Indigenous Career Progression

Cadetship program for final year Social Work and Human Services students

TERMS AND CONDITIONS
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1.0 Definition of an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person

An Aboriginal person is of Aboriginal descent who identifies as an Aboriginal and is accepted as such by the community in which he/she lives or has lived.

A Torres Strait Islander person is of Torres Strait Islander descent who identifies as a Torres Strait Islander and is accepted as such by the community in which he/she lives or has lived.

2.0 The cadetship program

2.1 Background

The Queensland Child Protection Commission of Inquiry was established on 1 July 2012 with the Honourable Tim Carmody QC appointed as Commissioner. The Inquiry was established to review Queensland child protection services, design a new child protection system and develop a roadmap for the next decade. The report, Taking responsibility: A Roadmap for Queensland Child Protection was handed down on 1 July 2013 and made 121 recommendations for comprehensive systemic reforms to achieve the best possible outcomes for children, young people and families.

On the 16 December 2013, the Queensland Government released its response to the report, accepting all 121 recommendations (115 accepted and six in-principle) which will:

- meet the requirements and needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, families and communities
- deliver quality services to children and families through a capable, motivated workforce and client-focussed organisations
- build an accountable, transparent and cost effective system.

As part of the Inquiry’s focus on workforce development and capacity it was recommended the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services implement a program to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers to attain the requisite qualifications to become Child Safety Officers (Rec 10.5). The basis of this recommendation was the assumption that the requirements and needs of Queensland’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are over represented in the system, their families and communities would be better met by qualified Indigenous staff working in the department.

The Indigenous Career Progression Cadetship Program sits in tandem with the Indigenous Career Progression Scholarship Program and aims to:

- enhance the department’s ability to deliver culturally appropriate services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients
- assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to gain tertiary qualifications
- provide professional and career development opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with the department.
2.2 Conditions

The cadetships are offered to students in their final year of Human Services or Social Work study. If a student is not studying full time, entitlements will be calculated on a pro rata basis.

Cadets will also be supported to transition to employment within the department.

2.3 Study program

Courses of study that are approved are:
- Bachelor of Human Services (BHS)
- Bachelor of Social Work (BSW)
- Master of Social Work (Qualifying) or equivalent

2.4 Eligibility

Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander students are eligible to apply if they:
- identify as an Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
- are accepted as an Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander in the community in which he/she lives, or has lived
- are enrolled for full-time study at a university located in Queensland, Australia or enrolled in distance/online delivery with an interstate university where no compulsory attendance is required.
- are an Australian resident in Queensland.
- have met the academic requirements for the course of study and are entering their final year of study
- commit to two years of employment with the department post-graduation.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are not eligible to apply if they:
- are undertaking study overseas
- are proposing to defer any part of his or her study

The department reserves the right to consider applications for cadetships that do not meet the eligibility criteria on a case-by-case basis.

3.0 Administrative arrangements

Human Resources and Ethical Standards, administers and co-ordinates the program. The program coordinator will monitor the progress of Cadetship Recipients and determine whether they continue to be eligible for assistance.

The coordinator will provide an annual written report on the cadetship program to the Chief Human Resources Officer, Human Resources and Ethical Standards.

Contact details:
Coordinator
Indigenous Career Progression
Cadetship Program
Human Resources and Ethical Standards
icpp@communities.qld.gov.au

Human Resources and Ethical Standards is responsible for securing the funding for the cadetship program and ensuring the alignment with the identified priorities. The number of cadetships available each year is dependent on the funding available.
3.1 Advertising

The cadetship program will be advertised through Queensland universities which offer Human Services and/or Social Work courses. Applications must be completed, and submitted to the coordinator prior to the closing date of applications.

Where the intake for the first semester of an academic year does not reach the maximum number, mid-year applications will be accepted.

3.2 Selection process

Cadetships are offered by the department after considering the recommendations of a selection panel.

The panel will make their recommendation based on written applications, referee reports and/or information obtained from pre-screening interviews with the applicants. The panel will make their recommendations to the Chief Human Resources Officer, Human Resources and Ethical Standards, prior to notifying the successful applicants.

3.3 Selection criteria

When assessing applicants, the selection panel assesses the merit of the applicants who best meet each of the selection criteria as detailed on the application form.

Applicants for study cadetships will be considered against the following criteria:

- commitment to working in the statutory child protection context.
- commitment to working for the department for a minimum of two years post-graduation.
- demonstrated benefit and relevance of the study to the strategic and operational plans of the department.

The panel will also consider:

- the applicant’s ability to complete the proposed course of study
- the merit of the applicant compared with other applicants.

Priority will be given to applicants who:

- have a sound academic record
- are located in rural and remote locations
- are studying full-time

3.4 Selection methodology

Selection for cadetships will be determined by:

- pre-screening interview of selected candidates
- short-listing of written applications based on evidence around each selection criteria
- examination of referees' reports.

The selection process will be conducted in an open and transparent manner ensuring that there is ample opportunity for each applicant to discuss his/her developmental needs and options and ensure that fair and unbiased decisions are made. Interviews may be conducted face-to-face or by telephone depending on location of the panel and the applicant.

In accordance with the department's policy on reasonable adjustment for people with disabilities, the selection panel will contact applicants regarding appropriate methods for assessing an applicant’s case.
3.5 Referees

Applicants must nominate a referee who should be his/her current supervisor/academic supervisor or someone who is familiar with his/her work/study.

Referees should complete the referee report forms attached to the application form. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that all referee reports are completed and attached to the application form.

Referees will be contacted as part of the selection process.

3.6 Mentors

The program coordinator will nominate a suitable mentor from the department.

Departmental mentors will play a supportive role while the cadetship recipient is studying which includes:

- working with the cadetship recipient to develop familiarity with and knowledge of the department and linking cadetship learning to departmental contexts
- establishing a schedule of regular meetings throughout the course of study to discuss the cadetship recipient’s progress
- monitoring the cadetship recipient’s progress and discussing solutions for any problems the cadetship recipient may be experiencing, particularly those related to practical placements.

3.7 Granting of cadetships

Human Resources and Ethical Standards will coordinate the advising and acceptance of applicants of the cadetship program. Following consideration of the selection panel's recommendations, the Chief Human Resources Officer, Human Resources and Ethical Standards, will grant final approval for nominated officers to participate in the program.

3.8 Acceptance of the cadetships

Successful applicants must notify of their acceptance or refusal of the cadetship. The granting of a cadetship is subject to Human Resources and Ethical Standards receiving the following information:

- an email from the applicant accepting the cadetship and the conditions contained in the guidelines.
- proof of acceptance and continuation of applicant in an approved course.
- notification of the date of commencement of the final year of study in an approved course from the educational institution.

In accepting a cadetship, applicants are also agreeing to accept the terms and conditions which apply and to fulfill their responsibilities under the cadetship. In particular, applicants must be made aware that it is their responsibility to provide the department with any information which may affect continuing eligibility for the cadetship as soon as is practicable when circumstances change.

Should a student be selected for a cadetship program and is, for any reason, unable to take the cadetship at the time of offer; he/she
may not defer participation in the cadetship until a later time. The student must re-apply for a cadetship and will be considered on the same basis as all other applicants in future rounds.

4.0 Conditions

4.1 Performance

Cadetship recipients are expected to maintain a satisfactory level of performance in their studies and therefore, should maintain at a minimum, a pass/competent assessment in all subjects. **Failure to meet performance planning objectives will result in withdrawal of the cadetship.**

4.2 Time limits on cadetships

Time limits are based on the duration of the student's final year — that is, cadetships are offered for the student's final year of study.

A cadetship recipient must apply to the Coordinator, Indigenous Career Progression Cadetship Program, for any time extension, in writing.

Where cadetship recipients fail to complete the course of study within time limits, it is their responsibility to complete the course in their own time and at their own expense. The department will not provide further financial assistance. This includes payment of administration or enrolment fees and the text book allowance.

4.3 Interruption to studies

While cadetship recipients are expected to complete a course of study within the period required, there may be circumstances (such as cultural reasons) where cadetship recipients may unexpectedly need to interrupt/defer studies.

Should this occur, the cadetship recipient must apply in writing to the Coordinator, Indigenous Career Progression Cadetship Program, to interrupt/defer their studies. Such cases will be considered on merit with particular consideration being given to circumstances leading to the interruption and effects on the completion of studies, and the intention of the educational institution in relation to the interruption/deferment.

Cadetship recipients will comply with the educational institution's rules and procedures relating to interruption/deferment of studies.

4.4 Changes to course of study

Cadetship recipients who wish to change their course of study, either prior to the commencement of their study or during the course of study, must seek approval in writing from the Coordinator, Indigenous Career Progression Cadetship Program, prior to negotiating any such arrangement with the educational institution.

Cadetship recipients who amend their course of study after commencement of the academic year, without approval from the Coordinator, Indigenous Career Progression Cadetship Program, may be withdrawn from the cadetship program.

4.5 Continuation of studies

Continued assistance under the cadetship program will be conditional upon the satisfactory completion of the current semester of study. Cadetship recipients must provide notification of their academic results to the Coordinator, Indigenous Career Progression Cadetship Program, as soon as they become available.
4.6 Academic failure

Prior to the cancellation of a cadetship where a cadetship recipient is failing subjects, all reasonable avenues to assist the cadetship recipient should have been exhausted. Where the cadetship recipient has been excluded from the educational institution, the cadetship will be automatically cancelled.

The Coordinator, Indigenous Career Progression Cadetship Program, will advise the cadetship recipient in writing of a decision to withdraw departmental support under the cadetship program.

4.7 Withdrawal from subjects

Where a cadetship recipient wishes to withdraw from a subject, he/she must obtain prior written approval from the Coordinator, Indigenous Career Progression Cadetship Program.

A request for approval to withdraw from subjects must be made in writing and include a statement of reasons. The statement should also be accompanied by evidence from student counsellors and/or course directors that the withdrawal is warranted and will not have an adverse effect on the cadetship recipient’s capacity to complete the course of study.

Should a cadetship recipient withdraw from a subject their study cadetship may be suspended and the allowance for text books may be revoked.

Cadetship recipients must contact the Coordinator, Indigenous Career Progression Cadetship Program immediately prior to the withdrawal from their course of study.

Where cadetship recipients fail to notify their non-attendance, their cadetship may be revoked. Where cadetship recipients withdraw from their course of study, their cadetship will be revoked.

5.0 Entitlements

5.1 Educational costs and financial assistance

Cadetship recipients are eligible for reimbursement of educational costs which include full payment of HECS. Recipients will also receive up to a $450 educational allowance each semester to be applied to cover the cost of textbooks and necessary course materials. If a student is not studying full time, entitlements will be calculated on a pro rata basis.

Other financial assistance maybe available on request, but is at the discretion of the Chief Human Resources Officer, Human Resources and Ethical Standards.

5.2 Payment and taxation of financial assistance

Human Resources and Ethical Standards will provide an education allowance reimbursement directly to the cadetship recipient following the completion of the academic requirements.

A copy of all course fee invoices should be forwarded through to icpp@communities.qld.gov.au to enable payment processes to begin.

5.3 Travel costs

Travel costs to and from the education institution is the responsibility of the cadetship recipient, although assistance maybe granted in special circumstances.