

ELLEN LARKIN

ORAL HEALTH (THERAPY AND HYGIENE)

CHARLES STURT UNIVERSITY

Senior School Subjects

- Year 11: English, Youth Ministry, General Mathematics, Biology, Health and Human Development, Psychology.
- Year 12: English, Biology, Psychology, Further Mathematics, Physical Education.

Why did you choose these subjects? I actually started off with a whole different subject list that would help me in the course I was aiming to get into after I finished school, however I didn't necessarily enjoy them and decided to change to subjects I would enjoy more and would do better in.

What resources did you use to choose subjects? The Senior Course Guide as well as the university course guides, the Job Guide and university websites.

What is Oral Health? Oral Health Therapists provide high quality oral health care for children, adolescents and in some states young adults including examination, treatment and prevention. Oral Health Therapists possess qualifications in dental therapy and dental hygiene. The subjects I did in my last session at university were Oral Health Sciences, Clinical Practice and Theory, and Psychology.

Every week we have 8 hours of Therapy Simulation Clinic, which is where we apply the theory we have learnt in class to practice. The Clinic aims to "simulate" a real clinical environment. So we have our mannequin patients, our dental light, hand pieces and our instruments. My mannequin has a very nice set of plastic teeth that I do fillings, fissure sealants and cleans on and it's super fun.

What is your course like? It is three years fulltime, so I'm at university five days a week and usually from about 9-5. I just try and think of it as a full time job and it's a course I'm quite passionate about. It is super busy but hey, it's only three years!

What do you love about your course? I love the friends I have made to start with. I moved to Melbourne not knowing anybody (scary!) but everyone is in the same boat too so it's a great opportunity to meet different people from all over the country, and all over the world! Secondly, I love my subjects and I love the amount of simulation clinic time we get. It's not all theory based and you get a great understanding of what you'll be doing with your degree when you graduate

How did your senior school subjects prepare you for your course? I know most people say "I'm never going to use this in real life". Sorry, but that is not true! I would say Biology, Psychology and Mathematics helped me the most. I did one term of Chemistry in Year 11 and even that helped me at university. Basically all health degrees have subjects related to biology. However the university subjects are more focused on human biology.

So when you're learning about different types of cells, DNA, etc. in Year 12 biology, it's background knowledge for university and then it's a lot easier to build on that instead of starting from scratch. Doing Psychology in Year 12 helped a lot too because I actually just did a Psychology subject at university, and I found some components of the subject were the same. Makes life that little bit easier.

Course information - Bachelor of Oral Health (Therapy and Hygiene), Charles Sturt University, <http://bit.ly/1SS454I>