EESJ1160

Blue Planet

NMJI Term 1 (Sept), In person-scheduled-weekday, China 2026

School of Natural Sciences

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff
Kyle Zawada
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Credit points
10

Prerequisites

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description
This unit introduces you to the ocean, the largest ecosystem on our Blue Planet, with particular focus on biological and physical processes operating at various timescales.

You will explore the formation of ocean basins and marine sediment; seawater, waves, tides and currents; marine life and its ecology and history; ocean-driven climate processes and global climate change; the importance of oceans to human society and our economy; and our impact on marine systems.

You will engage in student-led activities during hands-on workshops and a one-day field trip.

Oceans enabled the evolution of complex life, influence Earth's climate and weather, and provide food for much of the world's population. Learning in this unit enhances your understanding of global challenges identified by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals: Climate Action and Life Below Water.

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: Explain how key planetary processes influence the marine environment across different temporal and spatial scales

ULO2: Describe oceanic processes and their influence on aquatic life over evolutionary timescales and global spatial scales.

ULO3: Collect and interpret marine science data using standard field and laboratory techniques and equipment.

ULO4: Communicate results from guided marine science investigations using appropriate scientific conventions.

General Assessment Information

Requirements to Pass this Unit

To pass this unit you must achieve a total mark equal to or greater than 50%.

Engagement

You are expected to actively participate in the workshop activities by: asking questions, voicing your opinions, particpating in discussions, providing constructive feedback to your peers, and proactively working to find your place in our diverse community. You are expected to contribute to a supportive and respectful dialogue. Disrespectful, offensive, belittling or exclusionary behaviour will not be tolerated (https://policies.mq.edu.au/document/view.php?id=55).

Pre-workshop activities / readings

Most of the workshops build on a pre-workshop activities / readings, full participation in the unit requires that you complete these prior to the scheduled workshop. These will be part of your reflective journal. See iLearn for additional information.

Academic Honesty

Academic integrity is fundamental. Presenting another person's work as your own is a serious breach of the University's rules and carries significant penalties. The University's Academic Honesty Policy can be found at http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html

In this unit, written work will be checked for plagiarism using Turnitin. Penalties for plagiarism may include a zero mark for the assignment or in more extreme cases, failure of the unit. Plagiarism will be noted on your academic record. Full details of penalties can be found at http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/schedule_penalties.html

Individual assessments

Marking criteria / guidance for each assessment are provided via iLearn.

Due dates and assessement topics

Any student who is unable to meet a deadline should contact the unit convenor prior to the deadline to (possibly) avoid late penalties.

Late Assessment Submission Penalty

Students enrolled in session based units with written assessments will have the following university standard late penalty applied. Please see https://students.mq.edu.au/study/assessment-exams/assessments for more information. Unless a Special Consideration request has been submitted and approved, a 5% penalty (of the total possible mark) will be applied each

day a written assessment is not submitted, up until the 7th day (including weekends). After the 7th day, a grade of '0' will be awarded even if the assessment is submitted. **Submission time for all written assessments is set at 11:55 pm**. A 1-hour grace period is provided to students who experience a technical concern. For any late submission of time-sensitive tasks, such as scheduled tests/exams, performance assessments/presentations, and/or scheduled practical assessments/labs, students need to submit an application for Special Consideration.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due	Groupwork/Individual	Short Extension	AI Approach
Workshop portfolio	40%	No	13/12/2026	Individual	No	Open
Fieldtrip report	30%	No	22/11/2026	Individual and Group	Yes	Open
Final Exam	30%	No	Exam week	Individual	No	Observed

Workshop portfolio

Assessment Type [1]: Portfolio
Indicative Time on Task [2]: 12 hours
Due: **13/12/2026**
Weighting: **40%**
Groupwork/Individual: Individual
Short extension [3]: No
AI Approach: Open

You will complete a portfolio of workshop activities which will be submitted at the end of the session.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Explain how key planetary processes influence the marine environment across different temporal and spatial scales
- Describe oceanic processes and their influence on aquatic life over evolutionary timescales and global spatial scales.
- Collect and interpret marine science data using standard field and laboratory techniques and equipment.
- Communicate results from guided marine science investigations using appropriate scientific conventions.

Fieldtrip report

Assessment Type [1]: Written Submission
Indicative Time on Task [2]: 24 hours
Due: **22/11/2026**
Weighting: **30%**
Groupwork/Individual: Individual and Group
Short extension [3]: Yes
AI Approach: Open

You will write a report based on activities conducted during the fieldtrip.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Explain how key planetary processes influence the marine environment across different temporal and spatial scales
- Describe oceanic processes and their influence on aquatic life over evolutionary timescales and global spatial scales.
- Collect and interpret marine science data using standard field and laboratory techniques and equipment.
- Communicate results from guided marine science investigations using appropriate scientific conventions.

Final Exam

Assessment Type [1]: Examination
Indicative Time on Task [2]: 2 hours
Due: **Exam week**
Weighting: **30%**
Groupwork/Individual: Individual
Short extension [3]: No
AI Approach: Observed

You will undertake a final examination during the formal examination period.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Explain how key planetary processes influence the marine environment across different temporal and spatial scales
- Describe oceanic processes and their influence on aquatic life over evolutionary timescales and global spatial scales.
- Collect and interpret marine science data using standard field and laboratory techniques and equipment.

[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

Workshop activities will be completed using LabArchives. As such you will need to have a laptop to access LabArchives during the workshops. LabArchives can be accessed using the computers in the teaching laboratory.

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from Policy Central (https://policies.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). 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) 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 2026.05 of the Handbook