

Angela Mabee

BSc Major in Astronomy and Astrophysics, 2003



Why did you choose your degree at Macquarie University?

- “The BSc at Macquarie offered the theory behind the big ideas as well as a historical perspective to where Astronomy comes from.
- Macquarie has the great advantage of having onsite telescopes and hosts a number of astronomy events throughout the year.
- The Physics department was very personable, despite the university’s size, with all the lecturers being approachable and prepared to spend time with individuals to get the best results.”

Employment*: Strategic Planner in a UK Government Agency

“I currently work with a strategy unit with a UK government agency. What I like about my job is the chance to think analytically everyday and though I may not be using my Physics and Astrophysics knowledge I am able to think about challenging concepts and how best to analyse large datasets. I get satisfaction from seeing non-scientific people taking away an understanding of an enormous database of numbers because of my analytical and presentation skills. It is all those extra skills that help in my current job. The skills of organisation, prioritisation, presenting to colleagues and senior management, modelling and analysis. Through the constant use of computers and technical equipment and exposure to different operating systems I have, amongst my colleagues, an advanced understanding of computer technologies and therefore work on more technically challenging roles.”

How has your degree from Macquarie University helped you progress your career?

“Everybody chooses a degree because it will offer a challenge and new ideas. It is the skills not listed in the pamphlet that will make all the differences to an employer in the end; your ability to network, to work beyond the lecture theatre and next assignment, to engage in extra curricular activities and to organise yourself. Macquarie provides an environment where all of these opportunities are available; offering the flexibility in the units of study for you to manage your degree, the opportunity to be involved in the astronomy club, the chance to volunteer with running the public viewing at the onsite telescopes and helping with the open events.”

Reflections and advice

“Astronomy and Astrophysics intrigues many people. In any new workplace or social situation, as soon as the area of study my degree is known, there is a flow of questions about the big bang, what is a star really, whether I think there is life “out there”, where is the Southern Cross and is that the North Star? No matter where I am, or where I go, I am still using the knowledge I gained in doing the Astronomy Degree.”

I went to university as a mature age student to learn more about Astronomy and astrophysics, after 5 challenging years I now have an Honours degree and a great working knowledge of astronomy and astrophysics, Planetary Nebula in particular. It is never to late to continue studying and embark on a degree.