An average day for me depends on whether I am doing fieldwork or whether I am working at La Trobe University in my office. So, if I am doing fieldwork up at Lake Mungo, I’m basically looking for new archaeological sites or stone artefacts scatters and when I find them, I record them in detail. And then when I am back in Melbourne at La Trobe University working in my office, I’m analysing that data and I’m doing some research and I’m trying to write up my chapters.

Doing a PhD is different from doing a coursework degree. It’s completely different! I come in, sit down, and think to myself “What should I read”? Whereas doing a coursework degree, you’re taken by the hand and it’s a very structured process, where they will tell you “you have to learn this this and this”, and then you can look at a particular problem from the right perspective. Here, I decide what problem I’m going to look at, and I decide what perspective I’m going to use to look at it, and then it’s up to me to argue for the perspective I’ve chosen.

There are two things that help overcome the challenges of being faced with a big research project. One of them is just taking a really organised approach from the get go when you first start your research, and trying to plan everything out. And the other thing is having a good supervisor, which I do, and she gives me a lot of direction and a lot of feedback on my progress so that I can improve things all the time.

It’s really intellectual freedom, and at the same time sometimes that’s hard because it’s your path and you don’t really know where it’s going to lead you. But, it’s quite exciting as well as challenging.