

# SUPPORT FOR INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIANS INFORMATION FOR PROSPECTIVE LAW STUDENTS



In 1990 the ANU Law School established an entry and support scheme to give Indigenous Australian students the opportunity to enter and the skills to succeed in studies for a law degree. This Scheme is supported by the Law School and works in association with the Jabal Indigenous Higher Education Centre.

The program is now well established with twenty six graduates and an Indigenous student group of around twelve spread through all years of the degree. Indigenous Australian legal issues are taught in various courses and the Law School offers the elective subject Indigenous Australians and the Law.

## Special Entry

Places are made available each year for Australian Indigenous students who can demonstrate a capacity to successfully complete the degree. Offers are made on the basis that the applicant has the capacity to succeed in law studies given the extra coaching in academic skills that is available through the Scheme. Interviews and written tests for applicants are arranged by the Jabal Indigenous Higher Education Centre for Indigenous Australian students. Applications for entry through the Indigenous Alternative Entry Scheme close at the end of October and interviews are usually held in early December.

For further information contact:  
Asmi Wood on T: 02 6125 8141  
E: [WoodA@law.anu.edu.au](mailto:WoodA@law.anu.edu.au)  
The Jabal Indigenous Higher Education Centre on  
T: 02 6125 3520  
E: [Jabal.Centre@anu.edu.au](mailto:Jabal.Centre@anu.edu.au)  
W: <http://www.anu.edu.au/jabal/>

## Academic Advisers

Two part-time Academic Advisers have been specially appointed to tutor the Australian Indigenous law students in academic skills. The support scheme provides weekly tutorials for all subjects. The Advisers, in conjunction with the Jabal Indigenous Higher Education Centre also arrange for individual tutoring assistance in other subjects if the students have a need. Help with administrative problems and pastoral care are also provided and a social program gives the students a sense of peer support and cohesion.

## Indigenous Legal Employment Program

In 2000, the Law School officially launched the Indigenous Legal Employment Program—a program designed to encourage private sector law firms to employ undergraduate Indigenous law students during their study. The firms have the option of employing students either as cadets under the Commonwealth National Indigenous Cadetship Program or as part-time employees. The students

gain some financial support as well as being able to obtain law practice skills and supportive contacts within the legal profession.

### **Legal Workshop Indigenous Scholarship Scheme**

The ANU College of Law, in conjunction with the National Centre for Indigenous Studies (NCIS), has developed a scholarship program to offer up to two scholarships per year for full- or part-time study in the Graduate Diploma of Legal Practice (GDLP) offered in the ANU Legal Workshop. The GDLP is the practical legal training required for admission to legal practice in addition to the LLB or JD.

<http://law.anu.edu.au/Undergraduate/Scholarships.asp>

#### **Student Profile**

**Matthew Maurer, Indigenous Scholarship Scheme Scholarship Recipient**

I am studying the Graduate Diploma in Legal Practice at ANU Legal Workshop. As part of my practical legal training, I will be working with the North Australia Aboriginal Justice Agency.



Additional support available:

### **English in a Legal Context**

The ANU Law School offers a non-compulsory course called *English in a Legal Context*. The course is only available to first-year students whose first language is not English, or who identify themselves as Indigenous students. The aim of this course is to assist first year law students to address and overcome any issues or problems they are experiencing with their legal studies as a result of their cultural background or lack of English language skills. Indigenous students are also encouraged to enrol in English in a Legal Context in their first year.

<http://law.anu.edu.au/International/Adviser.asp>

### **Assessment Arrangements for Students from Language Backgrounds Other Than English (LBOTE)**

The ANU has a Policy on Assessment Arrangements for Students from Language Backgrounds Other Than English. Under this policy students from backgrounds other than English (including Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people) may be eligible for additional time in examinations. Students who want to apply for additional time in law courses must demonstrate that they satisfy the criteria in the policy and that they have participated satisfactorily in the course *English in a Legal Context*. There is a presumption against additional time after a student's first year of study in the Law School. Students should contact the convenors of *English in a Legal Context* (Miriam Gani) or the Indigenous Support Scheme (Asmi Wood) for information about this policy. Students must apply to the Sub-Dean at least four weeks prior to the commencement of the relevant examination period.

<http://law.anu.edu.au/Undergraduate/Linguistic.asp>

### **CHAT Mentoring Scheme**

All first year law students are encouraged to participate in the mentoring scheme. Students are allocated to a mentor group and each group will consist of two academic staff members, a later year student and a small number of other first year students. Mentors will be available to discuss the questions and issues that can arise in being a law student, and to refer students to appropriate sources of support and advice. Mentors will also facilitate the building of relationships between students in their group. We hope that these relationships will enrich student experience at law school, and will continue throughout the time as a law student, and beyond.

[http://law.anu.edu.au/Undergraduate/CHAT\\_mentoring.asp](http://law.anu.edu.au/Undergraduate/CHAT_mentoring.asp)