EDITH COWAN UNIVERSITY

INFORMATION STATEMENT

Made under the Freedom of Information Act 1992

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100 Joondalup Drive
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1. Introduction

Edith Cowan University (ECU) was established on 1 January 1991 under legislation enacted by the Western Australian parliament. Built upon a strong tradition of teacher education dating from 1902, the University has since developed courses across a wide range of disciplines and established a strong research culture.

ECU has almost 21,000 enrolled students; approximately 16,000 undergraduates and 5000 postgraduates. The University educates Australian students, as well as a significant cohort of international students. In 2007, ECU had more than 4000 international onshore and offshore students originating from approximately 90 countries.

The University has metropolitan campuses at Joondalup, Mount Lawley and Churchlands (although the Churchlands Campus will close at the end of 2008). ECU also has a regional campus at Bunbury, 200 kilometres south of Perth.

ECU offers high quality education across a broad discipline range including Education, Nursing, Finance, Business, Computing, Communications, Biomedical Sciences, Electronic Engineering and the Creative and the Performing Arts. More than 390 courses are offered through four faculties:

- Business and Law;
- Computing, Health and Science;
- Education and Arts (which incorporates the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts); and
- Regional Professional Studies.

In addition, the University has a number of administrative centres which support the University’s core activities of teaching and research through the provision of professional expertise in areas such as Information Technology, Facilities’ Management, Risk Management and Audit, Governance, Planning, Finance, Student Support, International and Research.

Further information regarding the University can be found on the ECU web site at [LINK] http://www.ecu.edu.au/links/about/ and in the Annual Report which may be found via the link on ECU’s Homepage at [LINK] http://www.ecu.edu.au/

2. University Mission and Vision and Strategic Priorities

MISSION

To further develop valued citizens for the benefit of Western Australia and beyond, through teaching and research inspired by engagement and partnerships.

VISION

For our staff, students and graduates to be highly regarded as ethical and self-reliant contributors to more prosperous, inclusive and sustainable communities.
Further details including the University’s Strategic Priorities may be found at [LINK] http://www.ecu.edu.au/GPPS/ppas/strategic_plan.html.

3. Applicable legislation

The University’s enabling legislation is the *Edith Cowan University Act 1984* (ECU Act). The Act establishes the University as a corporate body consisting of the Council, the members of staff and the enrolled students. The Act provides for the governance, staffing and financial management of the University and establishes the Student Guild as a corporate entity.

The internal legislation of the University consists of By-laws (relating to lands and traffic), and Statutes and Rules that regulate various aspects of the University’s affairs.


4. Structure and functions of the University


4.1 University structure

University Council
The Council is the governing authority of the University. The fundamental responsibilities of the Council are to determine the strategic direction and governance framework for the University. The Council is chaired by the Chancellor and consists of the Vice-Chancellor and members drawn from the community and the University’s alumni, staff and students. The Council’s functions are set out in the ECU Act. Further information on the operation of the University Council may be found at [LINK] http://www.ecu.edu.au/GPPS/council/.

Committees
The University operates on a collegial and devolved management model with committees being an important and integral part of the consultative and decision-making process. Further information on the operation of key committees is set out at [LINK] http://www.ecu.edu.au/GPPS/committees/index.html.

Faculties
The University has four faculties, whose primary responsibility is to deliver the University’s academic program. The faculties are:

- Business & Law
- Education & Arts (which incorporates the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts)
- Computing, Health & Science
- Regional Professional Studies

For further information on the University’s academic units, visit [LINK] http://www.ecu.edu.au/links/structure/

4.2 University functions

The functions of the University are set out in section 7 of the ECU Act at:
These include, in summary -

- providing courses of study;
- encouraging and providing for tertiary education;
- supporting and pursuing research and scholarship;
- fostering the welfare and development of all enrolled students;
- promoting and encouraging collaboration and consultation with other institutions; and
- providing facilities relating to the University’s functions.

5. Details of functions, including decision-making functions, affecting the public

The major functions of the University are to provide university education and foster research. The main impact on the public arises from the preparation of students to meet the educational and professional requirements of the community and involvement in research that contributes to the expansion of knowledge. ECU works closely with private and public sector organisations, locally and overseas, in designing its study programs. Research is undertaken in collaboration with industry, particularly the service industries and professions.

ECU strives to offer education of the highest quality in the service professions, concentrating on its particular strengths in education, nursing, finance, business, computing, communications and the creative and performing arts.

The University’s decision-making powers stem from the ECU Act and internal legislation, Council resolutions and policies.

6. Public participation in the formulation of policy and performance of agency functions

In exercising its functions the University involves members of the general and professional community who participate as members of the Council, Council Committees and Boards and other committees. Community members who serve on ECU’s committees are able to influence strategic and policy development at a range of levels within the University’s decision-making processes.

The University Council includes members of the community with experience in education, the professions, industry or commerce as well as staff, student and alumni representatives. The Boards of the WA Academy of Performing Arts and the South West Campus (Bunbury) include members of the community with relevant expertise. In addition, members of the public with experience in particular discipline areas contribute to course development through membership of course review panels.

Community members of the Council are appointed by the Governor or co-opted by the Council in accordance with the ECU Act. The Council appoints community members to Council committees and the Boards of the South West Campus (Bunbury) and the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts. Faculties and Centres may invite members of the community to participate in course review panels and other community projects.

Information relating to key University committees is at [LINK]
ECU also maintains a range of industry and community partnerships, engagement with the professions, relations with the University’s alumni and community engagement through arts, culture and sport.

The University has developed collaborative arrangements with other universities and industry participants. Details of ECU Research Centres and Centres of Excellence are available at [LINK] http://www.ecu.edu.au/research/ResearchCentres.htm

7. Documents held by the University

A substantial amount of information about ECU is available on the University’s web site at [LINK] http://www.ecu.edu.au/.

The FOI Act does not apply to documents that are already available to members of the public. For applicants seeking general information about the University and its operations it is therefore recommended that they search the ECU website in the first instance.

7.1 University administration

University records are subject to the State Records Act 2000.

The University’s Records and Archives Management Service is responsible for the organisation and management of documents relating to the administration of the University. Information on records management and the University’s archives collection is available at [LINK] http://www.ecu.edu.au/GPPS/rams/.

7.2 Student records

Records relating to students’ enrolment, academic progress and related matters are held on the Callista database and in hard copy files held in the Student Services Centre.

7.3 Library

As a university, ECU has an extensive academic library. A number of the facilities and services are open to members of the public as well as the University community. Further details can be found at the Library website: [LINK] http://www.ecu.edu.au/library/

8. The operation of FOI at Edith Cowan University

It is the aim of the University to make information available promptly and at the least possible cost, and whenever possible documents will be provided outside the FOI process.

If information is not routinely available, the Freedom of Information Act 1992 provides the right to apply for documents held by the University and to enable the public to ensure that personal information in documents is accurate, complete, up to date and not misleading.

Further Information about the operation of Freedom of Information within the University may be obtained from ECU’s FOI Coordinator.
8.1 Freedom of Information applications

Access applications have to:
• be in writing;
• give enough information so that the documents requested can be identified;
• give an Australian address to which notices can be sent; and
• be lodged at the agency with any application fee payable.

A telephone contact number or e-mail address is not essential, but it is helpful in cases where the FOI Coordinator needs to contact the applicant to clarify any aspect of the application.

Applications and enquiries should be addressed to the Freedom of Information Coordinator:

Address: FOI Coordinator
Edith Cowan University
Joondalup Campus
100 Joondalup Drive
JOONDALUP WA 6027

Telephone: (08) 6304 2453
Fax: (08) 6304 2661

Applications will be acknowledged in writing and applicants will be notified of the access decisions within 45 days, and requests for amendment of personal information within 30 days.

8.2 Access arrangements

Access to documents can be granted by way of inspection, a copy of a document, a copy of an audio or video tape, a computer disk, or a transcript of a recorded, shorthand or encoded document from which words can be reproduced.

8.3 Notice of decision

A notice of decision will include details such as -

• the date on which the decision was made;
• the name and designation of the officer who made the decision;
• if access is refused, the reasons for claiming the document is exempt;
• information on the rights of review and the procedures to be followed to exercise those rights.

8.4 Freedom of Information charges

A scale of fees and charges is set under the Freedom of Information Regulations 1993. The fees and charges are as follows.

8.4.1 Personal Information
• Personal information about the applicant No fee and no charges

8.4.2 Non-Personal Information
• Application Fee (for non-personal information) $30.00
8.5 Deposits

- Advance deposit may be required in respect of the estimated charges  25%
- Further advance deposit may be required to meet the charges for dealing with the application.  75%

For impecunious applicants or those issued with prescribed pensioner concession cards, the charge payable is reduced by 25%.

8.6 Review of decisions

Applicants who are dissatisfied with a decision of the agency are entitled to ask for an internal review by the agency. Application should be made in writing to the FOI Coordinator within 30 days of receiving the notice of decision.

Applicants will be notified of the outcome of the review within 15 days.

An applicant who disagrees with the result can apply to the Information Commissioner for an external review. An application for external review should be made within 60 days of receiving notice of the internal review decision.

9. Further Information

Further information about the Freedom of Information Act 1992 or the operation of FOI in Western Australia may be obtained from the Office of the Information Commissioner or through the Office’s website [LINK] http://www.foi.wa.gov.au/