Why is UB promoting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Traineeships?

The University is committed to indigenous employment and reconciliation. This commitment is enshrined in the University’s Union Collective Agreement (UCA) Clause 11. The clause outlines that in accordance with UB’s Reconciliation Action Plan and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy, the University is committed to increasing employment and development opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians. This will be achieved through the implementation of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Policy and Procedure, which includes the appointment of a dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Co-ordinator.

The role of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Co-ordinator includes implementing a range of employment strategies to increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people employed at UB. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Traineeships are just one of these strategies.

What is a UB Workplace Based Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Traineeship?

This is where the University employs an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person to learn an occupation or trade on the job with accredited training provided. It is the same as an apprenticeship. When all the required competencies are achieved, the trainee receives a nationally recognised qualification.

Trainees can be employed on a full-time or part-time basis under the National Training Wage structure. Wages can vary according to the years of secondary school completed, age, level of qualification to be attained, and the type of industry or job.

How is a trainee different to other employees?

A trainee is exactly that, a trainee. You should view an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Traineeship as over and above your normal staff compliment. You should not have the same competency expectations of a trainee as you would of an experienced employee. The main focus of a trainee is to learn on the job and gain an associated qualification during the period. A Training Plan will be developed between the teacher and the trainee’s immediate supervisor to provide structured learning during the Traineeship. It is recommended that the manager of the work area also have an involvement in the Training Plan, as it is likely to involve the trainee working in a variety of different sections of the work area throughout the traineeship period.

In all other respects, trainees are treated the same as other employees and are covered by the provisions of the University’s Union Collective Agreement (UCA).

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Co-ordinator is available to clarify any questions or concerns you or the trainee may have about the Traineeship process and expectations.

Who pays for the trainee’s enrolment fees into an accredited course?

The trainee is required to be enrolled in a relevant accredited course related to the work they will be learning and performing as part of the Traineeship. The enrolment fee is expected to be paid by the work area responsible for the trainee. Currently, the enrolment fee for a full-time traineeship is approximately between $800 to $900 per annum.
How much should I budget for an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Traineeship?

As per the National Training Wage, based on a full-time traineeship, completing a Certificate IV in an administrative service or business field, the maximum annual salary would be approximately $29,120 per annum, compared to the current base level HEW 1 annual salary of $37,160 per annum. If you deduct all the available government incentives listed below, the approximate maximum full-time annual trainee wage would be $18,020. You would then need to include the annual enrolment fee into the relevant accredited course of approx $900 per annum. Therefore you would need to budget for approximately $19,000 per annum, plus other on costs.

What are some of the likely financial incentives that can be received from government?

As well as the initial salary saving compared to a HEW 1, there are a range of financial government incentives that can be accessed as follows (based on full-time employment):

- On commencement of a Traineeship ......................... $1,500
- On completion of a Traineeship ................................. $2,500
- **Sub Total** ......................................................... $4,000

- Indigenous Wage subsidy ...................................... $6,600
- Career Development Assistance .............................. $ 500
- **Potential Total Incentives Available** .................... $11,100

How do I go about applying for the financial incentives from government?

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Co-ordinator will explain and discuss the incentives available and will apply for them on your behalf. Once the funds are paid to the University, they will be transferred into your School/Directorate’s account. You may need to let both the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Co-ordinator and Finance know which account you would prefer the funds be deposited.

How long will the traineeship go for?

This generally depends on the minimum duration period nominated for the particular job and qualification level to be achieved, and whether the trainee is full-time or part-time. In general, where the nominal full-time duration of the training qualification is two years or less, the maximum duration for a part-time trainee will be three years. Where the nominal full-time duration of the training qualification is greater than two years and up to four years, the maximum part-time duration will be six years.

All trainees must have a Training Contract which will stipulate the length of the traineeship and associated Training Plan. Duration periods can be negotiated with the trainee but cannot be less than the minimum specified.
What is a Traineeship?
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What happens if a trainee completes all training requirements earlier than anticipated or needs more time?
The duration of a traineeship can be varied by agreement between the trainee and UB. This can be done at any time during the Traineeship. If this occurs, the teacher, AAC representative and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Co-ordinator must be consulted and advised.
Completion can occur earlier than the maximum duration period if all competencies have been attained. An extension to the maximum period can be mutually agreed if all required competencies have not been attained.

What is the balance between work and training?
The minimum hours of employment for a Workplace Based Traineeship is 13 hours per week. Full-time Traineeships are based on a 38 hour week and in UB’s case, 36.75 hours per week.
Trainees enrolled in traineeships at Certificate III level and above must be withdrawn from work duties for a minimum of three hours per week to complete planned, structured training, as set by the teacher, in consultation with the workplace supervisor. The three hours per week are pro-rata for part-time trainees.

What is the process for signing up an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Traineeship?
Once you have discussed the possibility of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Traineeship with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Co-ordinator and made your decision to engage an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander trainee, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Co-ordinator will contact an Australian Apprenticeship Centre (AAC) representative from VECCI who will come out to the workplace, meet with the prospective trainee, their supervisor and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Co-ordinator and complete the Training Contract.
Both the University and the trainee must sign the Training Contract. The trainee will also receive a copy of the signed Training Contract.
Once the Training Contract is registered by the AAC, Skills Victoria will send you out information confirming the registration of the Training Contract.
Once registered, you can proceed to organise the enrolment of the trainee in the relevant UB training course. This must be completed within three months of commencement.

Who will conduct the accredited training course
In the majority of cases, UB will have the relevant accredited course on its scope and therefore provide the training. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Co-ordinator can check with the AAC representative if the University has the relevant accredited course chosen by the trainee on their scope, before signing them up on the Traineeship.
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Where the University does not have the course registered on their scope, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Co-ordinator together with the trainee, the trainee’s supervisor and/or manager of the work area will source an appropriate Registered Training Organisation (RTO) to provide the accredited training. Every effort is to be made to ensure that the RTO chosen will deliver the accredited training using workplace based methodology. Attending classes should not be a requirement.

If an external RTO needs to be sourced, they should ideally have a partnership or business relationship with the University rather than be a direct competitor.

How will the training component of the Traineeship work?

The Traineeship will operate using structured workplace based training standards

The relevant School responsible for the training (or RTO) will be required to:

- develop a Training Plan in conjunction with the trainee’s supervisor/manager;
- conduct an initial induction visit and a minimum of four further ‘face-to-face’ visits per year;
- make monthly (as a minimum) contact with both the trainee and their supervisor/manager either by email, fax or phone, to gain feedback on the support provided to date and to record training hours completed and competencies gained in the previous month;
- ensure the trainee has been withdrawn from work duties for a minimum of three hours per week (pro-rata for part-time trainees) averaged over a four week cycle, to complete structured training;
- ensure a workplace log has been kept and signed by both the trainee and supervisor/manager related to time spent on structured training; and
- quality assure and validate the trainee’s workplace assessments.

How does the Training Plan work?

1. Pre-Training Review

Prior to developing the Training Plan, the responsible teacher for the training will conduct a pre-training review with the trainee of their current competencies, including literacy and numeracy skills. This is to avoid duplication of any competencies already acquired and to determine that the proposed learning strategies and materials will be appropriate.

2. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

If the trainees requests, the responsible teacher must undertake an RPL process to ascertain and record all prior competencies achieved as a result of any prior work, life experiences and other informal training. These identified competencies should not be included in the structured training delivered as part of the Traineeship.
3. The Training Plan

The Training Plan is developed in consultation with the trainee’s supervisor/manager and must include as a minimum, the following:

- the competencies to be attained;
- a time frame for achieving the competencies;
- the training to be undertaken;
- the delivery modes that will be used;
- detail of structured training to be completed when the trainee is withdrawn from work duties. This would include any regulatory or compliance units of study;
- who is responsible for the delivery and assessment of each competency;
- how the assessments will be conducted and when;
- a record of RPL credit competencies granted;
- the name of the qualification to be issued on completion; and
- any other specific requirements that may have been agreed as part of the Training Contract.

Can the trainee fail their training?

Basically, no. If after an assessment the trainee has not met all the required standards for the unit of competency, they will be assessed as “not yet competent” and have further opportunities to be assessed and prove themselves competent.

Can a trainee withdraw from a Traineeship?

Yes they can. The trainee can cancel the Training Contract at any time by effectively ‘giving notice’ of employment in accordance with the UCA provisions. However, either the trainee, the immediate supervisor or both should discuss this with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Co-ordinator before any decision is made in withdrawing from the Traineeship or terminating employment.

The option of extending the Traineeship should be considered if the trainee is having difficulties in achieving or meeting the necessary requirements.

If the decision is made to withdraw, a request for cancellation will need to be obtained from the AAC representative who will in turn forward the relevant forms to Skills Victoria. There are separate forms for both the trainee and employer to complete and provide the reason/s why they wish to have the Training Contract cancelled.
Who do I contact if I’m having difficulties with the trainee?

In the first instance you would contact the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Co-ordinator who will then refer you to the relevant person/s depending on the type of difficulties you are having with the trainee.

Who can I talk to about any other matters related to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Traineeship?

Again, you would first contact the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Co-ordinator who will then determine whether the matter will need to be referred on to another relevant person/s.

Who is the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Co-ordinator?

The current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Co-ordinator is Ben Atkinson who can be contacted on (03) 5327 9817 or email b.atkinson@ballarat.edu.au.