



RMIT
UNIVERSITY

Parents and Families Guide

Your Guide to the Supports and Key information for Indigenous Student at RMIT University.

'Sentient' Artwork by Hollie Johnson
(Gunaikurnai and Monero Ngarigo)





Acknowledgement of Country

RMIT University acknowledges the people of the Woi wurrung and Boon wurrung language groups of the eastern Kulin Nation on whose unceded lands we conduct the business of the University.

RMIT respectfully acknowledges their Ancestors and Elders, past and present. RMIT also acknowledges the Traditional Custodians and their Ancestors of the lands and waterways across Australia where we conduct our business.

Purpose and Values

- ◆ Community-minded
- ◆ Inclusive
- ◆ Accountable
- ◆ Supportive
- ◆ Engaging
- ◆ Innovative

The Ngarara Willim Centre at RMIT University is a culturally safe space. We promote the self-determination and success of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and Community. We are dedicated to nurturing their growth, aspirations and empowering each individual to reach their full potential. We do this by supporting them in their educational journey and equipping them with the skills, knowledge and a sense of belonging.



About the Guide

Purpose of the Handbook

Hello!

On behalf of the Ngarara Willim Centre, we are excited to have you as part of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student cohort here at RMIT University!

We have put this information together for you to pass on to your support person (parent, sibling, friend etc.) or also to hold onto for yourself that will provide guidance on support available to you as a Student at RMIT, and the specific supports for you as an Indigenous Student with Ngarara Willim Centre.

We have included a table of contents, which provides directions to the relevant support you are after within this document. If you have any questions regarding the information in this document, you can stay in touch with us via the channels below.

How to Connect with Ngarara Willim

-  **Locations**
 - City campus: Building 5, Level 1, Room 5. 124 La Trobe Street
 - Bundoora campus: Building 202, Level 3, Room 21. 225-245 Plenty Road
 - Brunswick campus: Building 514, Level 1, Room 3. 25 Dawson Street

-  **Call or Email**
 - **Phone:** +61 3 9925 4885 (9am-5pm Mon-Fri, excluding public holidays)
 - **Email:** ngarara.willim@rmit.edu.au

Why This Guide Matters

- **Information sharing** Sharing important information so you can understand the academic journey.
- **Awareness** Build awareness of the Ngarara Willim Centre and the work we do for Indigenous learners.
- **Support** Understand what supports are available at RMIT and have links and information in one place.

Socials



<https://www.facebook.com/ngararawillim>



[@ngararawillim](https://www.instagram.com/ngararawillim)



[Ngarara Willim Centre](#)

Our socials are great for keeping up to date with Centre activity, but student requests should all be directed to ngararawillim.studentsupport@rmit.edu.au

Students will have access to additional platforms, such as Canvas, which is where all study and class materials will be located.

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Quick Links

Below is a list of quick links you may find helpful when navigating RMIT's website:

Academic Support:

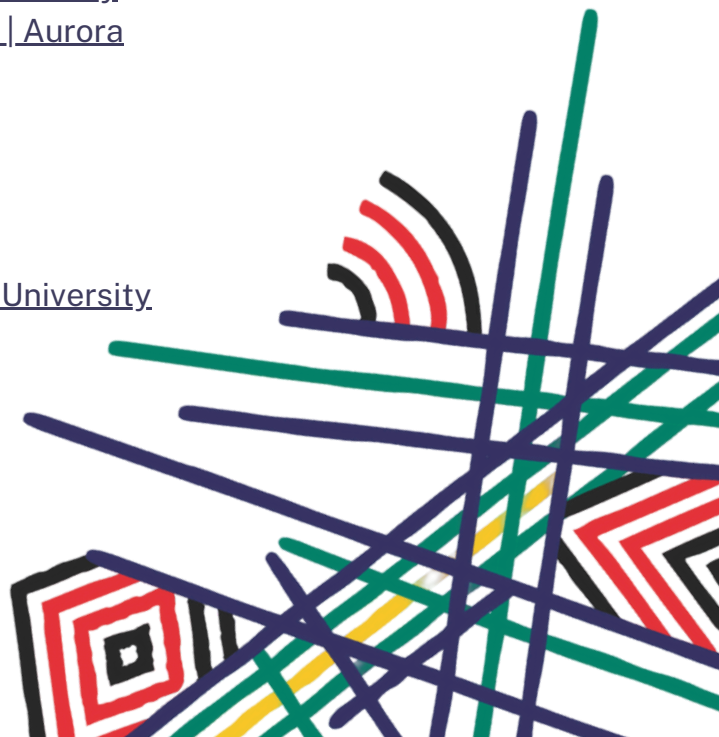
[Program inductions - RMIT University](#)
[Enrol as a new student - RMIT University](#)
[Study support - RMIT University](#)
[Free software and apps for students - RMIT University](#)
[How2RMIT - RMIT University](#)
[Ngarara Willim tutoring - RMIT University](#)
[Academic calendar - RMIT University](#)

Wellbeing Support:

[Compulsory Modules](#)
[5 ways to avoid burnout before the break - RMIT University](#)
[Managing study stress - RMIT University](#)
[Student Hardship Assistance Grants - RMIT University](#)
[Ngarara Willim Centre – Advisor Booking](#)
[Special consideration - RMIT University](#)
[Financial welfare advice - RMIT University](#)

Admin Support:

[Orientation - RMIT University](#)
[Public transport concession card - RMIT University](#)
[Scholarships](#) | [Indigenous Pathways Portal](#) | [Aurora Foundation](#)
[Before semester starts - RMIT University](#)
[Ngarara Willim facilities - RMIT University](#)
[Student cards - RMIT University](#)
[Orientation - RMIT University](#)
[Credit for prior study or experience - RMIT University](#)



Important Dates

Important Cultural Dates:

- Invasion/ Survival Day 26 January
- Anniversary of the National Apology 13 February
- National Close the Gap Day 17 March
- National Sorry Day 26 May
- Anniversary of 1967 Referendum 27 May
- Reconciliation Week 27 May - 3 June
- Mabo Day 3 June
- Coming of the Light 3 July
- NAIDOC Week 3 July
- Indigenous Children's Day 4 August
- World Indigenous Peoples Day 9 October
- Indigenous Literacy Day September 6

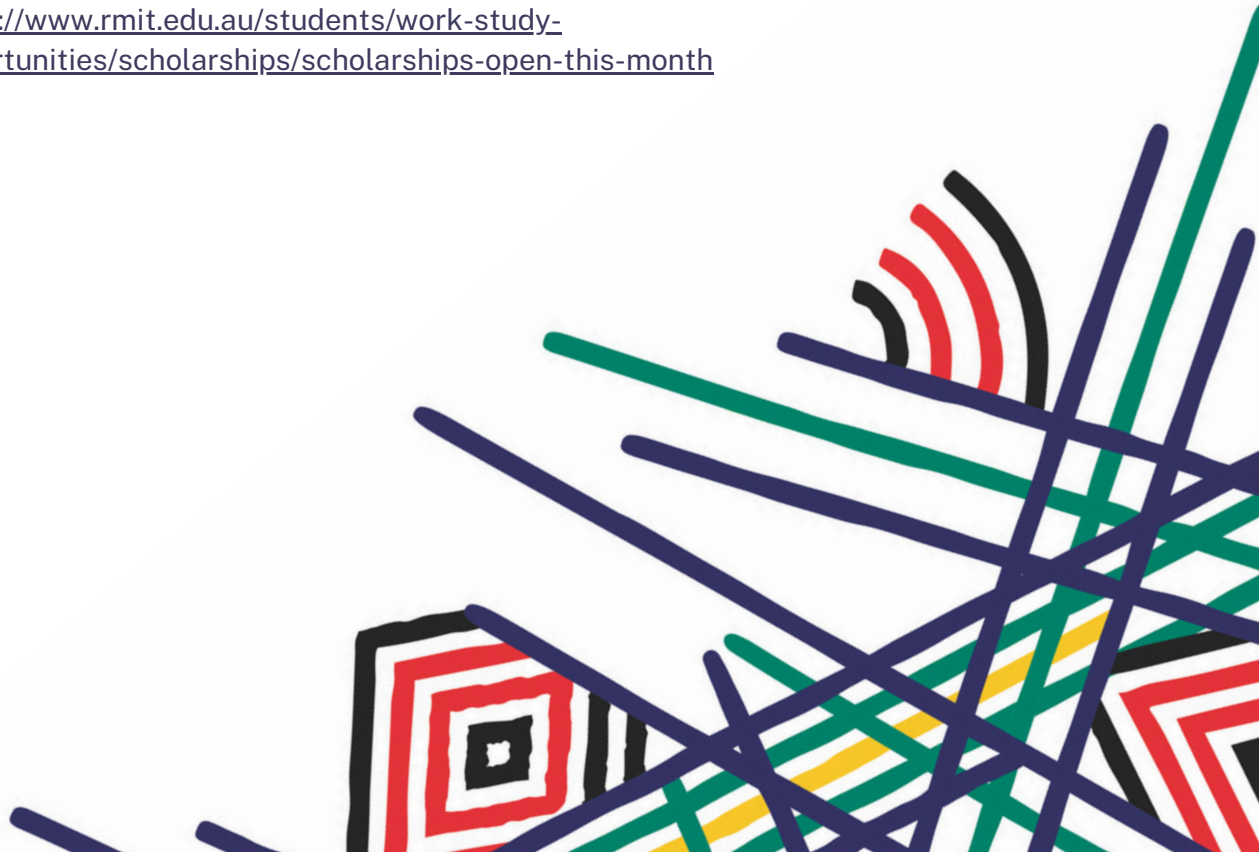
Important University Dates:

RMIT Important Dates:

<https://www.rmit.edu.au/students/student-essentials/important-dates>

Monthly reminder to check Scholarships available:

<https://www.rmit.edu.au/students/work-study-opportunities/scholarships/scholarships-open-this-month>



Support at Home

Supporting a student from home is crucial for their emotional, mental, and academic well-being. Encouragement, reminders of available support, and being a calming influence can help in the following ways:

- **Emotional Well-being:** Students often face pressure from schoolwork, extracurriculars, or personal challenges. When parents or guardians encourage them, it reinforces their sense of value and self-worth, helping them stay motivated. Knowing that someone believes in them boosts their confidence and reduces feelings of isolation.
- **Mental Health Support:** Academic stress can contribute to anxiety or frustration. Offering reassurance and reminding the student that it's okay to ask for help or take breaks fosters a positive mindset. It helps them cope with the inevitable ups and downs of school life in a healthy way.
- **Fostering a Growth Mindset:** Encouragement from home can help students embrace challenges and see mistakes as opportunities for growth. Rather than focusing on failure, they can view learning as a process, and this mindset can be critical for long-term success.
- **Building Resilience:** When parents or caregivers provide consistent support, they teach students that setbacks are a normal part of life and academic growth. A calming presence during stressful times can help them stay grounded and develop resilience to navigate challenges.
- **Creating a Safe Space:** Home is often the place where students feel safest. A nurturing, understanding environment where they feel supported can foster a sense of stability and security, which is essential for academic focus and emotional balance.
- **Promoting Open Communication:** Regular check-ins from home encourage open conversations about struggles, progress, or achievements. This fosters a collaborative relationship between student and family, allowing the student to feel heard and supported.

By offering a calm, supportive, and encouraging environment, students are more likely to thrive academically and emotionally. Their ability to approach their challenges with confidence and resilience is strengthened when they know they have the support and understanding of those around them.



Support available through Ngarara Willim Centre

For students on campus, the Ngarara Willim Centre is available for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. These spaces are designed to be a culturally safe environment where students can access private study and meeting rooms, computers and printing facilities, and a kitchen area for making a cuppa or preparing food. There is also a comfortable lounge space for students to relax and socialise.

Our staff work within these spaces and are available for students to visit at any time. We provide access to these spaces seven days a week, from 7am to 10pm. Staff are on-site from 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday. All students need to do is request access.

Students use our spaces not only for studying but also to build connections, form friendships, and engage in social and cultural enrichment activities. Additionally, these spaces offer opportunities to access other services and support available here at RMIT.

Student Advisors

The Ngarara Willim Centre offers dedicated support to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Each student is assigned a student advisor who will assist them throughout their study journey at RMIT University. Advisors provide guidance, encouragement, and serve as a vital connection to the wide range of services the university offers.

Student advisors will reach out to students several times during the semester to ensure their experience is both enjoyable and successful. It's important for students to communicate any challenges or difficulties they may be facing so that their advisor can help navigate through them smoothly. We want students to know that there is always a solution to a problem.

Our student advisors are here, ready and eager to assist students every step of the way. All the support available in this document can be accessed through the Ngarara Willim Student Advisors.

***Note, Due to our privacy requirements, we can only provide advice to family/friends, we are not able to specifically provide details relating to students.**





Indigenous Eligibility

To access some of the Indigenous-specific services and supports, such as Indigenous scholarships and tutoring, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students need to confirm their Indigenous eligibility.

This usually involves providing documents that demonstrate which mob and/or language group you belong to, and your relationship with community and your heritage.

To find out more about the types of documentation we can accept, visit this page: <https://www.rmit.edu.au/students/support-services/indigenous/future-students/eligibility>

All students who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, regardless of if you can provide documentation or not, are encouraged to connect with the Ngarara Willim Centre for support throughout your studies and to engage with our community of students.

Tutoring and Academic Support

Students may not realise that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at RMIT University have access to Academic Tutoring and support through the Ngarara Willim Academic Excellence Program.

We offer a range of dedicated tutors who are familiar with program areas and course content, ready to assist with all aspects of academic success.

This program is a fantastic way to:

- Find a study rhythm
- Develop effective study habits
- Manage time effectively
- Plan and organise assessments
- Review and provide feedback on drafts and help with structure
- Go over course content
- And, most importantly, be there when things get tough and extra support is needed

Students can access up to 8 hours of tutoring per week, with additional hours available for exam preparation. To get started students simply submit an application and wait for a member of the team to reach out to discuss specific needs.

Check out the website and make an application

<https://www.rmit.edu.au/students/support-and-facilities/student-support/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-students/indigenous-tutorial-assistance-scheme-itas>

- Study Support - <https://www.rmit.edu.au/students/study-support>
- PostGrad Support- <https://www.rmit.edu.au/students/my-course/research-students/resources>
- Studiosity- <https://www.rmit.edu.au/students/study-support/studiosity>
- One-on-one consultations- <https://www.rmit.edu.au/students/study-support/consultations>
- Learning Lab- <https://www.rmit.edu.au/students/study-support/learning-lab>



Scholarships and Financial Support

Being financially independent as a student can be hard. There are a wide range of scholarships and financial support that the university has on offer, and some that are specific to the Ngarara Willim Centre. It's best to chat with the students' allocated advisor to discuss what may be available. Financial strain can have a direct impact on being able to engage in study, so encourage them to make contact us as soon as they experience any hardship.

RMIT Scholarships

RMIT supports a comprehensive scholarship program that addresses some of the financial, educational, and difficult circumstances our students can face through their studies. More than 2000 scholarships worth millions of dollars are awarded annually.

<https://www.rmit.edu.au/students/work-study-opportunities/scholarships/browse-scholarships>

<https://www.rmit.edu.au/students/work-study-opportunities/scholarships/scholarships-open-this-month>

Indigenous Scholarships

Some scholarships are available only to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students. To be eligible, students will need to share documentation with the Ngarara Willim Centre. More information on the type of documents we can consider is available here: <https://www.rmit.edu.au/students/support-services/indigenous/future-students/eligibility>.

It is a requirement of our funding that students who receive these scholarships provide their eligibility documents. We understand that gaining these documents can be a lengthy and complex process, and the Ngarara Willim Centre can support students during this. If a student cannot provide these documents it will not affect their access to the centre, participation in our events or social activities, they are a part of our community regardless.

Financial Support Available:

<https://www.rmit.edu.au/students/support-and-facilities/student-support/finance>

- Financial Welfare Advice- help you understand what support options are available to you
- Student Hardship Grants- If you are experiencing financial difficulty, you may be eligible for vouchers or cash grants.
- Government and Community Support- including Centrelink support payments and emergency material aid including food, housing, and crisis support
- RMIT Tax Help- RMIT Tax Help is here to help take the challenge out of tax time by guiding you through your tax return.
- Budgeting- tools and ways to help you budget and manage your money.



Extension of Time: Assessments

At times, students may find it challenging to attend classes or submit assignments on time. If this happens, please reach out to your allocated student advisor at Ngarara Willim. They can provide guidance on the best course of action. In most cases, teachers or lecturers may grant a one-week extension. However, if more time is needed, students will need to go through the Special Consideration process. Special Consideration is an online application where students must upload supporting documentation, such as an Impact Statement, to explain why they were unable to meet deadlines.

Student advisors can assist with providing an Impact Statement for applications, or students can download the form and have their medical practitioner complete it. For more information, visit: [Supporting Documents for Special Consideration](#).
Special Consideration: If unexpected circumstances beyond the student's control have impacted their ability to complete an assessment,
Adjustments to Assessment: based on individual circumstances. Find the one that suits the students' needs here: [Adjustments to Assessment](#).

Equitable Learning Service

The Ngarara Willim Centre works closely with RMIT's Equitable Learning Service. The Equitable Learning Service provides support and equal opportunities for students with a disability, long-term illness and/or mental health condition. They also provide support to primary carers of individuals with a disability. Students can let their advisor know if they would like an introduction to this service to discuss their needs.

The Equitable Learning Service can assist students who suffer with:

- physical disability
- vision impairment
- hearing impairment
- intellectual disability
- learning disability
- neurological condition
- mental health condition
- mobility impairment
- long-term medical illness/condition

Types of support and adjustments available differ from student to student. The Equitable Learning service can provide:

- adjustments to your study conditions e.g. more time in exams
- course materials in other formats
- enabling assistance staff
- assistive technology

If you think this service may be relevant, encourage the student to ask their advisor about it. It could make all the difference to their academic performance and their health.

Culturally Aligned Support- Indigenous Social Emotional Wellbeing

Indigenous Social and Emotional Wellbeing Coordinator

The Counselling and Psychological Service (CAPS) at RMIT with Ngarara Willim have created the Indigenous Social and Emotional Wellbeing Coordinator role. This role provides students with culturally safe and inclusive support around health and wellbeing. The coordinator is available to students for longer appointments- phone and in person, and practices from the Ngarara Willim Centre on a regular basis. The coordinator can be contacted via the Ngarara Willim Student Advisors.

Types of support that can be accessed:

- Counselling- Free, confidential, and professional mental health support.
- Equitable Learning Service- Support for students with a disability, long-term illness and/or mental health condition.
- Housing support- Get help and advice to find accommodation that suits your needs.
- Financial Support- Financial grants and assistance are available for students in need.
- Legal Support- Get free, confidential advice from a lawyer via the Student Legal Service.
- Medical Hub- High-quality medical care and mixed/bulk-billing at RMIT City campus.
- RUSU Compass- Compass is a service that supports RMIT students by offering advice, information, and referrals regarding a wide range of issues that students experience during their time at university

<https://www.rmit.edu.au/students/support-and-facilities/student-support>

Careers and Employment

The Ngarara Willim Centre has a dedicated Careers Officer, meaning students have the opportunity to work with this advisor on their career and employment journey. It is never too early or too late to start conversations. There are so many opportunities for students in the areas of:

- Casual work while studying
- Internships for Industry Experience
- Graduate roles and the job market
- Volunteering opportunities
- Final year support and planning
- Skill building- Resumes and CV's, Cover letters, social media impact, interview skills

You can get in touch with the Careers Officer by emailing:

ngararawillim.careers@rmit.edu.au

Deadly Careers Site

The RMIT Careers and Employment Service have developed a site specifically for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students where information is collated and available in one place. The site contains Indigenous Specific opportunities for students to take advantage of.

<https://rmit.edu.au/sharepoint/sites/NgararaWillimCareersWebsite>

Student Support/RMIT Connect

Support opportunities are endless at RMIT, it can often be difficult to know where to go to find out how to connect with the support that is most relevant to you. It is best to chat with your Ngarara Willim allocated advisor. RMIT Connect is also a good place to go to seek help and support.

You can:

- Ask about enrolment
- Ask about course or program
- Ask about fees and finance
- Ask about results and graduation
- Ask about wellbeing, support, and housing
- Ask about global experience programs
- Ask about class timetables

<https://www.rmit.edu.au/students/contact-and-help/connect>

Social and Cultural Engagement

The Ngarara Willim Centre provides many opportunities throughout the year for students to get involved in. Students are encouraged to not just use the facilities, but to also get involved the community. Ngarra Willim Centre is a safe cultural space, filled with caring staff and supportive students. Come and join in!

- Our Community- Being part of the centre, participating in events, coming in for a chat and a coffee, making friends and supporting each other
- Indigenous Nationals (Uni Games), Global Mobility Opportunities, student work opportunities,
- Cultural Programs and Events, Social engagement activities,
- Academic related activity and support



Other Supports and Information

Victorian Aborigines Advancement League

Aims to improve the social, economic and cultural advancement of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of Victoria.

13 Yarn

13YARN [Thirteen YARN] is the first national crisis support line for mob who are feeling overwhelmed or having difficulty coping.

Koori Youth Council

Representative body for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people in Victoria.

Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated

Peak state-wide Aboriginal community-controlled organisation for education and training in Victoria.

Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service

Aboriginal community-controlled organisation operating Statewide in Victoria, providing community justice services and legal practice services to all Victorian Aboriginal community.

Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency

State-wide Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation (ACCO) servicing children, young people, families, and community members.

Djirra

Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation offering practical support to all Aboriginal women and particularly to Aboriginal people who are currently experiencing family violence or have in the past.

Federation of Victorian Traditional Owner Corporations (FVTOC)

The Federation is the Victorian state-wide body that convenes and advocates for the rights and interests of Traditional Owners while progressing wider social, economic, environmental, and cultural objectives.

Other Supports and Information

Victorian Aboriginal Housing Board

Not-for-profit registered Housing Association.

Victorian Aboriginal Health Service

Established in 1973 to address the specific medical needs of Victorian indigenous communities.

Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (VACCHO)

Peak body for the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal peoples living in Victoria.

Victorian Aboriginal Community Services Association Ltd

State-wide agency that provides advice to Government on a range of community development issues as well as being a major provider of extensive services to the Aboriginal community in both the metropolitan and some regional communities.

First Peoples' Health and Wellbeing

Aboriginal community-controlled health service that, along with a number of Aboriginal community-controlled health organisations across Victoria, has played an essential role in delivering culturally safe, holistic primary healthcare to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Dardi Munwurro

Specialist Aboriginal Family Violence service to help build stronger families and safer communities.

NGARARA WILLIM CENTRE



Artwork by Wurundjeri artist Mandy Nicholson
FOR ABORIGINAL AND
TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLES



'Sentient' Artwork by Hollie Johnson
(Gunaikurnai and Monero Ngarigo)