With ‘bio’ the buzzword of the 21st Century, it’s not surprising students wonder where to start navigating the range of amazing bio-careers, said Griffith School of Biomolecular and Physical Sciences head, Professor Frank Clarke.

“Biomolecular Science covers a variety of exciting careers that emerged as a result of recent advances in our biological science knowledge.”

“It’s what’s called an enabling science – you’ll take away portable tools that open doors to a range of careers, or choose to specialise in a particular area later in your degree.”

“So what can I do with it?”

If you’re into hard-core discovery and love being up with the latest developments, a career as a biomolecular research scientist is for you.

These talented guys and girls are doing for science what Christopher Columbus did for geography or Versace did for fashion! With an emphasis on discovery and design, these scientists work at the research cutting-edge, discovering how different molecules act on our cells – essential knowledge in the search for new products and drug treatments.

They may also work to outsmart disease by designing highly-specific drug molecules that fit our bodies like jigsaw pieces to destroy, say, a cancer cell without harming healthy cells.

Molecule design: Adrian Meedeniya looks at Brain-support cells or astrocytes at Griffith’s National Adult Stem Cell Research Centre.
A serious ‘drought’ of graduates with expertise in solving the water crisis has led Queensland water authorities to offer a range of valuable new scholarships and internships at Griffith’s Nathan and Gold Coast campuses.

The Queensland Government’s Department of Natural Resources and Water is offering two internships, which include cash study and living allowances, plus benefits such as up to eight weeks’ paid vacation work each year. On the successful completion of their degree, the interns will move directly into a full-time career, while enjoying mentoring support from experienced water industry professionals such as ground and surface water hydrologists, river ecologists, aquatic biologists, water engineers and economists.

Griffith’s Dean of Learning and Teaching for Science, Engineering, Environment, Engineering and Technology, David Edwards said rapid growth in demand for advanced re-use, treatment and desalination technology was creating a wave of new careers opportunities.

“Most of our schools are from Brisbane and Gold Coast areas, but some remote schools make an annual trip to be involved,” Sally said. “The best way to understand environmental issues is to get involved in real-life projects outside the classroom. “It’s also great exercise – particularly ripping out weeds!”

The Coast Ed team has also worked with SEQ Catchments and National Heritage Trust to produce a series of lesson plan kits for teachers. The kits are tailored for Years 1–12, and many can be adapted to suit coastlines throughout Queensland for students who can’t get down to the Gold Coast. Get involved with Coast Ed or download lesson plan kits at http://www.griffith.edu.au/centre/gccm/
Young scientist helps stem the tide of disease

A Biomolecular Science degree has landed Griffith graduate Nathalie Romond at the sharp end of one of the world’s most exciting medical research areas – stem cell therapy.

The 23-year-old former Loganlea State High School student blitzed her Biomolecular Science degree, completing honours and securing a sought-after position in Griffith’s National Adult Stem Cell Research Centre led by former Queenslander of the Year, Alan Mackay-Sim.

Professor Mackay-Sim gained international attention in 2006 when he discovered that adult stem cells from a patient’s own nose could be manipulated into different types of cells such as heart, nerve and liver cells.

Stem cell therapy is tipped as the technology most likely to provide a lifeline for sufferers of incurable degenerative disorders such as Multiple Sclerosis (MS), Parkinson’s and motor neurone disease.

Nathalie’s work targets MS, a devastating auto-immune disorder affecting about 16,000 Australians.

“It’s an incredibly exciting time to be involved in stem cell technology, as we’re only beginning to discover its potential in treating everything from diseases such as MS and Parkinson’s to helping people with spinal injuries walk again.”

Nathalie’s advice to students considering a ‘bio’ career was simple:

“Biomolecular Science opens a huge variety of career options without locking you into anything. If you’re into science, it gives you the skills to work in everything from medical research to drug design, agriculture or horticulture research,” she said.

To find out more about our degrees in science, visit www.griffith.edu.au/futurestudents

Let’s get technical

Biomolecular Science graduates may choose to work at the sharp-end of research and development, putting these tools to creative use through biological technology, better known as ‘Biotech’. Options include:

- Medical Science – developing genetic and stem cell therapies, better vaccines and drug treatments or tests to improve our ability to diagnose and treat disease.
- Environmental science – using microbes to clean our air, water and soil, to clean up chemical and oil spills or improve waste management.
- Food science – developing food and drink products with tasty new flavours and textures, longer shelf life or added nutrients.
- Agricultural science – using smart genetics to breed animals with higher yields of tender meat, develop disease-resistant crops with lower water use and higher salt tolerance, or faster-growing trees for the timber industry.

What about Biomedical Science?

The other important ‘bio’ degree you’ll find is Biomedical Science, which opens a world of health and medical research careers.

Many medical doctors begin with a biomedical degree to acquire their essential anatomy, physiology, and immunology knowledge.

Some graduates go straight into medical research careers in hospitals, drug companies or research institutes.

You’ll find other ‘biomed’ graduates at the healthcare coalface, bringing medical science into our lives through clinical trials of new treatments or by specialising in careers such as genetic counselling, pathology, clinical microbiology or nutrition.

New! In 2009 Griffith will launch the Gold Coast’s first Biomolecular Science degree, giving students the option to study at Nathan or Gold Coast campus.

Grow your own biotech career

Next time you bite into a luscious, sweet golden papaya (paw paw) you might have a biotechnologist to thank!

Griffith graduate Adam Kaity is putting his biomolecular science skills to practical use, working towards an exciting career in biotechnology.

Adam is completing his PhD taking part in a project in Griffith’s Centre for Forestry and Horticulture Research using natural genetic engineering to develop a stronger, tastier papaya that is more resistant to disease enabling farmers to use fewer toxic chemicals.

“There are several varieties of wild papaya in different parts of the world. By crossing these with the commercial varieties, scientists can breed papaya with particular characteristics,” Adam said.

“My role in the project involves finding ways to preserve these plants cryogenically and grow them from the preserved shoots years after they have been frozen, in a similar way to how babies can be born from cryogenically preserved eggs and sperm.”

An important part of Adam’s work involves analysing the plant’s DNA after freezing to see if the freezing process has caused mutations or damage.

“These basic skills can be adapted to careers in plant, water or biomedical biotechnology,” he said.
Students at Australia's remote outback schools are working alongside scientists in a project boosting Australia's ability to predict and measure dust storms.

Dubbed 'School DustWatch', students and researchers are linked by an interactive website http://school.dustwatch.edu.au

Project leader Professor Grant McTainsh of Griffith University heads the wind erosion team of the Desert Knowledge Cooperative Research Centre.

“These Northern Territory schools took part in a pilot program and are now becoming Dustwatchers on a permanent basis. We hope schools from across western Queensland, northern SA and WA will also join,” he said.

“The more researchers we have in remote areas the better the data. It’s a great way to recruit a new generation of scientific land managers in desert Australia.”

Laramba School, a 100-student school 230km north-west of Alice Springs, was one of the first to sign up to the pilot project. Teacher Jane Crossley said Laramba’s senior high school classes were in charge of dust-watching.

“The students take turns collecting dust samples and monitoring rainfall and humidity,” she said.

“We then analyse and calculate the data, which has turned out to provide great practice for students to apply the maths skills they’ve learnt in class.”

High and mighty: Hum Gurung, Jeremy Edwards, Carl Cater and Tim Trembath make it to Annapurna base camp.

To illustrate just what their profession offers, a group of young Australian planners including Griffith graduates Tiffany Lacey and Lauren Barnaby have got together to produce a DVD 'Planning is Awesome'.

Funded by the Planning Institute of Australia, Queensland Government and Gold Coast, Brisbane and Ipswich councils, the DVD was launched at Griffith University, and will be distributed in high schools nationally.

The DVD is a response to research by the Local Government Careers Taskforce that named planning as a skills 'hot spot', with more than 60 per cent of Queensland councils reporting a shortage of planners.

“Gold Coast City Council’s Planning Committee chair, Councillor Ted Shepherd said there was tremendous demand for planners in south-east Queensland.

“There are some exceptional planning schools within our local universities, including one right here at Griffith University,” he said.

Griffith School of Urban and Environmental Planning lecturer Dr Darren Dredge said as awareness of environmental threats such as climate change grew, governments and the public were demanding more sustainable development.

“The shortage means employers are willing to be quite flexible with work and study arrangements, while graduates are able to work and travel all over the world.”

For more information email nypg@planning.org.au

Plan your ‘Awesome’ career

If you’re after a job that will let you shape your world, urban and environmental planning could be for you!

To find out more about our degrees in environment, visit www.griffith.edu.au/futurestudents

Plan ahead: Griffith graduate Lauren Barnaby is now helping plan Queensland’s new desalination plant.
Electrifying stuff!

A micro-electronic engineering degree opened doors into a world of careers generated by Australia’s lucrative resource boom for Griffith graduate Monica Joseph.

Few 21-year-olds are in the position to pick from job offers from the world’s biggest resource companies, but Monica said demand for graduates was immense.

She took up a position with mining giant X-Strata as a graduate electrical engineer in Mt Isa.

“The resource boom created a situation where top companies are screaming for engineers, both in remote and city locations. As a result, they earn some of Australia’s highest starting salaries,” she said.

Monica caught the resource bug through Griffith’s Industrial Affiliates Program, in which she completed a real-life project with industry partner Kellogg Brown & Root while in her final year. Her project investigated metering instrumentation for a mine site near Emerald to enable better control of energy and water systems.

One of only a handful of female micro-electronic engineers, and one of even fewer in the mining industry, Monica said many girls didn’t realise the diverse careers electronics provided.

“I grew up on a farm near Dalby, and was interested in technology and enjoyed maths. If you told me I’d be working in the resource industry I’d have laughed, but mining today is incredibly technology driven,” she said.

“Microelectronics engineering is actually a great option. It offers flexibility to work in various industries in remote or city areas.”

Resourceful: Engineering graduate Monica Joseph.

What’s new in engineering?

To find out more about our degrees in engineering, visit www.griffith.edu.au/futurestudents

Engineers steam ahead in rail careers

The clean, green railway stations of the future could owe their existence to the work of Griffith engineering students Tom Wang and Brent Sorensen.

The students secured permanent careers with rail infrastructure alliance TrackStar even before graduating, after completing successful work experience projects with the company through Griffith’s Industrial Affiliates Program.

Environmental Engineering student Tom Wang worked on a project to find ‘green’ alternatives for constructing two rail station upgrades in South-East Queensland.

“There is a lot of focus on making buildings and construction techniques more environmentally sustainable across the board, particularly in the transport industry,” Tom said.

“My project looked at materials and methods of construction that had less impact on the environment not just at the start, but over the life of the building. This might involve using recycled and recyclable materials, using natural lighting and ventilation, and re-using rainwater.”

Civil engineer Brent Sorensen completed a project looking at alternative methods and materials to streamline railway station construction through faster, more efficient techniques.

“Through IAP I also secured a Queensland Rail scholarship to help with fees.”

On track: Engineering graduate Brent Sorensen.

“I had originally planned to work in building construction, but this opened my eyes to the diversity of rail industry engineering careers available around the world,” Brent said.

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James tackles the science of snowboarding

Griffith Bachelor of Engineering (Electronics) student James Small has just graduated with one of the ‘coolest’ projects around on his resume.

Electronics and snowboarding might seem worlds apart, but during his final year, James travelled to Perisher Blue Ski Resort to assist in the first major snowboard competition to be judged electronically with a new hi-tech monitoring system.

He worked closely with project leader Griffith’s Jason Harding, who is completing his PhD with the Australian Institute of Sport. James got the chance to work on the project as part of Griffith’s Industrial Affiliates Program.

“I had the opportunity to work with Jason and members of the Australian Olympic snowboarding team at the Winter Olympic Institute in the development of an automated snowboard judging system designed to aid in the coaching and competitive evaluation of half-pipe athletes.”

Snowboarding judges traditionally used a handwritten ‘memory board’ to record notes on performance, faults and technique throughout a run.

This project uses an electronic device to precisely measure acceleration, rotation, and air time providing an instant record of each athlete’s performance.

It will provide judges with an ‘electronic memory board’ enabling them to keep their eye on competitors at all times.

Snowman: Janet Small monitors snowboarders as part of the trial.

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Sixteen of Australia’s hottest young female IT professionals have embarked on a mission to change the image of their industry from geek to totally chic.

The young women profile their careers in a new book Tech Girls are Chic, not just Geek to be distributed free in high schools nationally.

The book is by Griffith University researcher Jenine Beekhuyzen, who juggles her PhD study into online music piracy with her small business as a jewellery designer and Rebecca Dorries, a project manager at an international airline.

"The image was terrible – every IT person in the media is a coke-bottle-glasses-wearing geek hiding in a lab doing endless programming," Jenine said.

"It just doesn’t reflect the reality of our lives so we decided to get out there and tell our stories. Most of us are ‘girly’ girls – we love shopping, music and hanging out.

"In fact much of our time is spent communicating – finding out what clients’ businesses do, and finding creative solutions."

She said on top of the rapidly-expanding internet commerce and entertainment industry, IT was the backbone of everything from film, television and music to the hospitality, recruitment, airline and travel industry.

"The careers we are doing now didn’t exist when we were at high school, and it will be the same for today’s students."

If computer programming was an Olympic sport, a team of Griffith University Bachelor of Information Technology and Bachelor of Engineering students would have just bought a place on the medal dais.

The team of Katie McLaughlin, Nicholas Dahm and Michael McMullen led by ‘coach’ lecturer Dr Andrew Rock was named Australian Champion at the South Pacific Finals of the 32nd ACM International Collegiate Programming Contest.

They placed second overall in the region, and are now among 100 teams worldwide to advance to the World Finals at Canada’s famous Banff Springs Hotel.

Also known as the Battle of the Brains, the event challenges students to solve real-world computer programming problems under a gruelling, five-hour deadline.

It is open to the best and brightest engineering and IT students worldwide. Last year 6700 teams from 83 countries competed worldwide to make it to the final 100.

Dr Rock said the competition required attention to detail and problem solving ability.

"Each team has three people, one computer and nine hard problems to solve. They are judged on how many they complete and how quickly, and they’re penalised for errors," he said.

"It’s not the sort of contest where you can fake it or wing it – either you've done the work or you haven't." Since the regional finals last year, Michael and Katie have graduated and secured jobs in the IT industry and Nick is undertaking further studies at Griffith.

“We've continued to train hard and will keep doing so right up until the competition. We're very grateful for the support the University has provided to get us to Banff," Dr Rock said.

Griffith students get with the program

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IT girls prove chic beats geek

Work IT, baby!

Griffith Bachelor of Information Technology student Kieron Maynard didn’t have to choose between getting a degree and starting a paid career.

He’s among the first students to take advantage of Griffith’s new Bachelor of IT @ Work, a degree that enables students to complete a foundation year of study on campus, then work full-time while completing their degree through summer intensive schools and on-line (off-campus) flexible mode study.

Kieron said he started his IT education at TAFE before switching to BIT @ Work.

"I was surprised how flexible the program was. It’s hard to know what you want to do straight out of high school, so it’s good to get some work experience under your belt and find out what elements of IT work you enjoy before choosing your major," Kieron said.

"Earning money certainly doesn’t hurt either – it takes away a lot of the stress associated with balancing work and study."

The students are working for fellow Griffith IT graduate Trevor Turnbull who now runs his own national business, Imagatix, designing point-of-sale software used by major retailers, finance and hospitality companies such as Zarraffa’s Coffee, Pizaa Capers and Hog’s Breath Cafe.

"I didn’t deliberately set out to employ Griffith students – I just found they stood out from the pack, and could probably hit the ground running," Trevor said.

To find out more about our degrees in IT, visit www.griffith.edu.au/futurestudents
**What’s new at the EcoCentre?**

**Have you seen this butterfly?**

Probably not – the stunning Richmond Birdwing Butterfly was once common in Queensland, but is now under threat from habitat loss.

Griffith’s EcoCentre has put together a living plant display to educate visitors about this and other amazing Australians and provide a habitat boost in the process.

“Our new plants are more than they seem,” said EcoCentre officer Rhannan Chamberlain. “They look great but also have a double use, such as food for wildlife.”

She said the Richmond Birdwing vine was the staple food for Richmond Birdwing caterpillars, but was disappearing in the wild.

“The butterfly also faces problems caused by an introduced look-a-like weed known as Dutchmans’ Pipe,” she said.

“It resembles Richmond Birdwing vine enough to trick the butterfly into laying its eggs on it, but is toxic, so poisons the caterpillars when they emerge.

“We have these plants on site to show visitors the difference.”

Other interesting plants at the EcoCentre include:

- **Cycas revoluta.** This plant belonging to the Cycad family used to be popular with dinosaurs! Cycads were one of the first plant species to colonise terrestrial land with fossils dating back 280 million years.
- **Wollemi Pine, the living fossil!** The first plant species to colonise terrestrial land with fossils dating back 280 million years.
- **Hoya Australis** (common waxflower), an amazing native plant with flowers that look like they’re made of wax, very popular with native butterflies.
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**The ‘Gore-y’ details on climate change**

Griffith EcoCentre manager Delwyn Langdon has been keeping celebrity company recently, after earning a place to study with climate change trailblazer Al Gore of ‘An Inconvenient Truth’ fame.

“**I was one of 170 people selected from about 2500 people to study with Mr Gore on his recent Australian trip. It was an amazing experience,**” she said.

“I was learning alongside everyone from television stars to school teachers to heads of major corporations to grass-roots conservationists, but it was a real level playing field.”

“Mr Gore taught us to communicate the climate change message to people of all ages.”

Delwyn will now use her new skills to conduct climate change education sessions for adults and school students both at the EcoCentre and at roadshows across Queensland.

“It’s ironic that the bush is the place where people are most immediately impacted by climate change in terms of drought and erosion, but much of the climate change education takes place in city areas,” she said.

“I’m looking forward to getting out there and sharing the challenges we face, and the solutions we can all play a part in.”

Is your school interested in studying climate change? EcoCentre manager Delwyn Langdon is available to present the climate change message in an Australian context to your school. Contact the EcoCentre on 3735 7992 for details.

**Community Seminar Series 2008**

Griffith’s EcoCentre is warming up for an exciting year of eco-themed events for people of all ages.

- **April 23:** Community Energy Initiatives
- **June 4:** Climate Change with Delwyn Langdon
- **July 17:** Natural Products for Health, Beauty and Home

For information on these events, contact the EcoCentre on 3735 7992 or Email l.malcolm@griffith.edu.au

**Schools go EnergyWise at the EcoCentre**

Six Queensland schools have put their carbon footprints under the microscope this year, joining the EnergyWise challenge to learn to reduce their energy consumption.

The Calvary Christian College, Old Yarranlea State School, Greenbank State School, Holland Park State School, Algester State School and Mt Gravatt State High School volunteered for the project.

The project is part of the Queensland Environmentally Sustainable Schools Initiative coordinated locally by Education Queensland’s Toohy Forest Environmental Education Centre at Griffith’s EcoCentre.

Toohy Forest EEC Principal Darren Shepherd said the schools had their sights set on reducing energy use and greenhouse emissions by 10 per cent in the coming 12 months. They will also be encouraged to switch to green power sources.

“The schools will then showcase their achievements in a ‘Powering Ahead’ presentation to enable schools to share ideas and discover what has worked for other participants,” he said.

“We’re working with Griffith staff to develop a solar-powered portable metering device to help students test and compare how much power appliances around their schools use.”

He said students were often amazed at how much difference low-cost changes made.

“Turning equipment off at the wall instead of leaving them on standby saves a surprising amount of power. Planting trees along a western wall and hanging curtains on windows that get the afternoon sun can make a big difference to air-conditioning load.”

“It’s a great opportunity for students to learn energy-smart skills they’ll then be able to apply at home.”

EnergyWise is sponsored by the Department of Mines and Energy and the Department of Education, Training and the Arts. For more information on getting involved email admin@toohforeec.eq.edu.au
Students ahead of the pack with GriffPhys and GriffChem

Students from 16 Queensland schools have now embraced the opportunity to finish Year 12 with a first-year university subject already under their belts.

The GriffPhys/GriffChem program was launched last year by Griffith’s Science, Environment, Engineering and Technology group to enable high-achieving students to complete a recognised first year Griffith chemistry or engineering physics subject over two years while studying Year 11 and 12.

Six new schools signed up in 2008, in addition to last year’s 10 pilot schools. About 60 students who began the program in 2007 in Year 11 are now eligible to continue the second phase of the program as they undertake their Year 12 studies.

Griffith University Pro Vice Chancellor of Science, Environment, Engineering and Technology Ned Pankhurst said students who successfully completed the course would receive credit towards a range of Griffith degrees in which the course was a core requirement, plus guaranteed acceptance into one of these as their first QTAC preference.

“There is growing demand from schools for an accelerated program to give students a head start at university,” Professor Pankhurst said.

“Our research shows today’s students are keen to begin their university and professional careers as soon as possible, and are seeking flexible arrangements to help them do so.”

“As well as the obvious benefit of finishing school with a university course completed, it has practical benefits, enabling students to get a feel for university, with lab sessions and specialist lectures held on campus.”

Griffith Science Education Alliance Director Associate Professor Richard John said the program provided training and support to help staff guide students through the program.

“Staff nominated by the school will receive specialist professional development through Griffith University enabling students to get a feel for university, with lab sessions and specialist lectures held on campus.”

Griffith Science Education Alliance Director Associate Professor Richard John said the program provided a boost for high school science teachers, with intensive professional development through Griffith University to help staff guide students through the program.

“Staff nominated by the school will receive specialist training and support to help them deliver the course at first-year university level,” he said.

“This is part of a suite of measures Griffith will make available to support teachers. Confident, inspired science teachers are the key to engaging students,” he said.

Cutting-edge: Anna Keenan (left) from Young Scientists of Australia with Year 9 students Xavier and Savannah.

Don’t miss…

Opening of the Eskitis Institute

24 April

To celebrate the opening of the $12 million Eskitis Institute, home of the National Adult Stem Cell Research Centre and Natural Product Discovery program, science teachers and students are invited for an exclusive tour on 24 April.

This is a unique opportunity to meet actual researchers working to develop revolutionary adult stem cell therapies, and to unlock new medicines from the forest and ocean.

This is a secure facility so numbers are strictly limited and bookings are essential. To register groups of up to five students and teachers, email eskits_events@griffith.edu.au and specify your preference for a 1.30pm, 2pm or 2.30pm tour.

Senior Student Environment Workshops

Griffith University EcoCentre, Nathan campus

12 May – Geographical Information Systems (GIS)

15 May – Invertebrates

Conducted by some of Griffith’s leading environment teachers and researchers, these workshops are considered essential for students considering tertiary studies in the fields of science, engineering and geography.

Bookings are essential as places are strictly limited. Contact Darren Shepherd, Principal, Toohey Forest Environmental Education Centre – dshisp26@eq.edu.au.

Science on the GO! Camps

A three day camp of fun and science exploration at Tallebudgera Beach Outdoor Education School. Students can discover and investigate the many worlds of science through hands-on workshops and visiting scientists.

Year 6 camp is 6 – 8 June and Year 7 Camp is 30 July – 1 August.

For more information – scienceonthego@griffith.edu.au.

Test-drive a science career at Griffith

Science-savvy Year 9 students from across Queensland took the chance to test-drive a science career in everything from electronics to forensics at Griffith University recently.

Supported by Young Scientists of Australia, Rotary and the Australian Science Teacher’s Association, the Siemens Science Experience is designed to encourage students to explore the amazing world of science careers.

National figures show Australia has a critical shortage of science graduates, and needs to recruit at least 55,000 scientists by 2012 to compete in international research and development.

They got the chance to talk about careers in science with real science lecturers and researchers working in a range of cutting-edge fields,” he said.

The Siemens Science Experience is held at Griffith’s Brisbane and Gold Coast campuses each January. To get involved, see www.scienceonthego.com.au.

Want to Discover more?

Find out more about our exciting degrees in science, environment, engineering and IT.

Contact Griffith University for more information

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CRICOS No. 00233E