
YOUR SCIENCE IS IN THE MAIL

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BACKGROUND

The Bachelor of Science (Extended) is a four-year program that provides a transition into tertiary science and technology study and is only available to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. A year of study in addition to the three-year BSc program comprises subjects in interdisciplinary science, mathematics and communication and provides students with foundation knowledge and skills for the wider BSc.

'Delivering' our practical program under COVID-19

Practical classes are key to a science degree. They develop critical skills and give student opportunities to apply their learning. 'Prac' is often the component that draws students to science and keeps them engaged. However, in the frantic transition from face-to-face to online delivery many science subjects were forced to deliver their practical experience via videos.

As COVID-19 restrictions increased and our BSc (Ext) students returned to their home states, we saw an opportunity to maintain the hands-on nature of our practical classes using the services of Australia Post. This is a report on the design and evaluation of kits of postable laboratory equipment for interdisciplinary science. Our students used this kit of equipment to complete their practical program that included an environmental survey (chemistry and biology), simple mechanics (physics and biology), and investigations of living things (biology and geography). We will discuss our teaching approach which informed the design of the posted lab program, student feedback, the learning outcomes for students and consider the scalable elements of these 'home experiments' for large subjects.

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