Since graduating from Murdoch University, Sharon has put the skills she acquired while studying for her First Class Honours degree in Biotechnology to good use. Laser- and Bio-engineering, Biomaterials Science and Electron Microscopy are three of the fields in which she has already gained employment. During four years at the Lions Eye Institute (Biomaterials Research Centre) Sharon was an important part of a multiskilled team developing artificial corneas for human transplantation. The project, which required interaction between Cell Biologists, Surgeons, Polymer Chemists, Histologists and Biotechnologists, was aimed at generating sponge-like polymers with an appropriate shape, mechanical strength and cellular adhesion properties to allow them to be used by eye surgeons as corneal replacements. The polymers generated by the team are now being tested in clinical trials so that people with damaged corneas may regain their sight.

During this work Sharon became proficient in electron microscopy and is now a key person in the Centre for Microscopy and Microanalysis at the University of Western Australia. There, Sharon is responsible for the operation of optical, scanning and environmental scanning electron microscopes, client training and public liaison. Sharon chose Biotechnology at Murdoch because the program was wide-ranging making many career options available. During year 12 Sharon toured all of the Western Australian Universities but preferred Murdoch because of its facilities and its friendliness.
Elizabeth Roberts

Having grown up in Albany, where snorkelling, sailing, swimming, surfing and fishing were part of her life from an early age, it was logical for Elizabeth to pursue a career in marine science. Taking advantage of the flexibility of Murdoch degree programs, she completed a Bachelor of Science with Honours in Biological Sciences and a minor in Conservation Biology. By choosing appropriate elective units she also built a strong marine science specialisation into her degree program. To gain extra practical experience, Elizabeth volunteered her services, while still a student, to a range of organisations. She worked at Underwater World (now Aquarium of Western Australia) and learnt about many facets of marine life. During the second year of her degree she won a Research Fellowship, sponsored by Woodside and Earthwatch, to survey humpback whales in the Buccaneer Archipelago near Broome and then participated in a long-term research program in conjunction with the Queensland Department of Environmental Heritage studying the abundance, distribution and behaviour of humpback whales in Hervey Bay. She also joined the Australian Marine Conservation Society and participated in a biological survey of flora and fauna species in Lancelin Island lagoon and a study of the green-lipped mussel in Cockburn Sound.

A licensed open water scuba diver with diving experience on the Ningaloo and Barrier Reefs, Coral Bay and as far afield as Thailand, Elizabeth, during her Honours year, used molecular biological techniques to study the taxonomy of local species of sponges, about which little was known. After completing her Honours, Elizabeth was appointed Statistical Officer in the Recreational Fishing Section of Fisheries, W.A. (Research Division). There she provides statistical and computing support to fisheries research programs, which includes measuring the impact of recreational fishers on fish stocks. Her work requires her to liaise with tour operators and recreational fishers in Angling clubs; to participate in field trips and to take part in chartered tours. She also prepares research reports, handles public enquiries and is responsible for community liaison. Elizabeth chose Murdoch University because of its reputation in the Biological and Environmental Sciences, the approachability of its lecturers and the good mix of theory and practical experience its courses have to offer.