ARTS3242, Environmental History
S1, 2015

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1. Course Staff and Contact Details

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<th>Course Convenor, Lecturer, and Tutor</th>
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<td>Name</td>
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<tr>
<td>Phone</td>
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<tr>
<td>Consultation Time</td>
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2. Course Details

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Units of Credit (UoC)</th>
<th>6</th>
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Course Description

“A global perspective on our modern environmental condition and its development, primarily in Europe and other Western cultures, since pre-industrial times. Topics include: human impacts and natural changes in climate, the forests and the oceans; changing concepts of the natural world; agriculture, technology, economics and environmental damage; the impact of population growth and the industrial revolution; imperialism and its ecological and social effects; ecological science and its politics, modern conservation and environmental movements.”

Course Aims

1. To increase students’ understanding of changes in the environment and their relation to human societies since prehistoric times

2. To impart a critical understanding of the information sources and forms of analysis on which environmental history is based

3. To give students an active, working knowledge of key writings and concepts in the scholarly field of environmental history

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Ability to draw intelligently on a range of specific examples of past environmental change in relation to human society

2. Ability to identify key examples of scholarship and core concepts in the field of environmental history, and relate these examples and concepts to those of other disciplines

3. Ability to think rigorously and critically about the strengths and weaknesses of these key examples and core concepts, their implications and their suitable applications

4. Ability to employ core concepts of environmental history in independently constructing own evidence-based stories about the past

Graduate Attributes

1. in depth engagement with discipline

2. rigorous analysis and other skills of scholarly enquiry

3. effective communication

4. independent critical and reflective learning

3. Learning and Teaching Rationale

This course aims to impart an active understanding both of knowledge in the relatively new field of Environmental History, and also of its historiography – that is, the different ways the history has been and can be written. Put another way: it is not just about what happened to the Earth and humanity's
relation to it since the last Ice Age (a subject too vast for a survey course of any rigour); it is at least as much about different ways to think about environments and human societies, past and present.

The organisation of the lectures and readings is roughly chronological, and mainly focussed on episodes in Western civilisation and its relations to nature. The chronological organisation partly helps to build factual understanding of how we have come to our present environmental situation, while the episode focus allows us to introduce key concepts and writings pertinent to them. The lectures will tend to cover major developments in society-environment relations during the period in question, dealing both with the events and their historiography. Often there will be a film in the lecture period to help make the past situation more immediate. The readings will deal with material from the same episodes and periods. These readings are of two main types. The ‘textbook’ for this subject, J. Radkau’s *Nature and Power*, is an advanced book that deals much more with historiography than directly with the events discussed in the historiography. It is therefore excellent for stimulating critical thinking, but no substitute for the lecture. The other type of reading consists of scholarly articles or chapters that represent widely-cited exemplary approaches to the subject matter, and/or examples introducing key concepts. They are compiled in a course reader that every student needs. These key examples/concepts are the focus for the weekly seminar discussions and short assignments, and can only be mastered fully against the factual background that the lectures attempt to impart, and the historiographic commentary coming mainly from the Radkau ‘textbook’. It is expected that you will do all the assigned reading each week, which should take 2-3 hours.

**This course is an advanced subject in History and Environmental Humanities. Although it requires no specific prior subjects and is available for general education credit, it does pre-suppose generic reading and essay writing capacities typical of third year Arts students. Students with other backgrounds may need to allow extra time to complete assigned readings and assessments.**

**4. Teaching Strategies**

The weekly lectures will familiarise you with an historical era, what has been written about some of its major environmental and social events, and the particular concepts/examples discussed both in the text and reader. The Radkau text familiarises you with the range of historiography and primes you to think critically about it. The weekly readings introduce key exemplars and concepts that you will explore in the seminar/tutorial discussions. You will learn to think rigourously about these exemplars and concepts with short writing assignments about two of them. An in class final test encourages you to learn more than just those two. With a research essay you will actively apply a wide range of or acquired knowledge, critical capacities, and research skills to a major project of your own.

The weekly lecture/seminar period is an essential part of this course. The lecture will move fast through a range of material, some discussed in the readings and some not. Although the lecture slides will in general be made available via the course web site, their complex content does not lend itself to bullet points. They are for review only, and neither intended nor suitable for to imparting knowledge on their own. Thus it is important not only that you fulfil your required 80% session attendance but that you prepare for the class period by reading.
### 5. Course Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Task</th>
<th>Length min</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Learning Outcomes Assessed (see above)</th>
<th>Graduate Attributes Assessed (see above)</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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<tr>
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<td>10%</td>
<td>2, 3</td>
<td>1, 2</td>
<td>weekly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concise essay 1</td>
<td>700 w</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>1, 2, 3</td>
<td>1, 2, 3</td>
<td>1 week after topic given</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concise essay 2</td>
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<td>15%</td>
<td>1, 2, 3</td>
<td>1, 2, 3</td>
<td>1 week after topic given</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In class final test</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>1, 2</td>
<td>1, 2</td>
<td>June 1 (scheduled tute session)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research essay</td>
<td>2700 w</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>3, 4</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4</td>
<td>May 22*</td>
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</table>

* Extensions of the research essay of up to two weeks (until June 5) will require no special documentation or extraordinary circumstances. For later extensions use the Special Consideration process.

**Please Note:** The Arts and Social Sciences Protocols and Guidelines state:

A student who attends less than 80% of the classes/activities and has not submitted appropriate supporting documentation to the Course Authority to explain their absence may be awarded a grade of UF (Unsatisfactory Fail).

The Attendance Guidelines can be found in full at: [https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/current-students/academic-information/Protocols-Guidelines/](https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/current-students/academic-information/Protocols-Guidelines/)

### Description of Assessments

**Seminar (tute) buzz group 'quizzes':** Discussions, and subsequent essays, are the main way in which key examples and concepts are learned. In seminars you will be broken into small groups and asked to discuss and answer a question or questions dealing with the key concept/example covered in that week’s readings and lecture. The groups will then share their answers with the others, and there will be a general seminar-style guided discussion. The answers of each group will be marked either 0 or 1 point, based on the adequacy of its answer to the question and its contribution to class discussion that week. You will generally share the mark of your group (unless you specially distinguish yourself from the group, e.g. by sleeping or by contributing more constructively to the overall class discussion, in which case you might earn a bonus point). These discussions will account for 10% of your overall mark. If you participate in more than ten sessions, the best ten are counted toward your participation mark. Attendance in the discussion sessions is recorded during the first 15 minutes of each session; if you fail to attend at the start of the session without a documented excuse submitted via the Special Consideration process, you will receive no participation mark for the week.

**Short seminar essays:** After the session, you will have the option to write a short essay of about 800 words (excluding references) on the topic of the week. **Essays longer than 1000 words may not be read or marked,** or marked on the basis of only the first 1000 words, at the instructor’s discretion. The essay questions/tasks will be provided you on the day of the lecture via the course web site and/or by email at your UNSW student email address, and
they will be closely based on the seminar buzz group discussion questions. You have one week to complete them. **Two short essays must be submitted in the course of the semester**, each worth 15% of your overall mark. If you submit three during in the term, the two best will be counted. Each is to be submitted electronically on week after the question is issued, that is by 4pm on the Thursday following the class in which the topic is discussed. A hard copy must also be submitted for marking. Papers received late will be penalized (see Late Submission, below) unless a properly documented application for Special Consideration is received and granted. **You must write one of these essays on one of the first three topics**, i.e. those discussed in seminars (tutes) of Weeks 2-4.

You may write on a week’s topic even if you have not attended the discussion, although you would be unwise to do so because you will be less well prepared. If a week of class is cancelled for whatever reason you will still have the option of writing the essay for that week as usual. In case of cancellation the topic will be provided on the scheduled day if not earlier, via the course web site and/or the UNSW student email system. The short essays will be assessed according to your capacity to synthesize information and apply the week’s key concepts critically to the assigned question or topic, expressing this thinking as a concise and coherent argument. Though these essays will reflect the group discussion, yours must be written entirely by yourself, and it will be subject to the plagiarism policy—and very likely checked electronically. Thus each of these written pieces must reflect **only your own work**. If the text of any two submitted papers is found to be too similar, in the opinion of the instructor, both will receive no credit. Please see Plagiarism below.

**In-class test:** This will require a few sentences about a number of key concepts/examples dealt with in the seminar discussions. Answering will be straightforward if you have done all readings and attended most sessions. You will be allowed to consult your notes and course reader; active understanding and coherent thinking is assessed, not memorisation.

**Research Essay:** This is an essay of about 3000 words, and absolutely no more than 4000 (excluding bibliography and purely bibliographic notes), on one of a list of historical topics provided by the end of week 3. It will ask you to use some of our key concepts and examples in describing and interpreting historical events developed (ie researched) by yourself -- not merely reprocessed from assigned readings. For empirical evidence you may extract data from published sources, and/or conduct primary research in sources like historical newspapers and periodicals (many available on line) or government reports such as those in the NSW State Library. Further instructions will be issued along with the topic list. Example topics from the past, which will be similar to this year’s topics, include:

- Discuss the idea the religion can contribute importantly to the ecological sustainability of a civilization, or lack thereof, through a detailed comparison and analysis of two particular cultures and periods, including ancient China and at least one of the following examples; ancient Egypt; ancient Mesopotamia; ancient Greece.

- To what extent do recent ecological accounts of the European conquest of the Americas repeat older notions that the extinction of indigenous peoples was an inevitable consequence of an inherent European superiority?

- Discuss the idea that European science – its ideas, institutions, and specific practices – is largely to blame for the deleterious environmental effects of Western civilization and imperialism, both before the industrial revolution (ca 1800) and after.

- Compare and contrast the engineering projects involving the Snowy River and Colorado River from an environmental history perspective, commenting on what they reveal about the different national contexts in the middle 20th century.
- Considering the development of ecology as a science over the past century (or longer), how reliably can ideas from ecology serve as a basis for sustained environmental activism today?

I am happy to give brief advice in response to provisional essay outlines of not more than two pages, if emailed me before the end of week 9. I will not read drafts essays.

Students should consult the History essay writing guide before beginning this assessment: See http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au/lcpub/HistoryBook_WEB.pdf

Grades

All results are reviewed at the end of each semester and may be adjusted to ensure equitable marking across the School.

The proportion of marks lying in each grading range is determined not by any formula or quota system, but by the way that students respond to assessment tasks and how well they meet the objectives of the course. Nevertheless, since higher grades imply performance that is well above average, the number of distinctions and high distinctions awarded in a typical course is relatively small. At the other extreme, on average 6.1% of students do not meet minimum standards and a little more (8.6%) in first year courses. For more information on the grading categories see: https://student.unsw.edu.au/grades

Submission of Assessment Tasks

Assignments which are submitted to the School Assignment Box must have a properly completed School Assessment Coversheet, with the declaration signed and dated by hand. The Coversheet can be downloaded from https://hal.arts.unsw.edu.au/students/courses/course-outlines/. It is your responsibility to make a backup copy of the assignment prior to submission and retain it.

Assignments must be submitted before 4:00pm on the due date. Assignments received after this time will be marked as having been received late.

Late Submission of Assignments

The Arts and Social Sciences late submissions guidelines state the following:

An assessed task is deemed late if it is submitted after the specified time and date as set out in the course Learning Management System (LMS).

The late penalty is the loss of 3% of the total possible marks for the task for each day or part thereof the work is late.

Work submitted 14 days after the due date will be marked and feedback provided but no mark will be recorded. If the work would have received a pass mark but the lateness and the work is a compulsory course component a student will be deemed to have met that requirement. This does not apply to a task that is assessed but no mark is awarded.

Work submitted 21 days after the due date will not be accepted for marking or feedback and will receive no mark or grade. If the assessment task is a compulsory component of the course a student will automatically fail the course.
The Late Submissions Guidelines can be found in full at: https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/current-students/academic-information/Protocols-Guidelines/

The penalty may not apply where students are able to provide documentary evidence of illness or serious misadventure. Time pressure resulting from undertaking assignments for other courses does not constitute an acceptable excuse for lateness.

6. Extension of Time for Submission of Assessment Tasks

The Arts and Social Sciences Extension Guidelines apply to all assessed tasks regardless of whether or not a grade is awarded, except the following:

1. any form of test/examination/assessed activity undertaken during regular class contact hours
2. any task specifically identified by the Course Authority (the academic in charge of the course) in the Course Outline or Learning Management System (LMS), for example, Moodle, as not available for extension requests.

A student who missed an assessment activity held within class contact hours should apply for Special Consideration via myUNSW.

The Arts and Social Sciences Extension Guidelines state the following:

- A student seeking an extension should apply through the Faculty’s online extension tool available in LMS.
- A request for an extension should be submitted before the due time/date for the assessment task.
- The Course Authority should respond to the request within two working days of the request.
- The Course Authority can only approve an extension up to five days. A student requesting an extension greater than five days should complete an application for Special Consideration.
- The Course Authority advises their decision through the online extension tool.
- If a student is granted an extension, failure to comply will result in a penalty. The penalty will be invoked one minute past the approved extension time.

7. Attendance

The Arts and Social Sciences Attendance Guidelines state the following:

- A student is expected to attend all class contact hours for a face-to-face or blended course and complete all activities for a blended or fully online course.
- If a student is unable to attend all classes for a course due to timetable clashes, the student must complete the Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences Permitted Timetable Clash form (see information at Item 8 below). A student unable to attend lectures in a course conducted by the School of Education can apply for “Permission to Participate in Lectures Online”.
- Where practical, a student’s attendance will be recorded. Individual course outlines/LMS will set out the conditions under which attendance will be measured.
A student who arrives **more than 15 minutes late** may be penalised for non-attendance. If such a penalty is imposed, the student must be informed verbally at the end of class and advised in writing within 24 hours.

If a student experiences illness, misadventure or other occurrence that makes absence from a class/activity unavoidable, or expects to be absent from a forthcoming class/activity, they should seek permission from the Course Authority, and where applicable, should be accompanied by an original or certified copy of a medical certificate or other form of appropriate evidence.

Reserve members of the Australian Defence Force who require absences of more than two weeks due to full-time service may be provided an exemption. The student may also be permitted to discontinue enrolment without academic or financial penalty.

If a Course Authority rejects a student’s request for absence from a class or activity the student must be advised in writing of the grounds for the rejection.

A Course Authority may excuse a student from classes or activities for up to one month. However, they may assign additional and/or alternative tasks to ensure compliance.

A Course Authority considering the granting of absence must be satisfied a student will still be able to meet the course’s learning outcomes and/or volume of learning.

A student seeking approval to be absent for more than one month must apply in writing to the Dean and provide all original or certified supporting documentation.

The Dean will only grant such a request after consultation with the Course Authority to ensure that measures can be organised that will allow the student to meet the course’s learning outcomes and volume of learning.

A student who attends less than 80% of the classes/activities and has not submitted appropriate supporting documentation to the Course Authority to explain their absence may be awarded a final grade of UF (Unsatisfactory Fail).

A student who has submitted the appropriate documentation but attends less than 66% of the classes/activities will be asked by the Course Authority to apply to discontinue the course without failure rather than be awarded a final grade of UF. The final decision as to whether a student can be withdrawn without fail is made by Student Administration and Records.

**Students who falsify their attendance or falsify attendance on behalf of another student will be dealt with under the Student Misconduct Policy.**

## 8. Class Clash

Students who are enrolled in an Arts and Social Sciences program (single or dual) and have an unavoidable timetable clash can apply for permissible timetable clash by completing an online application form. Students must meet the rules and conditions in order to apply for permissible clash. The rules and conditions can be accessed online in full at: [https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/media/FASSFile/Permissible_Clash_Policy.pdf](https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/media/FASSFile/Permissible_Clash_Policy.pdf)

For students who are enrolled in a non-Arts and Social Sciences program, they must seek advice from their home faculty on permissible clash approval.
9. Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Plagiarism is presenting someone else’s thoughts or work as your own. It can take many forms, from not having appropriate academic referencing to deliberate cheating.

In many cases plagiarism is the result of inexperience about academic conventions. The University has resources and information to assist you to avoid plagiarism.

The Learning Centre assists students with understanding academic integrity and how to not plagiarise. Information is available on their website: https://student.unsw.edu.au/plagiarism/. They also hold workshops and can help students one-on-one.

If plagiarism is found in your work when you are in first year, your lecturer will offer you assistance to improve your academic skills. They may ask you to look at some online resources, attend the Learning Centre, or sometimes resubmit your work with the problem fixed. However, more serious instances in first year, such as stealing another student’s work or paying someone to do your work, may be investigated under the Student Misconduct Procedures.

Repeated plagiarism (even in first year), plagiarism after first year, or serious instances, may also be investigated under the Student Misconduct Procedures. The penalties under the procedures can include a reduction in marks, failing a course or for the most serious matters (like plagiarism in an Honours thesis) or even suspension from the university. The Student Misconduct Procedures are available here: http://www.gs.unsw.edu.au/policy/documents/studentmisconductprocedures.pdf

10. Course Schedule

To view course timetable, please visit: http://www.timetable.unsw.edu.au/

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week Commencing</th>
<th>Topic(s)</th>
<th>Lecture content</th>
<th>Seminar/tute content</th>
<th>Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 2 (W1)</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Environmental historiography; prehistory; hunting gathering and environmental change</td>
<td>No session</td>
<td>Radkau: 36-45 Reader: Penna; McNeill; Pyne</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 9 (W2)</td>
<td>Discovering agriculture, the poisoned chalice</td>
<td>Crop and animal domestication; emergence of settled life; the biology of civilization</td>
<td>Coevolution</td>
<td>Radkau: 45-71, 77-85 Reader: Diamond Ch 4; Fowler &amp; Mooney</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 16 (W3)</td>
<td>Water and power in the ancient world</td>
<td>Natures and Civilisations; Egypt, Greece, China, Mesopotamia, Mexico, Peru</td>
<td>“Hydraulic Civilizations”</td>
<td>Radkau: 86-117 Reader: Hillel; Wittfogel, Hughes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 23 (W4)</td>
<td>Medieval Europe</td>
<td>Roman collapse; the Church, the Prince and the closed manor world; feudalism and the environment</td>
<td>Sustainability in the Ancien Regime</td>
<td>Radkau: 127-51 Reader: White; Pretty</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Lecture Title</td>
<td>Reading Material</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 30 (W5)</td>
<td>Early modern Europe and environment</td>
<td>Nature versus the Reformation, Capitalism, and Scientific Revolution</td>
<td>Reader only: Merchant; Thomas; Bowler (156-63)</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 13 (W6)</td>
<td>Old World meets New</td>
<td>Conquistadores and the &quot;Columbian exchange&quot;; institutions and organisms in the Europeanisation of the Americas</td>
<td>Radkau: 152-64 Reader: Crosby; Cronon’s <em>Changes</em>; Diamond Ch.10</td>
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<td>April 20 (W7)</td>
<td>Enlightenment, Life Science and the Economy of Nature</td>
<td>Biology and Imperialism</td>
<td>Radkau: 164-9 Reader: Bowler (163-9); Grove (skim India stuff); Koerner</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 27 (W8)</td>
<td>Industrial revolution; markets and masses; erasing space and time in agriculture</td>
<td>Energy transition</td>
<td>Radkau: 195-226 Reader: Cronon’s <em>Metropolis</em>; Davidson (skim); Sieferle</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 4 (W9)</td>
<td>First environmental crisis; 19\textsuperscript{th} C environmentalism (live lecture)</td>
<td>Environmental -ism, Conservation-ism, Nationalism.</td>
<td>Radkau: 226-49 Reader: Hutton &amp; Connors; Tarr; Tyrrell</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 18 (W11)</td>
<td>Cold War, Green Revolution, and the rise of modern environmentalism</td>
<td>Atomic fear</td>
<td>Radkau: 250-60, 265-94 Reader: Lutts, Cullaher, Hughes extract</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>June 1 (W13)</td>
<td>No Lecture</td>
<td>In-class test</td>
<td>Review</td>
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## 11. Course Resources

### Textbook Details


### Additional Readings

ARTS3242 Course Reader, available at UNSW bookstore

### Other sources

A number of books pertinent to the research essays have been placed on reserve (High Use) for this course at UNSW Library, and are listed under the course code in the library catalogue.

For a general starting point in environmental history journal literature, try: [http://www.eh-resources.org/links/index.html](http://www.eh-resources.org/links/index.html)

For journal literature dealing specifically with the history of environmental ideas, science, or technology, search in the "History of Science, Technology and Medicine” database in UNSW Library’s Sirius collection: [http://Sirius.library.unsw.edu.au](http://Sirius.library.unsw.edu.au)

Students can also obtain individual research assistance from the UNSW Library. One starting point for assistance is: [http://info.library.unsw.edu.au/web/services/services.html](http://info.library.unsw.edu.au/web/services/services.html)

## 12. Course Evaluation and Development

Courses are periodically reviewed and students’ feedback is used to improve them. Feedback is gathered using various means including UNSW’s Course and Teaching Evaluation and Improvement (CATEI) process.

## 13. Student Support

The Learning Centre is available for individual consultation and workshops on academic skills. Find out more by visiting the Centre’s website at: [http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au](http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au)

## 14. Grievances

All students should be treated fairly in the course of their studies at UNSW. Students who feel they have not been dealt with fairly should, in the first instance, attempt to resolve any issues with their tutor or the course convenors.

If such an approach fails to resolve the matter, the School of Humanities and Languages has an academic member of staff who acts as a Grievance Officer for the School. This staff member is identified on the notice board in the School of Humanities and Languages. Further information about UNSW grievance procedures is available at: [https://student.unsw.edu.au/complaints](https://student.unsw.edu.au/complaints)
15. Other Information

### myUNSW

myUNSW is the online access point for UNSW services and information, integrating online services for applicants, commencing and current students and UNSW staff. To visit myUNSW please visit either of the below links:

- https://my.unsw.edu.au
- https://my.unsw.edu.au/student/atoz/ABC.html

### OHS

UNSW's Occupational Health and Safety Policy requires each person to work safely and responsibly, in order to avoid personal injury and to protect the safety of others. For all matters relating to Occupational Health, Safety and environment, see https://www.ohs.unsw.edu.au/

### Special Consideration

In cases where illness or other circumstances produce repeated or sustained absence, students should apply for Special Consideration as soon as possible.

The application must be made via Online Services in myUNSW. Log into myUNSW and go to My Student Profile tab > My Student Services channel > Online Services > Special Consideration.

Applications on the grounds of illness must be filled in by a medical practitioner. Further information is available at: https://student.unsw.edu.au/special-consideration

### Student Equity and Disabilities Unit

Students who have a disability that requires some adjustment in their learning and teaching environment are encouraged to discuss their study needs with the course convener prior to or at the commencement of the course, or with the Student Equity Officers (Disability) in the Student Equity and Disabilities Unit (9385 4734). Information for students with disabilities is available at: http://www.studentequity.unsw.edu.au/

Issues that can be discussed may include access to materials, signers or note-takers, the provision of services and additional examination and assessment arrangements. Early notification is essential to enable any necessary adjustments to be made.