

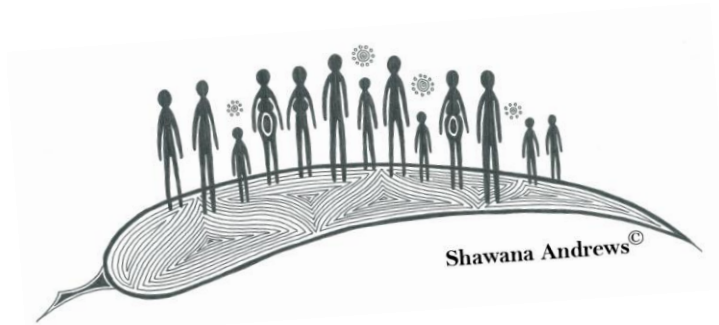
# Murrup Barak

Melbourne Institute for Indigenous  
Development



## ITAS Academic Excellence Program

*A Guide for Tutors*



December 2013

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

This guide is for ITAS Academic Excellence Program tutors, or people who intend to apply for a tutor position.

The information in this guide is not intended to be exhaustive and may be subject to change. The information provided is based on the Federal Government Guidelines. In the event of inconsistency between this guide and the Government Guidelines, the Government Guidelines will prevail. For further information Murrup Barak's contact details are provided at the end of this guide.

### 1.1. ITAS Academic Excellence Program

The Indigenous Tutorial Assistance Scheme (ITAS) is a specialised tutorial program established by the Federal Government to enhance educational outcomes for Indigenous Australians. It provides funding to Murrup Barak to employ qualified tutors who work one-to-one with enrolled Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to assist students with their academic studies.

Administered at the University by Murrup Barak as the ITAS Academic Excellence Program, it utilises current University staff and students to perform both individual and group tutoring for students across a broad range of discipline areas. This service is provided free to Indigenous students at the University.

### 1.2. The role of the tutor

The primary role of the tutor is to assist students to maximise their academic success. Tutors will be required to provide up to 2 hours tuition per week for each student; however this can increase to five (5) additional hours in total (not per subject) during examination preparation breaks.

The details of the tutor role can be found in the **Casual ITAS Academic Excellence Program Tutor Duty Statement**. This document is available for download through the Murrup Barak website.

### 1.3. Key Responsibilities

- Identify key areas of a student's academic support need;
- provide expert advice to allocated students on the subject and/or course requirements of the subject/s they are receiving tuition in;
- introduce allocated students to the underlying principles of those subjects and discipline/s;
- support allocated students to develop skills in reading and writing for academic (subject and discipline specific) purposes at the required level;
- assist allocated students to develop effective independent study skills;
- to be well-informed of the University's student support services and make referrals to the student where appropriate;
- to uphold student confidentiality at all times, except where required by law or to report to Murrup Barak;
- Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) and Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S) responsibilities as published at: <http://safety.unimelb.edu.au/topics/responsibilities/>

## 1.4. Reporting and Monitoring

- In consultation with the student, provide a written statement of tutorial program objectives (**ITAS Academic Excellence Program Work Plan**) within two weeks of tutorial commencement;
- provide a written statement of student progress and tutorial program outcomes (**ITAS Academic Excellence Program Student Progress Report**) within two weeks of the end of a tutorial contract;
- discuss student welfare or progress issues with the program coordinator in Murrup Barak or (with student permission only) academic and professional staff within the Faculties where that student is enrolled;
- attend regular (twice per semester) meetings and additional events at Murrup Barak as required.

## 2. HOW TO APPLY

Tutor recruitment is managed within each faculty and/or departments and positions are advertised along with other tutor positions **in early February each year**. If you are interested in becoming an ITAS Academic Excellence Program tutor, please contact the relevant staff in your department.

If you are selected as a faculty or department tutor, and you have indicated your interest in the ITAS Academic Excellence Program tutor role, your details will be forwarded to Murrup Barak and you will be invited to attend a specialist tutor training day held during Orientation week.

If a student's tuition needs match your skills and area of expertise, you will then be invited to Murrup Barak to meet your allocated student.

## 3. SELECTION CRITERIA

The following selection criteria are used as a guide when departments, faculties and Murrup Barak are assessing your suitability for the ITAS Academic Excellence Program tutor role. Most tutors are postgraduate students that are already engaged as tutors within their faculty or department.

### 3.1. Essential Criteria

- Minimum of third-year level tertiary study (in a major sequence) in a discipline, with demonstrated high-level academic achievement.
- Experience teaching; tutoring or mentoring students at undergraduate level, experience teaching at the University of Melbourne will be highly regarded.
- Highly developed organisational, interpersonal and communication skills.
- A demonstrated understanding or ability to rapidly acquire an understanding of the issues that impact on Indigenous Australians undertaking University studies.

### 3.2. Desirable Criteria

- Previous experience working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in an education environment.

### 3.3. Special Requirements

- Availability for the entire academic semester.

- Preference will be given to suitably qualified Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander applicants; however applicants who have previously received ITAS tuition in the same subject area are ineligible to apply.
- Successful applicants will be required to undertake Specialist ITAS Academic Excellence Program Tutor Training co-developed by Murrup Barak and the Academic Skills Unit in Orientation week, in addition to tutor training programs offered through Faculties.
- In the case that a student is under 18 years of age, the tutor will be required to undertake an Australian Federal Police (AFP) National Criminal History Record (NCHRC) in accordance with the Federal Government's Working with Children policy.
- The tutor must declare to Murrup Barak as soon as possible any conflict of interest or circumstance that compromises their professional integrity in relation to their tutoring role.

## 4. EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS

### 4.1. Specialist Training and Support

All new tutors are required to attend a half-day Specialist ITAS Academic Excellence Program Tutor Training course co-developed by the Academic Skills Unit and Murrup Barak. Held in Orientation week, the course covers topics such as one-on-one tutorial skills and Indigenous students' experiences at University. This training is important to ensure that tutors have all the tools necessary to guarantee success in the ITAS Academic Excellence Program tutor role.

Participation in the training does not guarantee employment as a tutor with Murrup Barak, however all professional development and training is paid.

On-going support is available each semester through informal sessions hosted at Murrup Barak. Held twice per semester, it provides a valuable opportunity for tutors to debrief, exchange ideas and network.

### 4.2. Recognition Event

Tutors' contributions to enhancing the educational outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled at the University of Melbourne are formally recognised at an annual event hosted by Murrup Barak and the Office for Student Equity at the end of each year.

### 4.3. Contract

ITAS Academic Excellence Program Tutors are employed by Murrup Barak on a casual basis. No annual leave entitlement is paid under the casual contract.

No tutorial services can be authorised or provided until all the required documentation has been completed and returned to Murrup Barak and authority to commence tutorial sessions has been provided, in writing, by Murrup Barak.

No payments will be made for services conducted outside of the tuition start and end date, in excess of the contracted hours, unless authorised, in writing, by Murrup Barak.

### 4.4. Pay rates

The University's one to one tuition rates are:

- \$39.00 per hour (undergraduate)
- \$50.15 per hour (postgraduate)

#### 4.5. Payment processing

Tutors need to submit fortnightly timecards through Themis, supported by a scanned copy of their completed **ITAS Academic Excellence Program Tutor Claim for Payment** form, submitted via email. Usually Tutor Claim for Payment forms are completed and signed at the end of each tutorial. Tutor payments cannot be processed without a completed Tutor Claim for Payment form.

When approving payments, Murrup Barak will ensure that:

- the hours per week, period and hourly rate are consistent with those agreed between Murrup Barak and the tutor;
- the tutor has signed the claim;
- the student has countersigned the claim;
- payments have not been duplicated;
- an ITAS Academic Excellence Program Work Plan has been approved; and
- an ITAS Academic Excellence Program Student Progress Report has been provided for any previous contract arrangement

Themis can be accessed at: <http://themis.unimelb.edu.au/>.

A schedule of pay claim deadlines and pay dates can be found online at: <https://hr.unimelb.edu.au/benefits/pay/pay-dates>

#### 4.6. Insurance

As employees of the University of Melbourne, ITAS Academic Excellence Program tutors are covered by Work Cover insurance. Work Cover provides suitable and just compensation to an employee who has been injured at work or as a direct result of their employment.

For more information, please visit: <https://fpg.unimelb.edu.au/io/internal/staff/staff-workcover.html>

#### 4.7. Termination

ITAS Academic Excellence Program tutors are casual staff members employed on an hourly basis and can be terminated by the University at any time. Murrup Barak requests that you provide a minimum of two weeks' notice if you wish to cease performing tutorial services under the contract.

#### 4.8. Confidentiality

Any personal information obtained during the course of your contract may only be used for the purposes of the contract. You must comply with the **University's Privacy Policy** at: <http://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1104>

Failure to comply with the University's Privacy Policy is a serious breach of contract, and may result in termination of employment and/or legal action being taken against you.

### 5. PROVIDING TUITION

#### 5.1. Meeting your student for the first time

You will be invited to Murrup Barak to meet your allocated student for the first time. In this meeting you will be able to exchange contact details and plan your tutorials together, including where and when they will be held.

## 5.2. When and where can tuition take place?

It is preferred that ITAS Academic Excellence Program tutorials take place on campus. Apart from this, the tutorials can take place at any time agreed between you and the student, except when the student's scheduled lectures, (course) tutorials and workshops are held. Murrup Barak allocates the maximum number of hours a student can receive tuition, but is not involved with scheduling the time/s or booking the venue for tutorials to be conducted.

Murrup Barak has a limited amount of space available for tutorials. As demand for these spaces is high, advance bookings are recommended. Please contact Murrup Barak on +61 3 9035 3032 or email at [vicky.peters@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:vicky.peters@unimelb.edu.au) to check availability. You may also like to contact your student centre, faculty, department or libraries to enquire about suitable spaces they may have available.

## 5.3. How many hours tutoring are available?

Usually ITAS Academic Excellence Program tutors work between two and four hours per week during semester. The amount of work available for tutors is difficult to predict and varies according to:

- the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled in the discipline / subject areas tutors propose to work in;
- the number of ITAS Academic Excellence Program tutors already available in the area/s students request assistance;
- the number of students who request ITAS Academic Excellence Program assistance;
- the amount of funding available;
- the amount of ITAS Academic Excellence Program support requested by the students and approved by Murrup Barak.

Although eligible students are entitled to a maximum of two hours per week per subject, not all students choose not to use all the tutorial hours to which they may be entitled.

Students are also entitled to an increase of five (5) additional hours (in total, not per subject) during examination preparation breaks. This allocation is not automatic. Students who wish to access this provision should make a request, in writing, to Murrup Barak. You cannot make this request on a student's behalf.

## 5.4. Student 'No Show' Policy

Students are required to give you a minimum of four (4) hours' notice if they can't attend a scheduled tutorial for any reason. If a student does not give you reasonable advance notice, you must notify Murrup Barak as soon as possible. Murrup Barak reserves the right to review or cancel a student's ITAS Academic Excellence Program entitlements in these circumstances.

If a student does not attend a scheduled tutorial session without providing the minimum required notice, you will be paid for the first hour of the time you would otherwise have spent in a tutorial session. To claim payment for these sessions, simply note the date and the first hour of the planned tutorial and write 'no-show' in the space normally reserved for the student's signature. This payment can only be made twice in the life of any given tutorial contract period.

## 5.5. Tutor Support

In addition to the scheduled debriefing sessions held each semester, you are encouraged to discuss any ITAS Academic Excellence Program related issues with Murrup Barak as soon as they arise.

## 5.6. Grievance and Dispute Resolution

If for some reason you have a disagreement or conflict with a student, you should first try to resolve the matter directly with the student. If this doesn't work, you can approach Murrup Barak and explain the problem to them.

Murrup Barak may then undertake to resolve the issue by approaching the student on your behalf or by arranging a meeting between yourself, a staff member, and the student (if appropriate) so that the issue can be discussed and resolved.

For more information, please refer to the University's **Staff Grievances and Dispute Resolution Policy** (MPF1174) at: <http://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1174>

## 6. TUTOR CODE OF CONDUCT

This Code of Conduct is provided to outline the standards of professional conduct and personal behaviour expected of ITAS Academic Excellence Program Tutors at the University of Melbourne. It is not intended to be exhaustive and should be read in conjunction with the University's **Responsible Conduct of Staff Policy** (MPF1160) at: <http://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1160> .

### 6.1. General Conduct

ITAS Academic Excellence Program tutors have a responsibility to treat all people with whom they have contact with courtesy and sensitivity and must conduct themselves with integrity, accountability and responsibility.

Tutors are in a position of trust with students, and while it is important to develop a rapport with students, sensitivity should be applied to ensure that student and tutor relationships are maintained on a professional basis. ITAS Academic Excellence Program tutors should:

- remember that they are a role model for students;
- attempt to engage students in the tutorial session;
- offer educational support and encouragement;
- use language and topics of conversation appropriate to the situation.

### 6.2. Academic Honesty and Integrity

ITAS Academic Excellence Program tutors have a duty to ensure that students do all their own work. Tutors must not do any part of a student's work for them. This includes (but is not limited to) conducting literature searches on behalf of students, editing and proof-reading student's work and provision of assistance to students to complete take-home exams.

### 6.3. Health and Safety

Tutors have a duty of care for all students they are tutoring or supervising. Tutors must take such measures as are reasonable in the circumstances to protect students from known hazards and/or harm which could arise. This means that tutors should:

- ensure that any equipment used in tutorial sessions is safe for use;
- not attend a session if they are unwell or have a contagious illness. Tutors should advise the student and/or Murrup Barak in advance if they cannot attend a tutorial session;
- if a student becomes unwell or is injured, assess the situation and contact emergency services, the student's emergency contact or Murrup Barak as appropriate;
- (if applicable) take care when lifting heavy objects; and
- familiarise themselves with emergency procedures for evacuation if using Murrup Barak premises.



For information on reporting accidents and injuries in the workplace, please refer to the University's **Occupational Health and Safety Policy**: <https://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1205>

#### **6.4. Conflict of Interest**

Tutors should avoid situations in which their personal or financial interests might reasonably be thought to conflict with their duties. Tutors should discuss any situations likely to compromise them in the conduct of their duties with Murrup Barak.

Conflict of interest situations may occur if you are a member of the student's immediate or de facto family, if you are the student's usual class or subject teacher, lecturer or tutor or if you have a close personal or business relationship with the student. All ITAS Academic Excellence Program student and tutor arrangements will be checked by Murrup Barak for potential conflicts of interest prior to approval. Tutors facing a potential conflict of interest situation after they have been contracted must immediately advise Murrup Barak.

#### **6.5. Gifts and Benefits**

Tutors must not seek or accept favours or gifts for services performed in connection with their duties.

#### **6.6. Compliance with the Tutor Code of Conduct**

If Murrup Barak has information to suggest that an ITAS Academic Excellence tutor has breached the Code of Conduct, it may undertake an investigation into the suspected breach. At Murrup Barak's discretion, tuition arrangements may be suspended for the duration of the investigation. If the ITAS Academic Excellence tutor does not participate in the investigation or if Murrup Barak is not satisfied with the results of the investigation, then the tutor's contract may be terminated at Murrup Barak's discretion.

### **7. FURTHER INFORMATION**

#### **7.1. Website and Forms**

To view frequently asked questions or to download forms, visit the Murrup Barak website at <http://www.murrupbarak.unimelb.edu.au/content/pages/itas-academic-excellence-program>. All forms are also available to collect in hardcopy at Murrup Barak.

#### **7.2. University Services for Staff**

Staff at the University of Melbourne have access to a range of free and confidential services. For a list of services available to staff visit: <http://staff.unimelb.edu.au/> or speak to Murrup Barak.

#### **7.3. Contact**

For information on tutor recruitment in your Department or Faculty contact the relevant staff member. For any other information on the ITAS Academic Excellence Program, please contact Murrup Barak at:

Ph. +61 3 9035 3032

Email: [vicky.peters@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:vicky.peters@unimelb.edu.au)

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