



BIOL3400

Conservation in Action

Session 2, In person-scheduled-weekday, North Ryde 2026

School of Natural Sciences

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Tristan Guillemin

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Credit points

10

Prerequisites

BIOL2400 AND 60cp of BIOL units at 2000-level or above

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

Conservation in Action is the Capstone unit for the Bachelor of Biodiversity and Conservation but is open to students from other courses. In this advanced-level unit, students will examine their own professional dispositions, theoretical knowledge, and ethical stance in conservation issues by focusing on solutions to case studies based on 'real-world' situations. Students will have the opportunity explore novel and innovative solutions aimed at improving recovery and resilience of species and ecosystems under threat. They will investigate the socioeconomic, cultural, and legislative aspects of conservation, including relationships between biodiversity and human wellbeing, the role of cultural knowledge and traditional practices, the economic valuation of ecosystem services, and legislative and policy frameworks associated with the management of biodiversity assets. They develop proficiency and confidence in assessing and effectively communicating a variety of viewpoints to other stakeholders in professional-level scenarios. Students will be required to cover costs associated with transportation to field trips.

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

ULO1: Integrate concepts and theories from various disciplines, including biology, ecology, environmental science, policy and legislation, and social sciences, to analyse complex biodiversity problems.

ULO2: Critically evaluate, communicate and debate a range of viewpoints on conservation approaches and their effectiveness in managing biodiversity, including conflicts between conservation goals and human development.

ULO3: Develop comprehensive conservation plans that encompass ecological, social, and economic aspects, such as habitat connectivity, climate change resilience, stakeholder engagement, and policy frameworks.

ULO4: Integrate ethical considerations and legal frameworks that govern biodiversity conservation, such as issues related to the rights of Indigenous and marginalised communities, legislation, and international agreements.

ULO5: Evaluate what is required as a conservation practitioner to address complex conservation challenges and demonstrate leadership skills in guiding group projects, decision-making, and conflict resolution.

ULO6: Self-reflect on personal growth, ethical development, and acquired knowledge base in the context of potential for continued learning and professional opportunity in the field of biodiversity conservation.

ULO7: Assess and apply the occupational and health requirements associated with field work.

General Assessment Information

Hurdle Assessments

There are no hurdle assessments in this unit.

Requirements to Pass the Unit

To pass the unit you must:

- Achieve a total mark greater than or equal to 50%

Assessment Criteria

Assessment at Macquarie University is standards-based, as outlined in the [Assessment Policy](#). This means that your work will be assessed against clear criteria, and these criteria will be made available when the assessment tasks are released to you on iLearn.

Submission of Assessments

All assignments must be submitted online through Turnitin unless otherwise indicated. Links for the submission of each assignment will be available on [iLearn](#). The due dates for all assessment tasks are not negotiable. If you have commitments that will significantly impact your study during the session then you must plan for this in advance as part of an effective individual study plan and you may need to contact the unit convenor for advice.

Marking of Assessments

Assignments will be marked through Turnitin (unless otherwise indicated) and feedback will be given via iLearn. **Do not** submit your assignments via email or in hard copy. Your grades will be returned using the Grades Report on iLearn.

We aim to return your assignments with feedback within two to three weeks of the date that you submit your assignment, and before your next assignment is due. We appreciate your patience and will advise you through iLearn when your marked assignments and feedback are available for viewing.

Late Submission Policy

- **5% penalty per day:** If you submit your assessment late, **5% of the total possible marks** will be deducted for each day (including weekends), up to 7 days.
 - *Example 1 (out of 100):* If you score 85/100 but submit 20 hours late, you will lose 5 marks and receive **80/100**
 - *Example 2 (out of 30):* If you score 27/30 but submit 1 day late, you will lose 1.5 marks and receive **25.5/30**.
- **After 7 days:** Submissions more than 7 days late will receive a **mark of 0**.
- **Extensions:**
 - **Automatic short extension:** Some assessments are eligible for automatic short extension. You can only apply for an automatic short extension before the due date.
 - **Special Consideration:** If you need more time due to serious issues and for any assessments that are not eligible for Short Extension, you must apply for Special Consideration.

Need help? Review the Special Consideration page [HERE](#)

Assessments where Late Submissions will be accepted

- Oral Viva: YES, Standard Late Penalty applies, to avoid these please apply for a Short Extension or Special Consideration
- Conference Poster: YES, Standard Late Penalty applies, to avoid these please apply for a Short Extension or Special Consideration
- Portfolio: YES, Standard Late Penalty applies, to avoid these please apply for a Short Extension or Special Consideration

Special Consideration

The [Special Consideration Policy](#) aims to support students who have been impacted by short-term circumstances or events that are serious, unavoidable and significantly disruptive, and which may affect their performance in assessment. If you experience circumstances or events that affect your ability to complete the assessments in this unit on time, please inform the convenor and submit a Special Consideration request through <https://connect.mq.edu.au>.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due	Groupwork/Individual	Short Extension	AI Approach
"Shark tank" type oral viva	35%	No	28/08/2026	Individual	No	Observed
Conference Poster	35%	No	23/10/2026	Individual	Yes	Open
Portfolio	30%	No	06/11/2026	Individual	Yes	Open

"Shark tank" type oral viva

Assessment Type ¹: Presentation task

Indicative Time on Task ²: 30 hours

Due: **28/08/2026**

Weighting: **35%**

Groupwork/Individual: Individual

Short extension ³: No

AI Approach: Observed

You will develop a pitch for funding for an aspect of applied conservation, including critical evaluation of alternate strategies.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Integrate concepts and theories from various disciplines, including biology, ecology, environmental science, policy and legislation, and social sciences, to analyse complex biodiversity problems.
- Critically evaluate, communicate and debate a range of viewpoints on conservation approaches and their effectiveness in managing biodiversity, including conflicts between conservation goals and human development.
- Develop comprehensive conservation plans that encompass ecological, social, and economic aspects, such as habitat connectivity, climate change resilience, stakeholder engagement, and policy frameworks.
- Integrate ethical considerations and legal frameworks that govern biodiversity conservation, such as issues related to the rights of Indigenous and marginalised

communities, legislation, and international agreements.

Conference Poster

Assessment Type ¹: Professional task

Indicative Time on Task ²: 30 hours

Due: **23/10/2026**

Weighting: **35%**

Groupwork/Individual: Individual

Short extension ³: Yes

AI Approach: Open

You will research an allocated project on an aspect of conservation and/or biodiversity relevant to Sydney. You will be given data to manipulate and you will produce a poster for a scientific conference.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Integrate concepts and theories from various disciplines, including biology, ecology, environmental science, policy and legislation, and social sciences, to analyse complex biodiversity problems.
- Develop comprehensive conservation plans that encompass ecological, social, and economic aspects, such as habitat connectivity, climate change resilience, stakeholder engagement, and policy frameworks.
- Integrate ethical considerations and legal frameworks that govern biodiversity conservation, such as issues related to the rights of Indigenous and marginalised communities, legislation, and international agreements.
- Assess and apply the occupational and health requirements associated with field work.

Portfolio

Assessment Type ¹: Portfolio

Indicative Time on Task ²: 20 hours

Due: **06/11/2026**

Weighting: **30%**

Groupwork/Individual: Individual

Short extension ³: Yes

AI Approach: Open

You will complete a self-reflection on skills and knowledge obtained throughout the BBioCons through the development of a portfolio

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Evaluate what is required as a conservation practitioner to address complex

conservation challenges and demonstrate leadership skills in guiding group projects, decision-making, and conflict resolution.

- Self-reflect on personal growth, ethical development, and acquired knowledge base in the context of potential for continued learning and professional opportunity in the field of biodiversity conservation.

¹ If you need help with your assignment, please contact:

- the academic teaching staff in your unit for guidance in understanding or completing this type of assessment
- [Academic Success](#) for academic skills support.

² Indicative time-on-task is an estimate of the time required for completion of the assessment task and is subject to individual variation.

³ An automatic short extension is available for some assessments. Apply through the [Service Connect Portal](#).

Delivery and Resources

Unit communications

Unit staff will communicate with you via your university email or through announcements on iLearn. Queries to convenors should be placed on the iLearn General Forum.

For matters of a more personal nature, and that do not concern other students (i.e. requests for extensions, etc.), you should contact the Unit Convener, Tristan Guillemain, by email - tristan.guillemain@mq.edu.au

Classes

Weekly workshops (beginning in Week 1): There is one two-hour interactive workshop each week, 1pm-3pm on Monday afternoons.

The class timetable can be accessed via Class Finder in [eStudent](#). A detailed class schedule with assessment due dates will be made available to all enrolled students through [iLearn](#).

Students are expected to attend all of the weekly 2 hour workshops. The workshops are structured as a combination of delivered material and small group discussions and tasks, often with guest lectures from professionals in the field.

Field Trip

The unit also has a three day field trip on the 28th-30th September. The field trip will be at the Coal Loader centre for sustainability in Ball's Head Reserve. Students will be expected to attend 9am to 5pm all three days.

Technology Used and Required

You will need to **bring a laptop computer or tablet to class each week**. If this is problematic for you, please contact the unit convenor who will help provide a solution. You will also need to have access to a computer to use the university systems (e.g. iLearn, library) and complete the assessment tasks.

For those enrolled in the online version of the unit, online weekly workshops will be **hosted in a virtual classroom space online**. A standard internet browser, and working microphone (essential) and camera (strongly recommended) should be sufficient to permit successful participation in the workshops.

We will make use of groupwork management tools such as Google Drive, Google Docs and Google Sheets.

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](https://policies.s.mq.edu.au) (<https://policies.s.mq.edu.au>). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

- [Academic Appeals Policy](#)
- [Academic Integrity Policy](#)
- [Academic Progression Policy](#)
- [Assessment Policy](#)
- [Fitness to Practice Procedure](#)
- [Assessment Procedure](#)
- [Complaints Resolution Procedure for Students and Members of the Public](#)
- [Special Consideration Policy](#)

Students seeking more policy resources can visit [Student Policies](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/policies) (<https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/policies>). It is your one-stop-shop for the key policies you need to know about throughout your undergraduate student journey.

To find other policies relating to Teaching and Learning, visit [Policy Central](https://policies.mq.edu.au) (<https://policies.mq.edu.au>) and use the [search tool](#).

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: <https://students.mq.edu.au/admin/other-resources/student-conduct>

Results

Results published on platform other than [eStudent](#), (eg. iLearn, Coursera etc.) or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in [eStudent](#). For more information visit connect.mq.edu.au or if you are a Global MBA student contact globalmba.support@mq.edu.au

Academic Integrity

At Macquarie, we believe [academic integrity](#) – honesty, respect, trust, responsibility, fairness and courage – is at the core of learning, teaching and research. We recognise that meeting the expectations required to complete your assessments can be challenging. So, we offer you a range of resources and services to help you reach your potential, including free [online writing and maths support](#), [academic skills development](#) and [wellbeing consultations](#).

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

Academic Success

[Academic Success](#) provides resources to develop your English language proficiency, academic writing, and communication skills.

- [Ask a Study Coach](#)
- [Access StudyWISE](#)
- [Upload an assignment to Studiosity](#)
- [Complete the Academic Integrity Module](#)

The Library provides online and face to face support to help you find and use relevant information resources.

- [Subject and Research Guides](#)
- [Ask a Librarian](#)

Student Services and Support

Macquarie University offers a range of [Student Support Services](#) including:

- [IT Support](#)
- [Accessibility and disability support](#) with study
- Mental health [support](#)
- [Safety support](#) to respond to bullying, harassment, sexual harassment and sexual assault
- [Social support including information about finances, tenancy and legal issues](#)
- [Student Advocacy](#) provides independent advice on MQ policies, procedures, and processes

Student Enquiries

Got a question? Ask us via the [Service Connect Portal](#), or contact [Service Connect](#).

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit <https://students.mq.edu.au/support/technology/service-desk>.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use of IT Resources Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

Unit information based on version 2026.03 of the [Handbook](#)