

Geography Past Pupil Career Profile Loreto Grammar School

Name: Aideen McGuigan

Dates studied at Loreto Grammar School:
2009-2016

A' Level Subjects Studied:
Geography, Biology and ICT

Third Level Course/ Training Programme:
BSc Geography at Queen's University Belfast
MSc Environmental Engineering - Queens University Belfast



Photo: On a site visit to a Wind Farm in Perth, Australia, pictured with a Blue Tongue Lizard

What attracted you to this course?

I really enjoyed studying geography in school and I was keen to continue studying it at university as the course offered various modules that appealed to me, especially renewable energy. As someone who originally wanted to be a teacher, studying geography allowed me to pursue this career but it also kept my options open, which was very beneficial for me as I decided to go down the engineering route instead. I chose this instead of teaching as the world is constantly changing with climate change, and I was drawn to the possibility of going into a career that finds sustainable solutions.

Company you currently work for, Job Title and Location:

I work as a Development Manager with Atmos Renewables in Melbourne, Australia. My role varies from day to day and includes site visits to wind farms, solar farms and battery storage sites all across Australia. Some examples are shown below:



How has Geography helped you in your career?

Studying geography has provided me with a strong understanding of spatial relationships and socio-economic dynamics, which are essential in development management. Geography teaches you analytical and critical thinking skills which have allowed me to assess community needs and evaluate the impact of projects effectively. My knowledge of the environment and cultural contexts has also helped to implement sustainable development strategies throughout my career.

Has your study of Geography opened up new opportunities for you?

Yes! Without geography I would not be where I am today. Studying geography has allowed me to visit places all over the world either through university or work and experience different cultures. Through my work I have been inside wind turbines, engaged in conversations with leading members of the government, local councils and the industry.

Why would you recommend A Level Geography to a young person today?

Geography provides an all-rounded education that combines critical thinking and analytical skills that are valuable in many fields, making it a subject that opens doors for both study and various career paths. The course covers a range of topics, from environmental issues to social dynamics, and includes field work, so if you like getting out of the classroom it's a great perk.



Aideen McGuigan announced as winner of Chartered institution of Water and Environmental Management NI's new members' paper competition 2022



Aideen McGuigan was announced the winner of the Northern Ireland branch's new members' paper competition 2022 at a virtual event on Wednesday night.

Aideen impressed a three-member judging panel made up of Warren Boal, technical director, Amey Consulting, Michelle McNally, higher scientific officer, NIEA Water Management Unit's Development Management Team and Daniel Hogan, Environmental Consenting project manager ESB Engineering & Major Projects, with a 15-minute presentation their paper on the potential of floating photovoltaic (PV) technology for electricity in Northern Ireland.

Aideen joined the Energia Corporate Development Team in Energia Group as a graduate at the beginning of September 2021. Previously, she graduated from Queen's University Belfast with a distinction in MSc Environmental Engineering. She also has experience as a Renewables Analyst with KRA Renewables.

