

Study Environmental Health with a scholarship on fees

We spoke to Environmental Health Officers Talisa Smith and Sally-Anne Donahue both proud Wiradjuri women, about their roles to give you an insight into this unique and rewarding career path. Scholarships are available now for Aboriginal people in NSW to study Environmental Health at university with fees paid.

What does an Environmental Health Officer do?

Sally-Anne, a Senior Environmental Health Officer said, "An Environmental Health Officer helps to keep the community safe by conducting inspections and educating businesses, schools and residents about topics such as hand hygiene, food safety and drinking water safety."

What's a day in the life of an Environmental Health Officer?

Talisa said, "Most of my day as a trainee with Council is spent out in the field – anything from food shop inspections, septic tank inspections, swimming pool water testing, addressing overgrown yard complaints and educating businesses."

What would you say to someone considering an Aboriginal Environmental Health Scholarship?

Talisa, who is part-way through her

university studies, explained, "Science isn't scary – it's everywhere and in everything that we do".

Studying science at university has been positive, both professionally and personally. "University is a place for Aboriginal people. I love studying and learning, in my own time however I see fit, even around family time. University is for everybody".

Sally-Anne, who supervises and mentors Talisa, said "We really need more Environmental Health Officers, so I encourage anyone with an interest in studying to apply for the scholarship."

What made you decide to study Environmental Health?

Sally-Anne had just finished school and recalled "My mother came home one day and talked to me about environmental health, after reading about it I wanted to study as I was interested in being out in the field and making a difference".

Talisa was an Aboriginal Health Practitioner in Orange and wanted a more proactive approach to health: "I researched environmental and public health and how it can improve people's lives and decided I wanted to be on the front line, helping to keep the community

safe and healthy."

What subjects do you study?

Talisa is studying online through Western Sydney University and said, "Some of the subjects are Indigenous Science, Policy Planning and Regulation, Air Quality, Toxicology, Chemistry, Epidemiology and Biodiversity – it's really science heavy – but it's easy to understand – and I wasn't that great at science at school!"

What do you like the most about your jobs with Bathurst Regional Council?

Talisa commented, "No two days are the same and it's great to be out in the field so much. We are being proactive to make sure the community is safe – water is safe to drink and swim in, tattoo parlours are clean and safe, and food is being prepared in a safe manner".

Sally-Anne added, "There's a small, tight-knit network of Environmental Health Officers across NSW and it's great to share ideas and problem solve together. Also, there are food group and public health meetings held between councils and public health units across the state."

Find out more about studying an environmental health degree and having your uni fees paid, visit: www.health.nsw.gov.au/aehs



Sally-Anne and Talisa out in the field, ensuring a restaurant kitchen is safe.

2023 Aboriginal Environmental Health Scholarships

Make a health difference for your mob

Apply today for an Aboriginal Environmental Health Scholarship

Scholarship includes:

- › Flexibility to study full-time or part-time
- › University subject fees paid
- › \$500 a year for student administration fees



Applications open until 11 October 2022

www.health.nsw.gov.au/aehs

