

Family and community key to success at NIKERI Institute

Remote or regional location, family commitments or work obligations shouldn't impact your ability to access university. At the National Indigenous Knowledges Education Research and Innovation (NIKERI) Institute the Community Based Delivery (CBD) approach supports students to access on campus study blocks at Deakin University without having to relocate.

The unique learning environment at NIKERI brings together Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from across Australia to share their individual perspectives and experiences. Over the more than 35-year history of NIKERI a special feature is the family and community connections students share. Multiple generations of families have studied together alongside siblings and work colleagues.

Cousins from Coober Pedy, South Australia, Aiden Ackland and Laura Larkins are both undertaking a Bachelor of Nursing. After conversations with Deakin graduates, they decided to apply to NIKERI Institute.

Aiden explains that they had both previously enrolled in university studies but found the nurturing community environment at NIKERI a welcome difference.

"We both have experiences of studying at other universities before here and we would have to go out and find support and try and access things that we didn't even know existed".

Laura highlighted that studying at NIKERI felt like a supportive community.

"I like that we are supported from the time we get off the plane. We get to our rooms, they make sure we're all ready. I also like that the class is taught separately to the mainstream students and that the teachers are very culturally aware."

Aiden agreed, "I think it's the mini community that we make within our class. Everyone seems to get along really well and support each other."

Bachelor of Education (Primary) student Janis Assan, a Badulaig, Maluilgal and Zenadth Kes woman from Badu Island is nearing completion of her studies. Her sister Ashley from Thursday Island has recently commenced at NIKERI Institute too. Their family connections stretch across the Torres Strait from Badu Island, Darnley Island and Saibai Island.

Like many NIKERI Institute students, Janis says her grandmother who was studying a Masters degree at the time, encouraged her to pursue university. As a result, Ashley witnessed her sisters success and was motivated to enrol too.

"I chose to study at Deakin after hearing about the great support that they offer. My sister was already studying at Deakin before I enrolled, she inspires me to complete my studies as well."

Ashley agrees that the supportive community at NIKERI is a highlight of studying at Deakin.

"The best thing about studying at NIKERI is the support from staff, meeting new people from all over Australia and the welcoming hospitality that they provide during our stay."

In addition to study support including tutoring, academic advice and social and emotional guidance there are many scholarships and other enablers available to make the decision to study a stress-free process. NIKERI Institute has a dedicated student services team available through the entire student journey, assisting with your online application, enrolment, travel and accommodation arrangements and academic engagement through to graduation.



First year Bachelor of Nursing students Laura Larkins and Aiden Ackland

Community Based Delivery

The National Indigenous Knowledges Education Research and Innovation (NIKERI) Institute provides Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians with access to flexible higher education programs. Our unique Community Based Delivery model enables students to maintain their family, work and community commitments while studying.

NIKERI Institute offers degrees in education, arts, law, nursing, social work, land and sea country management and public health alongside our growing research and Indigenous Knowledges studies.



Find out more
deakin.edu.au/nikeri
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