

International Development Studies

About this area of study:

International Development Studies is an interdisciplinary specialisation which seeks to understand 'good development' practices within international programs or projects, aimed at poverty reduction. It is now widely recognised that good development promotes justice, reduces poverty and builds environments for people to lead productive, creative and fulfilling lives. Professionally as this sector has grown, demand has increased for specialists with a balanced blend of theoretical knowledge and practical skills to administer or undertake projects that benefit communities within Australia or in developing countries. As a discipline, International Development Studies offers graduates a diverse range of interesting career opportunities globally and locally, but it can be hard for recent graduates to secure project work. Whilst this represents a challenge, through commitment and value adding activities, such as postgraduate study or internships, it is not impossible.

Key skills that International Development Studies graduates demonstrate include:

- Sophisticated knowledge of social, economic and cultural structures
- Appreciation of the relationship between theory and practice
- Critical thinking and analysis
- Problem-solving skills
- Good written and oral communication skills
- Knowledge of referencing and information systems
- High level of commitment

Training:

International Development Studies graduates are intellectually trained for any position requiring critical thinking and analysis, problem-solving and conceptualisation. As International Development Studies constitutes an interdisciplinary field of study, it is highly relevant for those considering a career in community organisations, local government, development consulting, project management, journalism, non-government organisations, teaching and export-oriented enterprises. Currently a bachelor degree represents the necessary pre-requisite for most avenues of employment. However, from 2008 International Development Studies will only be offered at the postgraduate level. Consequently, those seeking future professional employment will require further postgraduate academic qualifications, plus in some circumstances, relevant experience.

Courses offered by Deakin University include:

Bachelor of Arts (with an International Development Studies major)

- Available to continuing students only.
- Students develop a sophisticated understanding of the dimensions of world poverty, its causes, and the processes of development aimed at eliminating poverty by promoting human fulfilment and achievement.
- Aims to stimulate and challenge students to consider contemporary poverty and development issues in a global context to develop discipline-specific skills and acquire highly valued critical, analytical, research and writing skills.

Graduate Certificate or Graduate Diploma of International and Community Development

- A professional, cross-disciplinary course offered to graduates from all disciplines.
- Examines historical record of development, conflict following clashes between competing cultures, socioeconomic and policy dimensions of development, evolution of thought on the meaning of development, role of poverty reduction, and the foundations of sustainable development.
- Aims to produce graduates with interdisciplinary knowledge of key theoretical debates informed by practical experience.

Master of International and Community Development

- A professional coursework degree.
- Challenges students to further develop their analytical skills for understanding the contexts of development programs and practical skills for the formulation, resourcing, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of international and community development projects.
- Aims to produce interdisciplinary graduates with theoretical and skills-based knowledge.

Labour Market Information:

- Median salary for Arts Graduates - \$ 37,000
- Approximate salary for Journalist - \$45-50,000
- Approximate salary for Project Management - \$55,000
- Approximate salary for Community Development Officer - \$56-59,000

2006 Statistics:

Adapted from Deakin University Australian Graduate Survey Data, 2006.

Total number of graduates available for employment nationally:	1,407 (66.5%)
Total number of graduates gaining full time employment:	1,105 (78.5%)

What do Arts graduates go after finishing?

Activity Category	Number of Responses	Percent
Employed Full Time	179	67%
Seeking Full Time	87	33%
Seeking Full Time, Employed Part Time	49	18%
Seeking Full Time, Not Working	38	14%
In Full Time Study	135	27%
Activity Part Time Not Seeking Full Time Work	64	13%
Not Working, Seeking Part Time Work	4	1%
Total Responses	556	

Table 1. Activities of Australian resident bachelor degree (Arts) students taken from Deakin University 2006 Australian Graduate Survey.

What employment sectors do graduates work in?

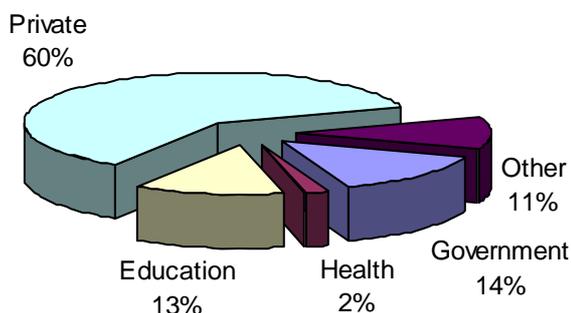


Figure 1. Employment sector of Australian bachelor degree graduates (Humanities) under 25 years of age 2006, adapted from Graduate Careers Australia, Gradsonline Website, October 2007.

Related Occupations:

Project Management Consultant

- Provide day-to-day administration of aid related projects funded by International organisations, such as World Bank, United Nations or Asian Development Bank.
- Engage in poverty reduction strategies, infrastructure development, capacity building, health, human rights advocacy or environmental management.
- Competitive nature often requires postgraduate academic qualification and experience.
- Employers are generally private consultancy firms contracted under tender.

Journalist

- Collect and analyse facts about newsworthy events from interviews, investigations and observations and compile stories for news bulletins, programs or commentary.
- Competitive nature of sector often relies on network of contacts to secure work.
- Can involve travel to remote international destinations experiencing conflict.

Policy analyst or information officer

- Review existing policies and legislation to identify anomalies and outdated provisions.
- Research social, economic, political and development trends to formulate and make recommendations for policy options.
- Employers include government agencies, local authorities, educational institutions, professional associations, and advocacy groups or media organisations.

Community development

- Research community issues, needs and problems to identify development and poverty reduction opportunities.
- Make recommendations based upon combination of research and expert knowledge.
- Design and coordinate advocacy programs or educational initiatives to increase awareness of relationship between sustainable development and poverty reduction.

Employers:

Examples of employers for International Development Studies graduates include:

Australian Government – www.apsjobs.gov.au.

State Government – www.careers.vic.gov.au

AusAID – www.ausaid.gov.au

International development networks – www.devnetjobs.org

Asian Development Bank – www.adb.org

Cardno ACIL – www.acil.com.au

For specific employment opportunities visit the following sites:

Deakin University Jobshop - www.deakin.edu.au/jobshop

Graduate Opportunities – www.graduateopportunities.com

Unigrad – www.unigrad.com.au

Seek – www.seek.com.au

Mycareer – www.mycareer.com.au

Career One - www.careerone.com.au

Professional Associations:

Australian Council for International Development – www.acfid.asn.au

Australian Institute of International Affairs Victoria – www.aiiavic.org.au