

MY LIFE-CHANGING SCHOLARSHIP TO DEAKIN UNIVERSITY



My name is Ana María, a physiotherapist from Chile and PhD candidate at the Institute for Physical Activity and Nutrition (IPAN) at Deakin.

My journey to Deakin began many years ago when I decided to undertake formal education in the field of physical activity, sedentary behaviour and their impact in chronic diseases such as type-2 diabetes and obesity. Since this was not possible in my home country, I searched overseas for programs that fit my interests.

It was then when me and my partner moved to Australia in 2009 to first improve my English skills. During my first stay in Melbourne, I worked as a waitress and studied English. I was accepted twice for studying a master's, however, I could not enrol because of the costs involved and my unsuccessful scholarships applications. Despite the adversity, I managed to keep my motivation and enthusiasm high.

“Despite the adversity, I managed to keep my motivation and enthusiasm high”

In 2011 we moved to the Netherlands, where I finally got a fellowship to do a master's. That was an unforgettable moment. I was shaking of happiness. However, this was not the biggest news; my daughter was on her way. Antonia was born only one week before I started my studies, which made 2012 unforgettable, as my professional dream came true and at the same time I received the most beautiful gift in life. I must say that it was also a pretty hard year, but with the active participation of my partner and very, very good organisation, we made it.

In 2014 a PhD appeared as a new professional challenge, and I had no doubts that coming back to Melbourne was the best option. I wanted to work with the best, so the search was not difficult and I contacted Professor Jo Salmon, world leader in the area of sedentary behaviour. After we had a Skype conversation to discuss about my research ideas, she accepted me as her potential PhD student!!! I couldn't believe it. We worked on the research project and the scholarships application, and in October 2014 I received an email that read: 'Congratulations, you have been accepted into the PhD program and granted the Deakin University Postgraduate Research Scholarship'. I really cannot describe how happy I was as another impossible dream came true.

I really cannot describe how happy I was as another impossible dream came true.



Doing my PhD in Australia – a dream come true

I am currently working on my PhD thesis, which aims at determining the health impact of breaking-up long periods of classroom sitting by young children and adolescents. In my research, I am analysing the impact on health of two types of classrooms: one full equipped with sit-to-stand desks and another classroom with traditional furniture. I expect my work can provide enough evidence for encouraging breaking-up sitting at schools in order to improve students' health and reduce health risk factors. My first year and a half as a PhD student has been a very challenging process, since I have had to upgrade my knowledge, keep up-to-date with new evidence in the field, analyse my own data and take advantage of every learning opportunity with my supervisors.

Although my journey to Deakin has had many up and downs, I would definitely repeat every step that allowed me and my family to be here. I also would like to thank my family and friends for their unconditional support and my supervisors for encouraging me to do my best.

STUDY SMART, PLAY HARD – MY LIFE IN AUSTRALIA



As a food lover with a great passion for nutrition, how could I refuse such a great opportunity to learn by studying overseas? With the support of my family, plus a desire to study further in food and nutrition science, I made my way here to Deakin University in Melbourne, Australia.

Nutrition and dietetics was my major at university when I studied in Taiwan. Therefore, I took this great opportunity to study a Bachelor of Food and Nutrition Sciences with a major in food science at Deakin University.



At Hanging Rock in Woodend near Melbourne

The course advisers worked effectively and processed my credit for prior learning (CPL) application faster than I assumed. In addition, they assisted me with my unit arrangement and made my university life very smooth.

During my time studying at Deakin, the facilities of the health faculty have been well-designed to provide a great learning environment for students, especially the laboratories for different experiments.

During my time studying at Deakin, the facilities of the health faculty have been well-designed to provide a great learning environment for students, especially the laboratories for different experiments. I truly treasure the time in the laboratory as it enhances my knowledge through hands-on practices. I also enjoy doing group assignments, whether it is a presentation or portfolio. I have practiced various skills, learnt about teamwork with course mates, and have worked my very best on assignments.

I found through my learning experience that I have an interest in sensory science, so I applied to participate in Deakin's Centre of Advanced Sensory Science (CASS) Academy program. This is a 12-week program designed to train sensory scientists. My application was successful and I got lots of hands-on experience with industry experts and learnt to do research with Deakin professors.



Having fun with a Kangaroo

Furthermore, university life is not limited to books or articles; it's about stepping out and getting connected. The Christian Union-International Bible Fellowship is the faith group I have become a part of and made friends outside of classes, many of whom are from lots different countries. I am so glad that I have met other international

students. I have been inspired and encouraged by them through their study experience stories.



With my friends from the Christian Union-International Bible Fellowship

“Study smart and play hard” is the advice I was given from a smart friend. Well, I would say that is true for making a balanced life. Time-management and peer mentoring are the keys to successful study.

Besides reading lots of articles in the library, I like to explore cafes, museums, and some of Australia’s amazing natural landscapes. These make it easier for me to understand the diet, the culture, and the population in Australia.

I hope you all find your way and enjoy studying at Deakin in Australia.

FOR THE LOVE OF NUTRITION (& COFFEE!)



Hey, my name is Syahirah and I'm from Singapore. People often mistake my name for Shakira so I let them call me 'Sha' instead.

I'm doing a Bachelor of Food and Nutrition Sciences at Deakin, currently in my second year. One of the best things about Deakin is that I received seven credits for prior learning from my polytechnic diploma in Singapore. So I dived straight into Trimester 2 of my first year at Deakin. This made my workload more manageable.

One of the best things about Deakin is that I received seven credits for prior learning from my polytechnic diploma in Singapore. So I dived straight into Trimester 2 of my first year at Deakin.



Enjoying the sunshine in Melbourne

My favourite module so far would be anything related to physiology. I know it's content-heavy, but I like to challenge myself. Nutrition modules are absolutely fascinating as well because they're current and practical. Food science-related modules might seem dull at first but the practicals are usually much more pleasant. For example, in HSN 206: Food Analysis and Quality Assurance, we determined the amount of sulphur dioxide in wines by direct titration and distillation/titration. The lab that we used had the latest equipment, and I liked how we could key in our experiment results into the iPad for submission.



Studying on campus

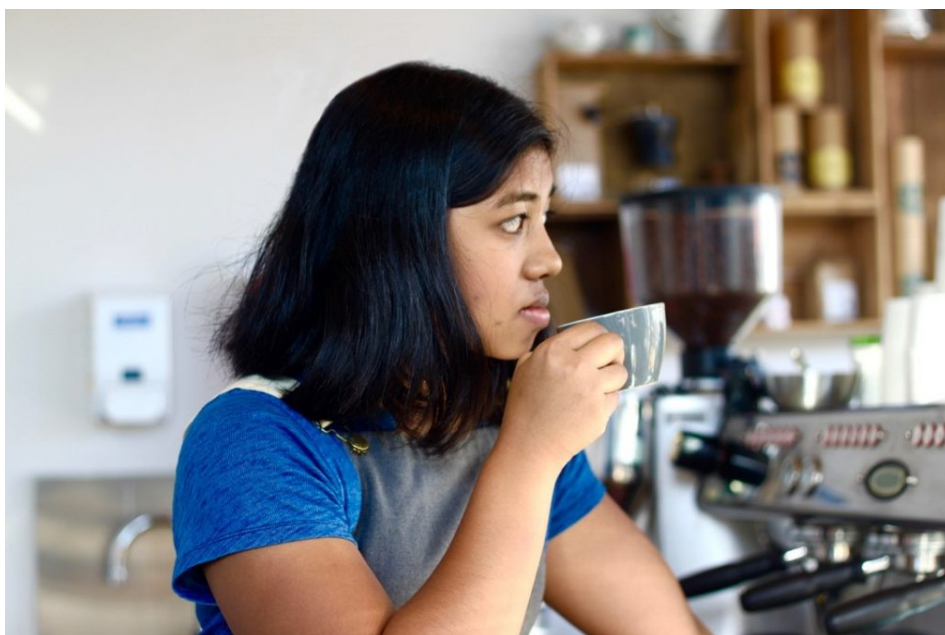
The library at the Melbourne Burwood Campus is stunning. Modern facilities are available and it's huge. It is a conducive environment to study and an ideal place to complete my assignments, because I get way too distracted at home.

I always knew that I wanted to study nutrition, since health is my utmost priority. A few years ago, I had some trouble with eating, which motivated me to study in the field. I received great feedback about my skills from my supervisor at the Health Promotion Board in Singapore, where I was an intern. Plus, having a diploma in food science and nutrition certainly made it easier to further my studies at Deakin.



My mum and I doing touristy things in Melbourne

Fast forward to 2016, I have never looked back since. Melbourne is amazing; the friendly people, a melting pot of cultures, the weather (four seasons in a day – I'll take that), and the amazing food and coffee scene.



Coffee helps me stay awake especially when I have a whole day of lectures

Not only that, studying in Melbourne meant that I could find part-time work, as long as I manage my time well. I'm really passionate about coffee and so I'm working at Black Flat Coffee Brewers in Glen Waverley now (say, 'Hi!' if you're getting a coffee).

Overall, studying abroad is indeed challenging but I believe I've made the right decision to study at Deakin