

# Matthew Barton

## PhD Candidate – Neuroscience

HSC Year: 1998

ATAR: 48

### Training (eg TAFE, University etc)

- 2000 Diploma of Health Science (TAFE)
- 2007 Bachelor of Medical Science (Hon)
- 2009 Masters of Nursing
- 2011 Masters in Islamic Studies
- 2011 PhD Candidate in Neuroscience

### Special Educational Achievements

- First Class Honours
- Deans Medal
- University Medal
- Golden Key Society of Academic Excellence

### Jobs (at university and afterwards)

- Anatomy and Physiology tutor
- Anatomy medical demonstrator
- Indigenous medical tutor
- Technician in sleep medicine

### What are you doing now?

Currently my fulltime position involves completing my PhD in neuroscience, this entails testing an alternative to sutures (stitches) in nerve repair. Basically, rather than a surgeon re-attaching a limb through the use of needle and thread I am looking at doing this by a laser.

<http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/scienceshow/replacing-the-needle-and-thread-approach-to-repairing-wounds/3909102>

### Relevant Experiences since leaving school (eg special achievements)

After high school, I knew I wanted to study something medical related, however, my UAI limited my options. My mother suggested I study at Port Macquarie TAFE in health science. Those two years at TAFE were the best learning experience I could have asked for. It gave me the exposure to my interests and academically I improved dramatically. Concurrently, I did a great deal of backpacking through many third world countries which gave me the appreciation of the opportunities we have in Australia, especially in education. There aren't many countries in the world where the government will basically pay for your education. So the take home message is, find what interests you and remember there is always another path than the most direct one and you might discover many amazing things along the way.

### Interesting Experiences

- Backpacking through more than 50 countries
- Working overseas



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- Cycling through Canada
- Helping those less fortunate than you (Volunteering for the homeless and asylum seekers)

### Tips for our students

- **Whilst completing HSC (eg how to gain the desired UAI)**

Well, I don't feel I'm the best advocate for this section, however, choose the subjects that you enjoy personally and not the ones your friends are doing. Plan your study schedule before you sit down and study and understand the fundamental principles before you address the intricacies.

- **Going to University (eg living away from home tips, university life)**

Balance your life between study, socialising and work; it is good to stay busy to prevent idleness. Form a study group with your friends who are academically focussed and most importantly, enjoy your education.

- **Getting a job (during and after university)**

Keep your options open, network with friends, associates etc. Be confident and don't give up after a few setbacks.

- **Other Tips**

- Never turn down an opportunity because you feel under skilled or unqualified.
- Your mind is like a parachute, it doesn't work if it is not open.
- One of the most just things in this world is knowledge; you don't need to go to Harvard to gain knowledge. Every day is an opportunity to learn something new and keep your mind's flame kindled.