photographer is also required. Please ensure everyone in the photo has given permission for you to use it for the story.

**Quotes**

Every news story must include quotes from people who were there or are experts in the topic of the story. Try and get quotes from multiple sources if you can.

**Other points to consider**

* keep sentences short and simple
* avoid passive voice. For example say, “The boy kicked the ball” rather than, “The ball was kicked by the boy”
* make sure the story is timely. Remember there is often a delay of several weeks before submission and publication when writing for the print edition of *Journey*
* make sure the story is of interest to people all over Queensland
* keep quotes short and on-point
* always include a web address where readers can find out more information.

# Feature articles

Feature articles are an in-depth exploration of a topic or issue. They are not typically personal reflections. A feature article really digs deep, getting underneath the surface topic/issue by making unique connections between ideas and saying things that aren’t being said anywhere else.

Each month *Journey* publishes three feature articles:

1. An article that explores/reports an issue, event or story that is relevant to the Uniting Church in Queensland
2. A profile of a lay person who has made high-profile achievements or a significant difference in the world around them as a result of their faith
3. An article that explores issues of faith in contemporary Australia.

Feature articles are between 800‒1200 words long, take up two pages and have one or two very eye-catching images accompanying the story. One of the features each month is the cover story, which needs an ultra-high quality and very captivating image in addition to the other images used. Always include a web address where readers can find out more information on the topic or person you are writing about.

**Tense**

Features are normally written in present tense. All quotes should also be referenced in present tense. For example, “Feature articles are long and interesting,” she says.

**Lead**

The lead of each feature should capture the reader’s attention and be intriguing enough to draw them down into the guts of the story. This should be one to two sentences long.

**Third person**

Unless you have a very good reason and have received approval from the editor, features should be written in third person.

**By-line**

Features include a by-line that introduces the topic and the author. Please include one sentence explaining who you are and what connection you have with the subject matter.

# Other articles

*Journey* publishes other kinds of articles too, which run on a single page. Single-page articles are written in a similar style to features, but are no more than 400 words long. Single-page articles have at least one picture accompanying them. Each month *Journey* will be looking for:

* a story connected to one of the Uniting Church’s agencies, community service providers or schools
* a story about a Queensland Uniting Church congregation connecting with and enriching their community
* a theological reflection on a specific topic. In 2014 the topic is “growing faith”
* an opinion piece.

We also publish reviews and cultural reflections on Christian and mainstream media. These have their own submission guidelines.