

# TRACKS to Zoology

Kyle Smith, a proud Worimi person from the Central Coast, started studying in the UNE TRACKS program in late 2020 after searching online for pathways to university.

When asked about their choice, Kyle, who uses the pronouns they/them said, "I didn't get the required ATAR for a Bachelor of Zoology, and I wasn't sure how the other pathways worked. With the extra support from Oorala, I found it beneficial to enter the TRACKS tertiary preparation program. The program helped me develop the required skills such as writing and answering assessments which is so useful when starting a bachelor's degree."

Kyle felt supported by TRACKS lecturer Kate Carter and was able to access Oorala's free tutoring service. Kate comments "One of the benefits of undertaking a pathway program such as TRACKS is that students have time to become familiar with the culture of university and find their place in it. Once students feel comfortable and valued within the institution, their potential for success is great."

Now in their first year of a Bachelor of Zoology Kyle reflects that "My interest in reptiles started when I was very young, after catching my first lizard at about 4 years of age. I was really into Steve Irwin back then. I went to Australia Zoo in about 2005, and I loved it all, especially the crocodiles."

"At home I have a menagerie of reptiles including a diamond python named Neil, a

children's python called Toffee, a bearded dragon called Ghidorah, a striped marsh frog named Pepe, a blue tongue called Frodo, plus a collection of fish, arachnids and a dog named Percy."

Originally keen to work in a zoo, Kyle had a change of mind after volunteer experience at the Laboratory of Applied Zoology and Ecological Restoration (LASER) and the University of New England's Reptile Ecology and Environmental Disturbance (REED) lab.

Some of Kyle's volunteering has involved assisting postgraduate students with their research projects and has included looking at the cognitive ability of Bells Turtles, and canoeing around local waterways in the New England area checking the cameras set up to monitor for turtles basking on basking platforms. Kyle says "The canoeing has been lots of fun".

This has sparked such an interest that Kyle has decided to major in Animal Ecology. "I see myself going into ecological field work with focus on herpetology, the study of reptiles and amphibians."

Kyle added that they would "recommend TRACKS as a pathway to university to other students due to the support the team at Oorala gives to help us through our studies and into the degree afterwards."

**Kyle Smith, a proud Worimi person from the Central Coast with Neil his diamond backed python.**



## A pathway to university, tailored for you

At UNE we understand not everybody has the academic background to dive head-first into a uni course. So we've developed TRACKS, specifically to help Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people prepare for university study.

### TRACKS Tertiary Preparation Program

The dedicated team at our Oorala Aboriginal Centre will work alongside you, stepping you through the program, helping you to gain the skills and confidence necessary to undertake a degree at UNE.



Your culture, your community and our partnership – helping you to future fit your life.

**Apply now!**

#### Benefits of TRACKS include:

- Can be studied completely online
- Is flexible to suit your specific needs
- Free access to peer mentors and tutorial support
- You will be part of a community of like-minded students who share similar goals.
- The opportunity to study a unit in your area of interest that may count towards your UNE degree

For more information visit  
[une.edu.au/tracks-course](https://une.edu.au/tracks-course)  
 or phone Oorala on **1800 622 384**



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your life**

