

Name: Claudia Yuki
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Job: Oceanographer



Claudia works as a research student at the University of Plymouth and Plymouth Marine Laboratory. Her task is to study microscopic plant life in vast regions of the Atlantic Ocean.

The job involves working from a research vessel navigating the Atlantic. Claudia uses underwater instruments to look at variables on the microscopic planet life such as dissolved oxygen levels, depth and levels of sunlight, the mineral content and pH of the water, the effect of changing temperatures, tidal flow and wave action.

Benefit of the work: The research allows a study of the effects of climate change on a primary producer of stored energy in the marine food chain. It can also highlight the effects of pollution on marine life.

Think you might be interested? Here are some of the skills you might need.

Personal skills or aptitudes:

- A curiosity about the sea and life below its surface
- Stamina to endure the extreme weather conditions at sea
- Practical ability, dexterity and fitness
- Patience to collect large quantities of data
- Good powers of observation, commonsense, plus a sense of humour.

Key skills:

- Problem solving
- Working as part of a team, occasionally, taking the lead
- High levels of numeracy and ability with statistics
- Good powers of communication, to present research findings clearly

Skills Build

First steps – moves you can take now

Visit aquaria and observe the huge variety of plants and animals that live in the oceans. Watch TV documentaries

- Claudia was inspired by Jacques Cousteau's underwater films which revealed life beneath the sea. It's almost essential to be able to swim and do a little sub-aqua diving with a camera. You can learn in a pool, if necessary. Keep your own aquarium of small varieties of marine fish and observe their behaviour. There are a whole range societies and clubs you could join.

Third floor

There are the usual A-level courses to study – biology, chemistry and possibly, geography or geology. These set the groundwork in place for your specialist interest. You can also take a BTEC National Diploma or a vocational A level (double award) in applied science, you can choose from oceanography, marine biology and ocean science. Some biology courses also have marine studies options.

On to the second level

Take GCSEs in double science and carry on with putting the effort into maths. Taking maths to as high a level as you can manage is important, because it is a tool you'll continually use. Modern languages are useful - oceanographers are a multinational workforce.

Fourth floor

Most top oceanographers have taken one or two specialist courses before moving into research work in their chosen field. The ocean's a big place and there's a lot to explore below the surface.