Master of Public Policy

About

Northern Institute (NI), since its establishment at Charles Darwin University in 2010, has become one of the leading centres for social and policy research in Northern Australia. The Institute draws on the expertise of nearly 50 core research staff trained in anthropology, sociology, social policy, public health, demography, statistics, economics, education, linguistics, environmental science, Indigenous studies, and more. We undertake rigorous, ethical research of relevance to regional and remote societies – all with a demonstrated commitment to working in partnership with government, non-government, industry and community sectors. This includes partnering internationally, particularly in Asia and the Pacific.

Professor Ruth Wallace is the Acting Deputy Vice-Chancellor, First Nations Leadership and Acting Director of the Northern Institute at CDU, following her impactful tenure as Pro Vice-Chancellor of the Faculty of Arts & Society. As a nationally recognised leader in First Nations research and education, Professor Wallace brings extensive expertise in education policy and systems, particularly across regional and remote areas of Australia.

Key Contacts

Get in touch for more information about CDU's Master of Public Policy. Our team can guide your study options, research pathways, and next steps toward a meaningful policy career.

Dr Kate Golebiowska
Senior Lecturer & Senior Research Fellow
8946 6891 | kate.golebiowska@cdu.edu.au

Susan Edwards
Senior Lecturer
896 7468 | susan.edwards@cdu.edu.au

Northern Institute Research Support Services
89467468 | thenortherninstitute@cdu.edu.au

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Visit our website at
cdu.edu.au/northern-institute

Master of Public Policy
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Why Study Public Policy at Northern Institute?

The Master of Public Policy provides advanced skills in political, cultural, and social theory, combined with practical capabilities in evidence-based policy development and evaluation. The program is uniquely designed around the context of northern Australia and its strategic relationship with South-East Asia.

The 2-year (full-time) or 4-year (part-time) course can be studied 100% online or on campus and culminates in a research project that explores issues of research in policy-related fields.

Whilst the structure is mostly prescriptive, there is scope within the course to conceptualise new thinking in an important public policy research project of your choice.

Program Highlights

DEEP UNDERSTANDING OF CONTEMPORARY POLICY-MAKING FRAMEWORKS

FOCUS ON REMOTE CONTEXTS, FIRST NATIONS PEOPLES, AND REGIONAL ISSUES

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DEVELOP SKILLS IN RESEARCH DESIGN, POLICY EVALUATION, AND CRITICAL ANALYSIS

PERSONALISED ONE-ON-ONE SUPERVISION FROM RESEARCHERS AND POLICY PROFESSIONALS

What You Will Learn

Northern Institute (NI) delivers flexible research and public policy education that builds advanced analytical capability and real-world impact. Through higher-degree pathways, specialised Indigenous-led programs, and practical research-driven workshops, learners gain targeted skills to address complex contemporary challenges, strengthen community-centred practice, and navigate governance, evaluation, and culturally informed policy work.

Specialisation Streams

Tailor your studies with one of the policy streams:

- Education
- Environment & Livelihoods
- Health & Social Policy
- Indigenous Contexts
- Public Management & Governance
- Secure & Safe Communities

Course Structure

Duration:
2 years full-time
4 years part-time

Credit Points: 160
Includes a capstone research project exploring real-world public policy issues