



# Environmental Studies



Ranked  
**#1**

ANU is ranked #1 in Australia (and in the top 30 in the world) for 7 disciplines across humanities, arts and social sciences.

\*QS World University Rankings by Subject 2026

Bushfires at Fingal, Tasmania, 2020

Graduates of the Environmental Studies major possess a variety of critical perspectives and skillsets to engage in effective ways with the environmental problems confronting contemporary societies.

If you want to understand the complex, and often conflicting, interrelationships between human societies and environments, and develop different strategies for addressing some of society's most pressing environmental issues, include this major in your Bachelor of Arts degree.

You will have the opportunity to gain an understanding of environmental topics from multiple perspectives, as well as being exposed to different cultural, policy and economic approaches for cultivating and managing the environment.

Courses from a diverse range of disciplines — including sociology, history, anthropology, development studies, environmental policy, geography, human ecology, and sustainability science — are available to give you the broad

perspective required to identify environmental opportunities and tackle environmental challenges.

## Career opportunities

Graduates of the Environmental Studies major possess a variety of critical perspectives and skillsets to engage in effective ways with the environmental problems confronting contemporary societies. These attributes are highly valued by employers in government, policy, development and aid organisations, multinational companies, social or environmental science research, the natural resource sector, and many other fields.

## Environmental Studies at ANU

The Australian National University (ANU) is ranked among the world's top universities, and has a strong international reputation in humanities, the arts and social sciences. The University also has the highest possible ERA rating in Environmental Science.<sup>1</sup> Students who include the Environmental Studies major in their Bachelor of Arts degree receive a world-class education from some of the leading scholars in this socially and politically important area.

<sup>1</sup>Excellence in Research Australia (ERA) Ratings 2018

The Environmental Studies major combines cultural, policy and scientific approaches to the study and governance of the environment. It addresses the needs of local, national and international organisations and stakeholders by linking policy makers and the public to the University's world-leading experts in sustainability, climate change and adaptation, and conservation ecology research and education.

Environmental Studies students learn to:

- Critically assess the intricate and dynamic relationship between social activity and the natural environment
- Understand the nature and structure of socio-ecological systems, and comprehensively define current and future Australian (and global) environmental issues
- Critique ongoing developments in environmental thinking and evolving perspectives on society-environment relationships and sustainability.

### Flexible Double Degree

The Bachelor of Arts can be combined with degrees in Law, Business or Science as part of the ANU Flexible Double Degree program. For a full list of degree combinations see [anu.edu.au/study/study-options/flexible-double](http://anu.edu.au/study/study-options/flexible-double)



### Adam

#### Environmental Studies Major

*Adam chose environmental studies as a path to environmental policy research.*

I studied a Bachelor of Politics, Philosophy and Economics and a Bachelor of Arts, majoring in Environmental Studies. I didn't begin with the intention of doing Environmental Studies — I happened to take the first-year introductory course, fell in love with it, and changed my major. The Environmental Studies major allowed me to take the theories I was learning about in my PPE degree and apply them to real-world environmental and climate issues. It introduced me to a variety of disciplinary perspectives through courses such as environmental sociology, environmental economics, and human ecology. After graduating, I did a year-long fellowship at The Australia Institute, an independent public policy think tank, where I conducted climate policy research. I've now returned to the ANU to study Honours in Environmental Studies and write a thesis on Australian fossil fuel policy.

### Further information

T 1800 620 032  
E [future.student@anu.edu.au](mailto:future.student@anu.edu.au)  
W [cass.anu.edu.au/study](http://cass.anu.edu.au/study)



### Alice

#### Environmental Studies Major (Hons 2024)

*Alice chose environmental studies to work with Indigenous people on cultural landscapes.*

I didn't always know I wanted to study geography and people's relationships to the environment. It was only in my second year of university that I became interested in this space, so I began my Environmental Studies major and quickly realised this was something I loved. I was able to tailor my course choices to my exact interests, which was the intersection between Indigenous studies, Environmental Studies, and mapping. There are many fantastic teachers in these spaces who are passionate about exposing students to a wide array of perspectives and teaching critical thinking skills.

The highlight of my four years doing these courses, many of which were through the Fenner School, were the abundant field trips. I was lucky enough to travel to Fiji as part of my studies, as well as to Darwin and more locally to Kioloa. Interacting with the places you are learning about and being able to interact with stakeholders is so important to building nuanced and just understandings of the world. The collaborative nature of many of the courses I took also meant that I got to know many of my peers and form strong relationships over the course of my degree.

My Environmental Studies major equipped me with skills for the professional world. I began working for the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water in my third year and found my studies an excellent foundation for the workplace. The culmination of my studies led to me undertaking an Honours year in the Fenner School. I had the privilege of working with the Anindilyakwa people on the remote Groote Eylandt in the NT on a cultural mapping project, which was both a summation of everything I'd learned and a real-life demonstration of best practice research. I feel prepared for a wide range of post-study options since graduating, but importantly, I had so much fun doing this major.