



Australian
National
University

ANU Tetum Language Program



Ranked

#1

ANU is ranked #1 in 12 Academic Disciplines in Australia

*QS World University Rankings by Subject 2025

Why study Tetum?

Timor-Leste is one of Australia's closest neighbours, but few people realise just how close.

When Timor-Leste gained independence in 2002, Tetum was adopted as one of the country's two official languages. Due to its colonial history, Tetum has strong linguistic influences from Portuguese. In addition, many words in Tetum are derived from Malay. Despite Timor-Leste being one of Australia's closest neighbours, experts on Timorese language and culture outside the country are rare. Timor-Leste, as part of the Southeast Asian archipelago, has a deep human history and its cultural heritage contains traditional Timorese, Portuguese, Chinese and Indonesian facets. The study of Tetum is essential for anyone wishing to understand Timor-Leste's society, culture and history.

"I love that it's so simple, and that one word can mean many things depending on the context."

— SUSANNA ROSSI, NON-AWARD STUDENT IN THE TETUM LANGUAGE PROGRAM



Studying Tetum at ANU:

ANU is the only university in Australia that offers a Tetum language program, providing a program with a specialised and flexible approach. In our classes, we read and engage with Tetum-language media, write and speak the language.

The ANU Tetum program is fully online, offering a supportive and interactive learning environment in which students can communicate and practise with the teacher and their peers.

- ANU Students: Choose to study Tetum as an elective or a minor (24 units/4 courses) as part of your ANU degree.
- Open Universities Australia (OUA)/Non-Award: Enrol in individual courses taught completely online for professional development or personal interest without pursuing a full degree. Cross-institutional offerings available.
- Advanced Courses: Progress through Tetum language levels 1-4, and explore subjects in Southeast Asian studies.

Students with prior language experience must take a Language Proficiency Assessment (LPA) for proper level placement. For details, see the ANU College of Asia and the Pacific (CAP) language proficiency assessment site.

Study Tetum language and culture at the Australian National University.

Further Information

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