

AN INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH TO FOUNDATION STUDY IN THE BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (EXTENDED)

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BACKGROUND

The Bachelor of Science (Extended) is a four-year degree that provides an additional pathway into Bachelor of Science study for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who do not meet the standard degree entry requirements. The BSc(Ext) contributes to increasing Indigenous student participation in tertiary science study, fields in which they are significantly underrepresented.

CURRICULUM APPROACH

The degree's extension component comprises eight subjects taken during the first three semesters, in interdisciplinary science, mathematics, communication and Indigenous studies. The extension subjects embed students' academic skills development, and science and mathematics knowledge and skills, to provide a foundation for success and further study in students' chosen STEM specialisation.

RESULTS

Integrating science disciplines, Indigenous Knowledges and mathematics into the science subjects has provided an enriched curriculum that is valued by students, who comment on the importance of foundation knowledge and skills and the multiple ways of learning provided. We will use examples of this approach to highlight its potential, with particular emphasis on Indigenous Knowledges and student impact.

DISCUSSION

An interdisciplinary thematic approach is a key component of the curriculum design, examining science through lenses of chemistry, physics, biology and Indigenous Knowledges, to prepare students for a range of STEM futures.

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