

**School of Health
and Biomedical
Sciences**

**Discipline of
Psychology**

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Australia

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Rebecca HIRD-FLETCHER
Melbourne Poche Centre for Indigenous Health - Leadership Fellows Program

I am writing this letter of support as Rebecca's Primary PhD Supervisor.

Rebecca commenced her PhD studies at RMIT as part of her being awarded a Vice Chancellor Indigenous Pre-Doctoral Research Fellowship in early 2023. The Fellowship recognises and celebrates Rebecca as a future Indigenous research leader and academic and will involve her in not only completing her PhD but also developing her skills to be an academic. She is working with me and other RMIT staff as part of this aspect of her Fellowship, so that once her PhD is finished, she will join RMIT as an academic. To that end, one significant initiative she will be working on in 2024 is a cultural awareness and safety audit of the courses and programs offered by the Psychology Discipline – with the findings then shaping and refining curricula, assessments, and graduate competencies. Implicit, and at the core of this work, will be to appropriately represent, include, and maintain First Nations peoples and communities' perspectives, views, and needs. It is envisaged that this work in turn will be translated into a whole-of-College initiative. As the College graduates allied health professionals, from nurses, to pharmacists, physiotherapists, and psychologists, her work will have far reaching impact.

Rebecca's research's focus is not only compelling but also very much needed, as in focusing on First Nation young people in detention in Queensland her research will examine why so many young First Nations young people are in detention, how they are viewed and discussed in the media, as well as whether current approaches to researching the lives of young First Nations young people are relevant and appropriate, and in doing so document an approach to research that is grounded in what young First Nations people want us to hear about their lives and hopes. This is important and timely research given the unacceptable rates of First Nation young people in detention in Queensland; and again, the outcomes of her work and research will have far reaching impact – as in listening to their voices meaningful and much needed change can occur.

I am fully supportive of Rebecca's application for inclusion in the Melbourne Poche Centre for Indigenous Health - Leadership Fellows Program. In doing so I acknowledge and support her attending the three week-long modules that are part of the Fellow Program. Rebecca's participation will not only benefit her, but also her work here at RMIT, and the broader community more generally. I cannot recommend her highly enough.

Please feel free to contact me should you require any further information.

Kind regards,



Dr Nikos Thomacos PhD MAPS

Pronouns: he, him, his

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