



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Closure of Griffith University Environmental Health Course

“Environmental Health Officers protect people from hazards in their environment. This is an accredited profession with 100% employment rate for graduates”.

BRISBANE, QLD, 7 NOVEMBER, 2024

Environmental Health Australia (EHA) has been made aware of the proposed closure of the Griffith University, *Bachelor of Health Science (Environmental Health)*. The environmental health profession utilises science to provide essential preventative support for public health. This means that there is less burden on hospitals as environmental health officers make sure the food we eat, the water we drink and the air we breathe is safe.

Environmental health professionals are employed across all levels of government, including the Australian Defence Force and in private enterprise. The profession, like many in allied health areas, is suffering severe workforce shortages of Environmental Health Officers (EHOs) across Australia. The shortage of environmental health professionals has significant implications for Local and State Government capacity to deliver important services to communities, meet statutory obligations and severely limits the ability of the health system to adequately respond to public health emergencies. The evidence supporting the chronic workforce shortage has been reported in numerous Local Government Association workforce.

“With less environmental health graduates, there is a risk of an increase in primary care costs relating to treating preventable illnesses” said Melissa Burn, National President, Environmental Health Australia.

“The Griffith University accredited course is vital to building the expert skills and knowledge required in communities to maintain environmental health standards and protect Queensland communities”, said Ms Burn.

The *Bachelor of Health Science (Environmental Health)* is strategically aligned with the enHealth Skills and Knowledge Matrix and the EHA Accreditation Policy to ensure consistency in the delivery of skills and knowledge across Australia.

“EHA has for many years promoted internships, cadetships and traineeships and encourages universities and industry to work together to adequately fill the accredited courses”, said Ms Burn. Providing targeted information to undergraduate science students in their first year of study encourages them to enroll in the environmental health qualification at Griffith University. There has never been a greater need for employers to engage appropriate levels of resources, including competent environmental health professionals, to effectively respond to emerging community health issues.

Environmental Health Australia is committed to the professional development and status of its members and the enhancement of environmental health standards and services to the community through advocacy, promotion, education and leadership.

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