



WAAPA delivers strong pathways



WAAPA at ECU continues to open doors for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander performers through its nationally recognised **10908NAT Certificate IV in Aboriginal Performance**.

Delivered at ECU City in Yagan Square, the one-year, full-time program builds confidence, cultural grounding and professional skills for roles in theatre, film and television. With no ATAR required, the course offers intensive, hands-on training in acting and improvisation, dance and stage movement, voice and singing, script analysis and audition technique. Workshops feed into rehearsals, and rehearsals feed into performance, placing storytelling and lived experience at the heart of learning.

The strength of the course is reflected in

its alumni, many of whom are shaping Australia's creative industries. One recent success is **Lila McGuire**, a proud Whadjuk and Ballardong Noongar woman and WAAPA graduate, who stars as Evonne Goolagong Cawley in the ABC mini-series Goolagong. Her journey from training at WAAPA to leading a major national production highlights the power of culturally grounded performance training.

Other notable alumni include **Mark Coles Smith, Shari Sebbens, Meyne Wyatt** and **Megan Wilding**, all continuing to build strong careers across stage and screen.

For young people looking to step into the arts, the Certificate IV in Aboriginal Performance offers a culturally safe, skills-based pathway grounded in community, creativity and self-determination.



WAAPA



Join a legacy of incredible performers

10908NAT Certificate IV in Aboriginal Performance

WAAPA's 10908NAT Certificate IV in Aboriginal Performance is a 1-year full-time course at ECU City, designed for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander creatives. Grounded in First Nations cultural perspectives, it draws on the rich traditions of storytelling, songlines, and oral history to build powerful, authentic performers.

Train in acting, movement, voice, and audition skills – all through a lens that honours the world's oldest living culture.

Applications are now open for 2027.

Head to the WAAPA website for more information.

waapa.ecu.edu.au



Creative thinkers made here.

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Local Student Breaks Barriers in Carpentry Trade

Year 13 Tagai State College graduate Sherkoda Uta is making history as the first Torres Strait Islander female carpentry apprentice with Matt Birney Builders on Thursday Island.

A proud Torres Strait Islander woman, Sherkoda recently completed her Certificate II in Infrastructure and Resources through the TagaiTECH program. She has already gained experience in framing, concreting, and guttering, earning praise from her foreman for being punctual, reliable, and hardworking.

Despite working in a male-dominated trade, Sherkoda says she feels respected and treated equally. "I get treated the same as everyone else—they let me get on with the job," she said.

Inspired by helping her father growing up and her love of hands-on work at school, she is committed to finishing her trade and using these skills, experience and qualifications in her future.

Sherkoda encourages other young women to follow their interests. "Don't feel shame or think you can't do it because it's a man's job," she said.

She hopes to continue working in her community and use her skills to give back, proving her achievement is just the beginning.



TAGAI STATE COLLEGE



WAYBENI KOEY NGURPAY MUDH



Beka-Lily Dorante, Mother and Grandmother at her school-based traineeship Cert III Health Services Assistant graduation with Queensland Health Deadly Start program.

Beka Lily Dorante from Kirriri (Hammond Island) is a 2025 graduate at Tagai State College, Thursday Island. Beka-Lily was supported by the TagaiTECH program for the duration of her senior schooling and school-based traineeship in Cert III Health Services Assistant.

During this time Beka-Lily participated in numerous industry work placements in the childcare and tourism industries.

After graduating, Beka progressed to the Deadly Start Cadetship program which allows her to work with Cairns, Hinterland Health Services whilst studying her degree in Nursing at James Cook university in Cairns.



Rina Manuel is employed as an administration support officer in the maritime industry with Torres Pilots Pty Ltd.

Rina Manuel has strong family connections with the Badugal, Muagal and Kaurareg communities in the Torres Strait.

She is the recipient of the 2025 VET Student of the Year Award, which recognised her achievements completing qualifications in Cert II Engineering, Cert II Automotive Vocational Preparation and a school-based traineeship in Cert III Business Administration.

After graduating Year 12 with these achievements, Rina immediately started work as an Administration Support Officer in the maritime industry with Torres Pilots Pty Ltd.



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