



# New scholarship program removing barriers for teachers



FOR the first Indigenous student enrolled in Australian Catholic University's All Points to Teaching (APTT) program, representation matters.

It's one of the reasons aspiring educator Krisharna Barrs, a proud Ywaalaraay woman, shifted her focus to teaching after completing a Bachelor of Exercise and Nutrition Sciences.

"I always carry my culture with me as a source of pride, and being the only Indigenous student in the program motivates me even more to succeed," she said.

"It's important to me to represent my community and help pave the way for future Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers. Representation matters, and I hope my journey encourages others to follow."

Ms Barrs, 23, realised her passion was in teaching while in the final stages of her first degree and is planning to combine the two learning areas to foster lifelong healthy habits and a curiosity about the world in her students.

"I'm passionate about empowering young people through education and helping them see their own potential," she said.

ACU's innovative APTT program aims to increase participation of underrepresented groups in higher education and within the teaching profession, with a focus on First Nations and mature age students, those from regional, rural, and remote areas, and those with disabilities.

Year 12 graduates, career changers, and school support staff looking to upskill are also ideal candidates to undertake a fully funded Bachelor of Education (Secondary or Secondary and Special Education) or a Master of Teaching (Secondary) degree.

As part of the earn and learn APTT model, students receive intensive wraparound support while being paid to work in secondary schools across Queensland and New South Wales.

Students have access to ACU study support hubs located in in Townsville, south-east Queensland, Rockhampton, Forbes/Bathurst, Parramatta,

Lake Macquarie, south-east New South Wales, Riverina and Tablelands.

The hubs operate in partnership with participating schools, the New South Wales and Queensland governments, several Catholic dioceses, and community organisations.

ACU APTT academic lead Dr Rebecca Pagano said the new industry-leading APTT pathway removed many of the financial, cultural, and geographic barriers students often faced when accessing higher education.

"The program offers a culturally responsive, place-based model that enables students to remain connected to Country, family, and community while studying," she said.

Ms Barrs said having teachers with an Indigenous background at the helm of classrooms was a powerful way to make connections and enrich learning environments.

She called on those thinking about a career as an educator to "go for it".

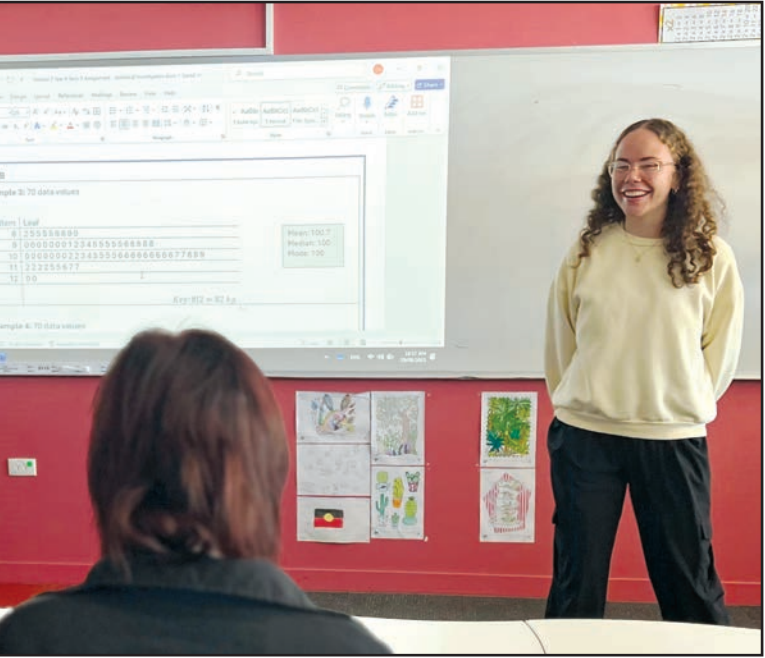
"Teaching is a powerful way to create change, inspire young people, and share our culture in a meaningful way. If you're even

considering it, take the leap – you never know whose life you might impact," she said.

"I would absolutely recommend the APTT program. It offers not only practical support but also a strong sense of community, and

it's a great pathway for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to step into education with confidence."

The ACU APTT scholarship portal is open for the 2026 intake. Enquiries: [APTT@acu.edu.au](mailto:APTT@acu.edu.au)



Aspiring educator Krisharna Barrs, a proud Ywaalaraay woman.



## Study a fully funded online degree

Work in a local school while studying to become a teacher. All Points to Teaching (APTT) is an exciting pathway for aspiring secondary school teachers. It offers a fully funded scholarship for an online degree – giving you the skills, experience and support to become a qualified teacher.

Find out more  
[acu.edu.au/aptt](https://acu.edu.au/aptt)

