



Master of Food and Packaging Innovation

AIP-Led Packaging Innovation Intensive at the University of Melbourne

by Pierre Pienaar FAIP, CPPL, AIP Education Director

During the July 2026 winter break, the University of Melbourne (UoM) hosted an intensive one-week program on campus, curated by the Australian Institute of Packaging (AIP). Designed to bridge academic theory with real-world technical application, the course featured lectures delivered exclusively by AIP industry experts covering a broad spectrum of modern packaging technologies. The AIP provided over 24 hours of content with 10 technical packaging experts.

The program brought together 72 students from across the Asia-Pacific region—including Australia, China, Brunei, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, India, Indonesia, New Zealand, Taiwan, and Thailand. The immersive format sparked high engagement: multiple students expressed strong interest in pursuing PhD research in packaging science and engineering following their Master's degrees.

Each day delivered rigorous technical content, followed by dedicated evening review. To complement classroom instruction with operational context, students participated in two technical field visits:

- **Advanced Print Technology:** Hosted by CMYKhub, the design students toured and observed modern commercial printing machinery in action giving them insights to live production environments. Guides from CMYKhub demonstrated state-of-the-art print hardware, helping students connect core theoretical concepts with industrial-scale execution. Industry experts from CMYKhub and Currie Group demonstrated how technical partnerships drive performance and innovation across the printing sector.





▲ CMYKhub Site Visit.

- **Recycling Infrastructure & Circular Economy:** Hosted by Close the Loop, packaging technology students experienced and examined advanced material recovery processes firsthand, gaining direct insight into the environmental impact and lifecycle management of packaging materials.

Returning to the lecture hall with practical perspectives, students engaged deeply, driving extended Q&A sessions with the lecturers into early evenings. Many noted that the experience completely reshaped their view of everyday packaging, highlighting the complex engineering,

material science, and cross-industry integration required to bring functional packaging solutions to market.

These operational insights significantly boosted classroom engagement, prompting detailed technical discussions and extended Q&A sessions.

Students walked away with a newfound appreciation for packaging not just as an everyday product, but as an intricate, highly engineered field at the intersection of material science, design, and supply chain technology.



▲ Close the Loop Site Visit.



As a part of the partnership with the AIP Australasian Institute of Packaging and the University of Melbourne the AIP coordinates practical site visits to some of our Member companies each year for the Master of Food & Packaging Innovation and Food Science students.



CMYKhub Site Visit

The AIP coordinated a tour of CMYKhub for the first time for the students. This would not have been possible without the support of AIP Partner Currie Group, who arranged the visit.

CMYKhub had the pleasure of hosting students from the **University of Melbourne's** Master of Food and Packaging Innovation and Food Science & Nutrition (Food Chemistry) programs for a behind-the-scenes look at modern print manufacturing.

Thanks to **Mark Daws** from **Currie Group**, through his involvement with **AIP Australasian Institute of Packaging**, the University was looking for a manufacturing business that could demonstrate how ideas are brought to life in a real production environment.

While packaging isn't a major part of what we do (labels certainly are!), the students were incredibly engaged, asking thoughtful questions about our technology, automation, workflows and production processes. It was also great to hear a few asking how they could build a career at CMYKhub.

Finally, a big thank you to **Mark Daws** for making the connection, **Glen Francis** and **Paul Norton** for leading the factory tours and sharing their knowledge, and **Michael Ellis** for coordinating today's visit. We love opening our doors and helping the next generation see that print is a high-tech, innovative manufacturing industry with exciting career opportunities.



“As a Food & Packaging Innovation student at the University of Melbourne, I had the opportunity to visit CMYKhub – one of Australia's leading commercial printing and packaging companies.

It was fascinating to see advanced offset printing, digital printing, finishing, and packaging technologies in action. I was truly impressed by the scale of the operation and the wide variety of products they produce for different industries, including food packaging, apparel, consumer products, labels, promotional materials, and many well-known branded products.

Seeing how innovative ideas are transformed into high-quality commercial packaging gave me a much deeper appreciation of the packaging industry and its role in our everyday lives.

A big thank you to CMYKhub for the warm hospitality and to the AIP for organising such a valuable industry visit. Looking forward to learning even more throughout this journey.”



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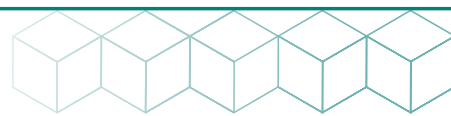
Close the Loop Site Visit viewed from a UOM MFPI student

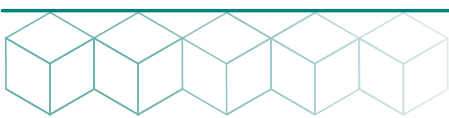
Last week, I attended the course Food Packaging Materials and Processes, where we learned from a series of industrial speakers, each focusing on different aspects of the field.

What made this experience especially valuable was the opportunities to meet those industry professionals. Compared to academic courses, this course gave us a clearer understanding of current industry landscape and real-world challenges, helping me better imagine my future career path in the food and packaging industry.

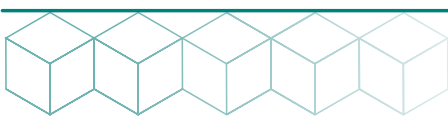
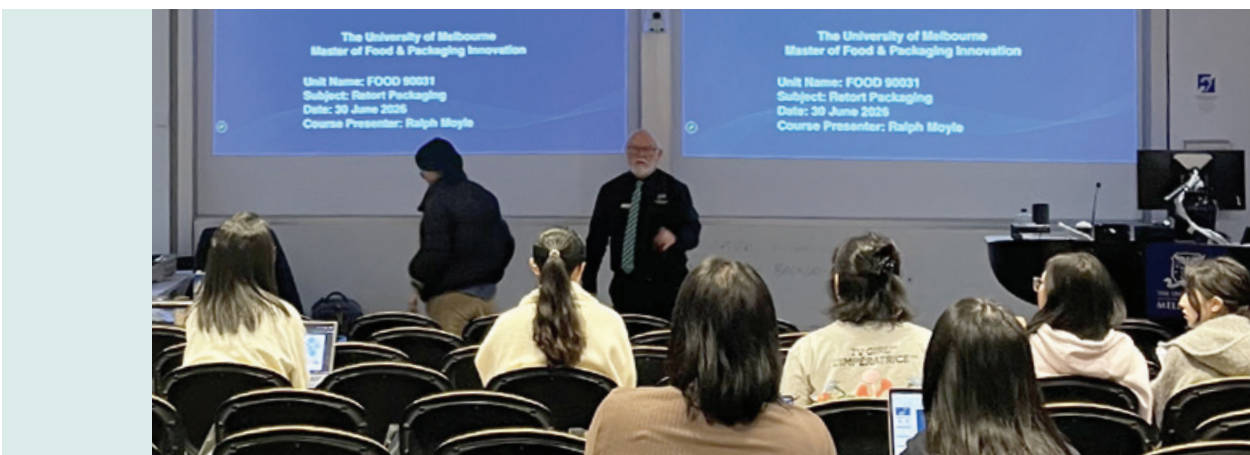
One highlight was visiting Close the Loop, where I gained my first insight into plastic recycling technologies and the current technical limitations. This experience prompted me to rethink how food packaging design can be improved to better support recycling efficiency and sustainability.

It was inspiring to see how packaging, sustainability, and technology intersect in practice – not just in theory. Lastly, I would like to sincerely thank Prof Hafiz, Prof. Pierre Pienaar, the other lecturers and the AIP, for giving us such a wonderful course.











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