



First Peoples Theological Study Scholarship

Purpose

To support Australia's First Peoples to undertake courses of Theological study at the Uniting Theological College so that they may be equipped to take up Ministry roles, lay and ordained, within the Uniting Church of Australia (including UAICC).

Scholarship inclusions:

The First Peoples Theological Study Scholarship includes the following:

- a) Payment of tuition fees and student fees for study for one of the following UTC courses:
 - Bachelor of Theology
 - Graduate Diploma of Theology
 - Master of Theology
 - Doctor of Ministry
 - Doctor of Philosophy (Theological study related)

Eligibility Criteria

1. Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Person

To be eligible for this Scholarship an applicant must be able to demonstrate that they are an Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person, defined by the following criteria:

Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait islander person means a person who:

- (a) is a member of the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander race of Australia, and
- (b) identifies as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person, and
- (c) is accepted by the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander community as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person.

Note: this definition, adapted to include Torres Strait Islander people, is derived from the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983* (NSW).

Applicants must identify as an Aboriginal or/or Torres Strait Islander person, and must provide evidence of their Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander identity with their application at the time it is lodged. Such evidence of identity may include:

- A certificate of Aboriginality, endorsed by a Local Aboriginal Land Council or an Aboriginal Community-Controlled organisation, with the certificate printed on letterhead of the organisation, signed by the Chairperson and/or CEO of the organisation, and including the organisation's Common Seal.
- A statutory declaration that the applicant self-identifies as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person.

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- A letter (or letters) from a known Elders or senior community leader from the community that the applicant is from, verifying that they know the applicant and confirm that the community knows the applicant to be an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person. Any Referee letters should include a contact phone number for the Referee.
- Evidence of previous identification as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person (for example, evidence of previous employment in identified roles, evidence of holding elected Executive/Committee position(s) in Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander Community- Controlled organisations, works published in the public forum identifying the applicant as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person, evidence of receipt of Abstudy benefits from the Australian Government, etc.)
- Any other relevant evidence that an applicant may be able to provide to verify their identity as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person.

All evidence of Aboriginal identity will be reviewed, and any Referee letters or other documents provided may be verified through contacting the person or organisation that provided them.

If an applicant's Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander identity cannot be confirmed to the satisfaction of the Scholarship Selection Panel then they will be deemed ineligible to apply for the Scholarship.

Criteria/assessment:

Essential:

- Demonstrated Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander identity.
- Demonstrated commitment to Christian Faith.
- A commitment to completing the course applied for.
- Ability to meet relevant level of academic course requirements.

Desirable

- Membership of, or a connection to, the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress.
- Membership of the Uniting Church in Australia.
- To encourage young people to undertake Theological study, applications from young people (under 35 years of age) will be viewed favourably.

The Scholarship Selection Panel

The review of applications will be undertaken by the Scholarships Committee of the United Theological College, and a recommendation of the successful applicant(s) will be provided to the General Secretary of the Synod of NSW and the ACT for their consideration/approval. At least one First Nations person will be a member of the Scholarships Committee for the purpose of reviewing applications for the First Peoples Theological Study Scholarship and discerning the recommendation to the General Secretary.



First Peoples Theological Study Scholarship APPLICATION FORM

Name:

Address:

Date of birth: Contact phone number:

Contact email address:

Please select the course of study you wish to apply for a Scholarship for at the Uniting Theological College/Charles Sturt University:

- ☐ Bachelor of Theology
- ☐ Graduate Diploma of Theology
- ☐ Master of Theology
- ☐ Doctor of Ministry
- ☐ Doctor of Philosophy

Please note: If approved, the Scholarship will cover payment of Course/Subject and Student Fees for the nominated course, and cost of any nominated subject textbook(s) for each subject undertaken, as identified in the Charles Sturt University subject guide. All other costs relating to study, including travel and accommodation, are the responsibility of the applicant.

Have you enrolled and been accepted into the course selected above?

- ☐ Yes ☐ Awaiting confirmation of enrolment ☐ No

ABORIGINAL AND/OR TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER IDENTITY

We appreciate that providing proof of identity can be a sensitive issue for some people, however the funds utilised for this Scholarship include funds from bequests and donations specifically made for the support of Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people to undertake Theological studies. Accordingly, we wish to ensure that the relevant funding is appropriately utilised to support Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander applicants.

If you have any concerns about this identity requirement please contact the Manager First Peoples Strategy and Engagement, Synod of NSW and the ACT (contact details below).

Are you an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No



Important: Please ensure you attach copies of any relevant identity documents to this application at the time of lodgement.

Please note that proof of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander identity documents may include:

- ✓ A Confirmation of Aboriginality from a Local Aboriginal Land Council, or an Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation registered with ORIC.
- ✓ Letter(s) from known Elders/Community leaders from the community you are from, acknowledging that you are accepted as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person by that Community. Referees should provide a contact phone number so that references can be verified.
- ✓ Any other documentary evidence of your identity that you wish to provide to support your application (eg. Genealogy documents from Native Title claims or similar, evidence of previous work in Aboriginal community sector, evidence of links to your community).

APPLICATION FORM

Evidence of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Identity

Please briefly tell us about yourself and your family/community, and describe the evidence that you are able to provide of your Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander identity:

[illegible]

Are you a person of Christian Faith?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Are you a member of the Uniting Church in Australia?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If Yes, which Congregation do you belong to?

1	5	5	1	5

Are you a member of the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress (UAICC)?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, which Ministry Centre or Faith Community of the UAICC do you belong to?

In 200 words or less, please explain why you wish to study the course you have nominated above?

[illegible]



Are you currently engaged in Ministry, or considering entering into a Ministry role in the future?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Is there anything else you would like to tell us in support of your application?

PLEASE ENSURE ALL INFORMATION PROVIDED IN THIS APPLICATION IS TRUE AND CORRECT.

Please note: Any Applicant found to have provided false or misleading information in their application may be deemed ineligible for this Scholarship, and, if deemed to be ineligible, may be required to repay any funds received via this Scholarship.

Please ensure you have read and understand the First Peoples Theological Study Scholarship - Terms and Conditions.
[link to T&C document]

APPLICANT SIGNATURE

I ("the Applicant") confirm that the information provided in this application for the First Peoples Theological Study Scholarship is true and correct, and that I have read and agree to the Terms and Conditions applicable to the Scholarship.

Signature:

Date:

HOW TO APPLY

Please send a completed application form to the United Theological College Scholarships Committee via email:

studenta@nswact.uca.org.au

For any enquiries about submitting scholarship applications please call: (02) 8838 8900



ENQUIRIES

If you have any enquiries in relation to this application, please contact:

Nathan Tyson

Manager, First Peoples Strategy and Engagement

Synod of NSW and the ACT

Ph: 0474 908 460 | **Email:** NathanT@nswact.uca.org.au

First Peoples Theological Study Scholarship

Scholarship Terms and Conditions

1. SCHOLARSHIP TERMS AND ADMINISTRATION

- a. The First Peoples Theological Scholarship ("the Scholarship") is offered by the Synod of NSW and the ACT.
- b. The Scholarships Committee of the United Theological College will review all Scholarship applications received by advertised closing date, and provide a recommendation to the General Secretary, Synod of NSW and the ACT, who may approve a Scholarship offer to the recommended applicant (or applicants).
- c. The Scholarships Committee will consist of at least 1 First Nations person for the purpose of reviewing applications for the First Peoples Theological Study Scholarship.
- d. The Scholarship is awarded to the Scholarship recipient for the course of Theological study identified by the Scholarship Applicant in their application.
- e. The Scholarship is awarded to the value of the standard tuition fees, standard student fees, and the cost of course required textbook(s) (as per the Subject Guide), for the duration of the course identified by the Applicant in their application.
- f. Only courses listed on the First Peoples Theological Study Scholarship application form ("the relevant courses") are eligible for the Scholarship.
- g. The Scholarship is applicable for the relevant courses offered by the Uniting Theological College and Charles Sturt University, in either face to face or online format.
- h. The Scholarship monies will be paid to Charles Sturt University by the Synod of NSW and the ACT, via the Scholarships Committee, as standard tuition fees and standard student fees become due and payable. It is the responsibility of the Scholarship recipient to provide the Scholarships Committee with a copy of the fee invoice for payment, via email, *at least* 2 weeks prior to the due date of the fees. The Synod and/or the Scholarships Committee will not be responsible for any late fees incurred in circumstances where the Scholarship recipient does not provide the Scholarships Committee with a copy of the invoice at least 2 weeks before the due date for the fees.
- i. The costs of course required texts will be reimbursed upon provision to the Scholarships Committee of a completed Reimbursement form along with a copy of the University Subject Guide (listing the course required text(s)) and a copy of the purchase receipt(s). Any reimbursement claim for the purchase of course required texts should be lodged within 30 days of the purchase.
- j. The Scholarship is not redeemable for cash. No Scholarship funds, in any form, will be issued to the Scholarship recipient directly, nor will the Scholarship recipient be eligible for a refund of, or other access to, any unused Scholarship funds. Any unused Scholarship funds will be retained by the Synod of NSW and the ACT.
- k. The Scholarship does not cover any additional tuition fees associated with course extensions beyond the standard course duration due to repeat study or failure to meet progression requirements or withdrawal from any subjects or units of competency after census day, unless otherwise determined by the Scholarships Committee. Any additional tuition fees payable will be the responsibility of the Scholarship recipient.

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l. The Scholarship does not cover any other costs associated with the study of relevant courses, including but not limited to, additional (non-prescribed) textbooks, photocopying, parking/transport costs, administration charges, late-fees, and accommodation costs.

m. Scholarship recipients may study either a full time or part time study load and can apply to amend their study load at any time, noting census day implications and notification obligations outlined below.

n. Course subject fee liability is imposed from census date for the relevant courses offered through Charles Sturt University. The Scholarship recipient must ensure that a copy of the fee invoice (for subject fees and student fees) for subjects that are enrolled in for the relevant study period is provided to the Scholarships Committee at least 2 weeks prior to the due date of the invoice, and in any event, at least two weeks before the census date.

o. It is the responsibility of the Scholarship recipient to ensure they are properly enrolled in the subjects for their course prior to the census date, as tuition costs associated with withdrawal from a subject, or non-completion of a subject will not be covered by the Scholarship unless extenuating circumstances apply. A determination on whether extenuating circumstances apply will be made by the Scholarships Committee based on documentary or other relevant evidence provided by the Scholarship recipient.

p. If a Scholarship recipient withdraws from enrolment in a subject prior to the census date, in circumstances where fees for that subject have already been paid, the Scholarship recipient should notify the Scholarships Committee, via email (studenta@nswact.uca.org.au), within 7 days of the date of withdrawal from the subject so that arrangements can be made for a refund of the relevant fees.

2. GENERAL OBLIGATIONS

a. I understand that if I wish to discontinue my enrolment in a relevant course, or suspend or defer my enrolment for any reason after I accept this Scholarship, I must notify the Scholarships Committee in writing (via email: studenta@nswact.uca.org.au) at the earliest possible opportunity.

b. I understand that the Scholarship offer only applies to the course nominated in my Scholarship Application and the Scholarship cannot be transferred to another course, or deferred for longer than 12 months unless extenuating circumstances apply.

c. I understand that it is my responsibility to submit documentary evidence to the Scholarships Committee for a determination on whether extenuating circumstances apply and a deferral for greater than 12 months will be approved. Each application for approval of deferral will be considered on its own merits, considering the evidence provided by the applicant and any other circumstances deemed relevant by the Scholarship Committee.

d. If it is determined that extenuating circumstances do not apply, and deferral for longer than 12 months is not approved, the Scholarship recipient will either need to resume study after a 12 month deferral or forfeit the Scholarship (so that related funds can be utilised to support another Scholarship offer). If a Scholarship is forfeited as a result of deferral for longer than 12 months, a former Scholarship recipient must reapply for a new Scholarship if they wish to seek further Scholarship support for their studies.

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c. I understand that a First Peoples Theological Study Scholarship recipient cannot receive any other scholarship or sponsorship from any other organisation that is intended to cover the tuition and student fee costs covered by the First Peoples Theological Scholarship, and I declare that I am not in receipt of any other such scholarship or sponsorship.

e. I understand that in addition to the terms and conditions outlined in this document, I am obliged to comply with all rules, regulations and policies of Charles Sturt University and the Uniting Theological College, as well as all State and Australian laws, and that a failure to meet these obligations may result in the Scholarship offer to the Scholarship recipient being terminated.

f. I understand that should the Synod of NSW and the ACT decide to terminate a Scholarship offer to a Scholarship recipient due to a breach of these Terms and Conditions (for example provision 2(e), above), any course fees payable from the date that written notification of termination of the Scholarship is provided to the Scholarship recipient become the responsibility of the Scholarship recipient

f. I understand that there is academic support assistance available via the First Nations Student Centres of Charles Sturt University, and also via Uniting Theological College, and that I should seek support and assistance if I am struggling with any academic requirements or other aspects of my course.

g. I understand that I must accept these terms and conditions prior to course commencement and that if I fail to do so, the Scholarship offer will be void and I will be liable for the course tuition fees.

3. TERMINATION

a. I understand that failure to meet any of the terms and conditions outlined in this document may result in the Scholarship being terminated.

b. I understand that the Scholarship may be terminated if, following the award of the Scholarship, it is determined by the Scholarship Committee or the General Secretary of the Synod that the Scholarship Offer was made on the basis of incorrect, incomplete or fraudulent information supplied by the applicant in their application.

c. I understand that any decision by the Scholarship Committee or the General Secretary of the Synod of NSW and the ACT to terminate a Scholarship offer due to a breach of these terms and conditions will not be subject to appeal.