

\$17 million ACU program to point new teachers in the right direction

Australian Catholic University is proud to launch its new All Points to Teaching (APTT) program designed to boost employment-based pathways and access to fully funded undergraduate and postgraduate teaching degrees.

Already Australia's largest provider of initial teacher education, ACU's APTT program will award an extra 285 students with scholarships to complete a Bachelor of Education (Secondary or Secondary and Special Education) or a Master of Teaching (Secondary) while working in schools across New South Wales and Queensland.

The APTT program is being funded by an \$11 637 692 Australian Government Department of Education High Achieving Teacher Program grant and a \$5 452 767 commitment from ACU.

ACU Vice-Chancellor and President Professor Zlatko Skrbis said the APTT partnership between the university and the Australian Government was a testament to ACU's industry-leading reputation.

"We have long been leaders in educating high-quality teachers across the country and our new APTT program will further cement this tradition of delivering more 21st Century educators for 21st Century learners," he said.

ACU Executive Dean of Education and Arts Professor Mary Ryan said the APTT program was a game-changer for the teaching profession, particularly in the face of ongoing workforce shortages.

"Our APTT program is designed to connect low socio-economic and hard to staff schools, secondary students, and future teachers together from the get-go," Professor Ryan said.

"The APTT cohort will be placed in schools most in need from the outset while they study their degrees and receive support from the intensive wraparound scaffolds required for their success and career longevity."

The fully funded APTT program will start next year with 285 students undertaking the new employment-based pathways between 2025 and 2031.

While they study, students will be paid to work in government, independent and Catholic secondary schools in roles including teacher aides, school learning support officers, and paraprofessionals. They will work as teacher interns in the final year of their studies.

The APTT students will study high demand discipline areas including mathematics, English, history, and geography as part of their online teaching degrees.

They will be assigned to one of seven ACU support hubs linked to partner schools, the NSW and Qld governments, several Catholic dioceses and community organisations across each state.

In the hubs, students will receive intensive professional learning in key areas including advanced classroom management, literacy support, AI, learner diversity, and Indigenous culture.

Professor Ryan said the APTT program was committed to increasing participation of students from groups underrepresented in higher education and within in the teaching profession including those from regional, rural and remote areas, First Nations and mature-age students, and those with disabilities.

"There has never been a better time for anyone within the orbit of a school, including current classroom support workers, parent volunteers, Year 11 and 12 students, and those thinking of a career change, to embark on this groundbreaking journey towards a fulfilling and rewarding career," she said.

"We are offering fully funded scholarships in addition to the opportunity to earn and learn while studying an engaging and evidence-based degree backed by wraparound support including mentoring and coaching, academic assistance, in-person intensives, and peer support networks.

"You could literally go straight into a school and make a positive difference in a child's life from day one."

The APTT program is one of several industry-leading pathways at ACU designed to provide flexible learning opportunities for those wanting to become teachers.

ACU's successful partnership with the Teach for Australia program has also received a Federal Government funding boost, with additional support for students studying teaching under that employment-based teaching pathway.

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Media Contact: Mary Papadakis, 0448 491 059, mary.papadakis@acu.edu.au

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