**Transcript: Andrew Butt – Planning**

Studying planning’s really about studying a range of issues. It’s about environment, politics – at the local level particularly – it’s about studying the way that we live and interact. Students are really interested in the sort of communities they live in, the sort of places they live in, the environments they live in. So it really gives them a chance to mix those things together.

Planners like to try and shape communities. Sometimes that doesn’t always work the way people want to, but part of the exercise of the course is trying to think about where we’d like to be and how we get there, and that’s not always a straight path.

Our subjects include a range of issues: politics, policy making, urban design, transport planning, planning neighbourhoods for children. A good planner is a good communicator. Not only to try and understand what people think but also to try and articulate ideas and views for the future into the community more generally. So planning’s a lot about communication. It’s a lot about understanding community life and it’s a lot about understanding ways to tell people about where we might be and how we might get there.

We love to get out in the field. I mean that’s one of the strengths of doing planning is that you actually get out there and do things. So we have trips in Australia, locally, overseas, trying to get out and look at different places – country towns, in the city, internationally we travel quite often to Europe, to parts of Asia, trying to look at different communities, different cities. We have people who are graduates of this course who are looking at airport structures, looking at housing from a broad social perspective, doing environmental work, working internationally on transport issues – a range of different areas. We also do a lot of project work where we go and visit communities and do work for them.

The students in the undergrad program here would have a chance, before they’ve graduated, to really do some work for communities that will actually make a difference and be part of an outcome that’s beyond just school work that actually takes you into the professional realm.