Contact us
Mana Yura Student Support
support.cadigal@sydney.edu.au
+61 2 8627 8651

Breadwinners’ Programme
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Scholarship
Breadwinners’ Programme

What is it?
The Breadwinners’ Programme is a scholarship for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are the primary breadwinner in their family, and want to study for their first university degree while keeping their permanent job.

The programme works through an agreement with your employer which allows you to study a three-year undergraduate degree over four years while maintaining a regular income.

How does it work?
During years 1 and 2, you will keep working full time while studying at the University of Sydney part time. You’ll study two subjects per semester (four each year).

During years 3 and 4, you will study at the University full time (four subjects each semester), while on extended leave from your job – except during all University breaks when you will be required to work for your employer (20 weeks a year).

To fund your living expenses in the final two years, the Breadwinners’ scholarship tops up the salary paid to you by your employer to an agreed amount – equivalent to your current post-tax salary.

You will need to pay all student fees associated with your course, including Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS) fees that you can pay off over time once you have graduated.

At the end of the four years, you will have a degree and the opportunity to resume your previous job or to explore new options with your employer.

Am I eligible to apply?
You need to:
- be an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person
- be employed full time in NSW
- be at least 21 years old
- be the main breadwinner in your family, or financially supporting at least one other person
- have experienced educational disadvantage and/or financial hardship
- have not already completed a university degree
- be accepted into an undergraduate degree at the University of Sydney
- be eligible for and accept a Commonwealth Supported Place (CSP) for your course.

Entry to the Breadwinners’ Programme is competitive, so you also need to show you have the capacity to succeed at university study. You can demonstrate this through an ATAR/UAI, university preparation course, AQF approved diploma, or partial completion of a university course.

Other conditions of the Breadwinners’ Programme:
- you will need to enter into a HECS-HELP scheme to cover student and course fees
- you need to achieve academic progress deemed satisfactory by the University of Sydney to remain in the programme
- if you have to extend your study for any reason, you will be responsible for return-to-work negotiations with your employer (also note: the scholarship payment is only available for two years; years 3 and 4 of study).

What can I study?
The Breadwinners’ Programme is available for any three-year undergraduate course offered at the University of Sydney.

We recommend selecting a course that can be completed in four years, due to the part-time component of the programme.

How do I apply?
1. Talk to your employer
Your employer will need to agree to the terms of the Breadwinners’ Scholarship Programme.

2. Select a course
Choose one of our three-year undergraduate degrees.
- sydney.edu.au/courses

3. Apply for your course
Apply through the University Admissions Centre (UAC).
- uac.edu.au

4. Apply for the Cadigal Alternative Entry Program
The Cadigal program can help you gain entry if your entry scores are lower than normal requirements.
- cadigal.sydney.edu.au

5. Apply for the Breadwinners’ Scholarship
Once you have applied to a course, you can apply for the Breadwinners’ Scholarship.
- sydney.edu.au/scholarships/breadwinners

For information about any of these applications or supporting documents, please email us at support.cadigal@sydney.edu.au
Support while you study

Once in the programme, you can access all the support and services available to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at the University, including:

- support from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student Support Officers
- access to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student Orientation and Academic Skills Workshops (which run just prior to the start of each semester)
- access to the Indigenous Tutorial Assistance Scheme: providing tutors for two hours per unit of study per week, at no cost
- support from an Academic Adviser within your faculty who can provide any study-specific advice you may need
- assistance from the Student Support Services Unit, including counselling, study skills, career advice, financial support and more
- access to University facilities, including labs, libraries, our aquatic centre, gyms and other sporting centres
- support from a student mentor under the Mentoring Our Brothers and Sisters (MOBS) program.

For more about our services, visit:

- sydney.edu.au/study/indigenous-support

Salary and scholarship

In years 1 and 2 of the programme (when you are working full time and studying part time) you will receive your normal income from your employer.

To help fund your living expenses in the final two years, the Breadwinners’ scholarship tops up your employer’s pro-rata salary to an equivalent level of your current post-tax salary. Under tax laws, scholarship money provided by the government is considered exempt income. So, when you receive these funds in years 3 and 4, you won’t be taxed on them.

Information for employers

The Breadwinners’ Programme benefits employers because:

- it is an advantage to have qualified, highly knowledgeable and productive staff
- supporting your employees to improve their qualifications, skills and career prospects builds staff loyalty and increases workforce diversity
- supporting staff professional development is integral to organisations’ human resources policies and commitments, as well as Reconciliation Action Plans and Corporate Social Responsibility programs.

Talking to your employee

Talk to your employee about whether the Breadwinners’ Programme might suit them, and the opportunities that may be available to them in the future.

Key factors to discuss:

- payment of regular salary in years 1 and 2
- management of salary-related on-costs such as superannuation, annual leave, leave loading, long service leave, payroll tax and workers’ compensation
- employer agreement with employees to take leave to study part time in years 1 and 2, and full time in years 3 and 4
- providing access to a workplace mentor
- the commitment from both employee and employer for the employee to work during all semester breaks in years 3 and 4, maintain contact and give the employee opportunities for real-world application of their studies
- commitment to keeping the employee’s return-to-work options open after they have finished their studies.

Visit our website for details.

- sydney.edu.au/scholarships/breadwinners

“I am the first person from both sides of my family to attend university and I know they are extremely proud of my achievements.”

Jacinda Matthews
Bachelor of Oral Health
Get in touch
If you have any questions about the Breadwinners’ Programme or you’d like help with your application, please contact one of our friendly staff.

Mana Yura Student Support
support.cadigal@sydney.edu.au
+61 2 8627 8651

Student Support Services
Level 5, Jane Foss Russell Building (G02)
The University of Sydney
+61 2 8627 8619
+61 2 8627 8482 (fax)
support.cadigal@sydney.edu.au
sydney.edu.au/academic-support

sydney.edu.au/scholarships/breadwinners

This publication is supported by the Australian Government Department of Education and Training through the Breadwinners’ Programme.

Cover image: the Clocktower in the Quadrangle of the University of Sydney with artwork used during Vivid – Pathway to the Future in 2015.

Produced by Marketing and Communications, the University of Sydney. August 2017. The University reserves the right to make alterations to any information contained within this publication without notice.