FOSC300: Participation and Community Engagement in Science and Engineering

UNIT SUMMARY FOR STUDENTS

WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW ABOUT FOSC300?

FOSC300 is a Professional and Community Engagement (PACE) unit open to all undergraduate students with a minimum of 39 credit points at enrolment time. It provides students the opportunity to apply theory learnt through their degree to real-world situations, to consider what they might want to do after graduation, to learn through participation, and develop their employability. Learning is facilitated through:

• Orientation and induction activities
• Curriculum which fosters skill and knowledge development on topics such as Graduate Capabilities, career skills, ethics and ethical practice, communicating science, reflection, and more
• Debriefing on experiences
• Rigorous academic assessment

Please see the FOSC300 Unit Outline for detailed information on learning outcomes, assessment requirements, curriculum schedule, marking, and other important information.

Enrolment in FOSC300 is by Special Approval only. In addition to meeting the 39 credit points pre-requisite, eligibility is based on:

• The intended PACE activity and partner organisation meeting the PACE criteria (e.g. mutual benefit, ethical, etc.)
• The intended PACE activity enabling the unit learning outcomes
• WHS/risk considerations (e.g. should be relatively low risk)

Important: FOSC300 is classified as a 300-level elective unit, and it is Science and Medical Science designated. Some students enrol to meet a general requirement of PACE (students must complete a PACE unit to graduate, but they choose which one as relevant). Others want more experience in addition to completing specifically required PACE units in their degrees.

“I helped conduct cross cultural biodiversity surveys and wetland monitoring with the Yirralka Rangers in North East Arnhem, Northern Territory. This activity not only allowed me to to put theory I'd learnt at Macquarie into practise, but also feel empowered knowing that my actions had real social and environmental benefits.”

Bridget Campbell, BABSc student.

KEEP SPACE FOR PACE

It is very important to keep elective space in your student planner (e-student) to enrol in FOSC300. If PACE is a general requirement of your degree and you have to complete a PACE unit, but do not have elective space available, please contact Student Connect about making space for you to complete your PACE requirement.

LEARN MORE AND ENROL

The FOSC300 Pre-enrolment iLearn site is your gateway to the unit. Check the site regularly for Announcements, FAQs, required processes and helpful resources.

Step 1: Check out the essentials. Add yourself to the FOSC300 Pre-enrolment iLearn site: http://ilearn.mq.edu.au/course/view.php?id=26740 and attend the pre-enrolment workshop either in person, or virtually (reviewing both the powerpoints and Echo360 recording).

Step 2: Prepare for Special Approval, then apply for it. Once you have attended the pre-enrolment workshop (in person or virtually), prepare for Special Approval by looking at what information is needed (document entitled ‘Prepare for Special Approval’). For example: your plans for the PACE activity, what sorts of partner organisations you would like to engage with, and your core skills and interests. If you want to enrol in FOSC300, click on the the Web link ‘Apply for Special Approval’ to provide this information to the FSE PACE Team.

Photo credit: Julia Salt 2017
**SPECIAL APPROVAL**

Students must apply for Special Approval using the online form through the FOSC300 Pre-enrolment iLearn site (not through Ask MQ) no later than 4 weeks before the start of session. PDF forms will not be accepted.

**Step 3: Act on Special Approval decision.** Applications for Special Approval are processed on a rolling basis. Eligible students will receive an email to confirm receipt of Special Approval. These students should finalise enrolment asap via e-student (i.e. as you would normally enrol for a unit). Once enrolled, you will have access to a system called ‘iParticipate’. iParticipate enables acknowledgement of your PACE roles and responsibilities, provision of emergency contacts, information on checks such as Working With Children as appropriate, and expressions of interest for activities. In cases where additional information is required or enrolment is not possible, students will be contacted directly.

**WHat is a PACE ACTIVITY and how do i find one?**

A PACE activity is the practical experience students complete as part of the PACE unit. PACE activities occur in partnership with a relevant organisation, and must:

- Enable the learning outcomes of the unit
- Meet the PACE criteria (e.g. contribute to the host organisation’s goals in a way that benefits you and them)
- Be suitable in terms of WHS and risk.

Think carefully about activities that align with your own interests and skills, while also being flexible and open to opportunities that might not seem obvious at first. In FOSC300 there are three ways of finding your PACE activity:

- Bringing Your Own Activity (BYOA)
- Expressing interest for an activity with an FSE PACE partner
- Direct application to a partner-run selection process

**BRING your own ACTIVITY (BYOA)**

FOSC300 students are encouraged to BYOA, the more common method of finding activities. By doing so, you can learn first-hand how to approach future employers and opportunities, while enhancing your chances of securing something that meets your specific goals and interests. You can also be more involved in negotiating your activity tasks and structure. Begin by reviewing the pre-enrolment workshop, which explains how things work. Be realistic in your expectations and truthful in your dealings with organisations.

Watch our video on how to source your own PACE activity, featuring former FSE PACE students: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sGC5LnJoOc&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sGC5LnJoOc&feature=youtu.be)

For more tips on BYOA please refer to the FOSC300 Pre-Enrolment iLearn Site.

**Expressing interest for an activity with an FSE PACE partner**

Each FOSC300 session, there are select opportunities available through existing FSE PACE partner organisations. Only students enrolled in FOSC300 can express an interest for these. The FSE PACE Team will communicate opportunities to students, as well as explain what is needed to express an interest, and by when.

**Direct Application to a Partner-run selection process**

Some partner organisations prefer to run their own selection process for the limited opportunities they have available. These activities will be advertised on the PACE Opportunities page: [http://pace-opportunities.mq.edu.au/lat/en/listing/](http://pace-opportunities.mq.edu.au/lat/en/listing/) and students will be required to apply directly to the partner organisation as per the details of the promotion. These opportunities can be competitive and students are encouraged to put their best foot forward well ahead of the deadline.

**Important:** If you have exceptional circumstances that require you to start your PACE activity prior to the session, you must apply for approval subject to the PACE Early Commencement Procedure: [https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policies/participation_activity](https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policies/participation_activity)

“I learnt how to apply and practice ‘hard science’ in a communication and interpersonal role...[It] gave me far greater scope on the opportunities that exist for those with a scientific background.”

Jono Kennedy (BSc Biomolecular Studies) did his work experience at the Centre for Genetics Education.

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FIND OUT MORE
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(Left) Marine Science students, Emily Best and Mitchell Hawtrey, Manly Sealife Sanctuary (Photo credit: Chris Stacey 2015)