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Australian Government

Department of Education,
Skills and Employment

2021-2023 MISSION BASED COMPACT BETWEEN THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA AND EDITH COWAN UNIVERSITY

PURPOSE

This compact is an agreement between the Commonwealth and the University. Entering into a compact is one of the quality and accountability requirements, which a higher education provider must meet under the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* (HESA) as a condition of receiving a grant. Specifically, subsection 19-110(1) of HESA requires that Table A and Table B providers must, in respect of each year for which a grant is paid to the provider under HESA, enter into a mission-based compact with the Commonwealth for a period that includes that year.

All strategies should provide qualitative and/or quantitative measures of assessment.

MISSION

The strategic focus, values and aspirations of Edith Cowan University (ECU) are set down in the [ECU Strategic Plan 2017-2021: World Ready](#), approved by the University's governing Council in October 2016.

ECU's vision is to be recognised for our world-ready graduates and leading edge research.

ECU's purpose is to transform lives and enrich society through education and research.

ECU's values are: Integrity; Respect; Rational Inquiry; and Personal Excellence.

ECU's strategic themes are: dedication to our students; connections to the community and the world; building strategic partnerships and collaborations; fostering strong alumni relations; and promoting equality, diversity and social responsibility.

Key outcomes for the period 2017 to 2021 are:

- to maintain a high ranking (top 10 nationally) for student satisfaction with their overall educational experience;
- to achieve a top 100 world ranking in the *THE Young University Rankings* and a top 500 world ranking in the *THE World University Rankings*; and
- to establish at least one offshore campus by 2021.

This compact is an interim statement for 2021 aligned to the current strategic plan. The strategy is its final year of implementation and ECU is currently developing a new five-year strategic plan for 2022-2026, for approval by the University Council in late 2021.

A revised compact will be provided, capturing the key elements of the new strategic plan and new supporting plans, and following the proposed discussions with the Department, as flagged in the Department's communication of 24 June 2021.

FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND ACADEMIC FREEDOM

The promotion and protection of freedom of speech and academic freedom are fundamental to ECU's purpose of transforming lives and enriching society through education and research.

In March 2020, following extensive consultation, ECU adopted a [Statement on Academic Freedom and Freedom of Speech](#) together with a set of principles relating to freedom of speech and academic freedom, aligned with the Model Code.

The Walker Review found that ECU was 'mostly aligned' with the Model Code. A key point of non-alignment was a provision in ECU's Code of Conduct that may be interpreted as preventing staff members making public comment on the affairs of the University. This provision has subsequently been deleted to address this non-alignment.

ECU has a periodic review process in place for all its policies and procedures. As part of this process, each policy and procedure is now reviewed against the ECU Statement on Academic Freedom and Freedom of Speech, and amended as appropriate to ensure alignment.

A number of communications have been circulated to the ECU community about ECU's implementation of the Model Code, including how to access the ECU Statement on Academic Freedom and Freedom of Speech and the outcomes of the Walker Review.

ECU is supportive of the recommendations proposed by the Walker Review, including the preparation by universities of an annual attestation statement regarding freedom of speech and academic freedom and the possible inclusion of a complaints process within the Model Code.

IMPROVING TEACHING AND LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR AUSTRALIAN STUDENTS

ECU's learning and teaching goals are articulated in the [ECU Strategic Plan 2017-2021: World Ready](#), the [Student Success Blueprint 2018-2021](#), [Technology-Enhanced Learning Blueprint 2018-2021](#) and the [Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Blueprint 2020-2021](#).

The University's current performance targets for teaching and learning are: retention (sector average); student satisfaction (top 10 nationally, SES), and graduate employment (WA average, GOS). These are achieved through a student-centred approach to support and success; evidence-informed analytics and decision-making; improved academic preparedness and assistance; and future-oriented employability, industry engagement, and career development.

ECU's [Admissions Policy](#) and [Admission, Enrolment and Academic Progress Rules](#) provide comprehensive and clear information on admissions criteria, including pathways, English proficiency, and preparation courses, as part of its **admissions transparency** obligations.

ECU has undertaken extensive revision of core academic policies, including [Academic Integrity](#), [Fitness to Study](#), [Academic Progression](#), and inherent course requirements. ECU initiatives include personalised interventions and study support to **improve retention** and to address non-participating enrolments.

ECU **engages with industry** representatives for the purposes of developing and reviewing all of its courses. The [Work Integrated Learning](#) policy ensures industry-relevant learning experiences are embedded in courses.

ECU's [Student and Staff Mental Health Strategy 2021-2024](#) sets out a University-wide approach to mental health and wellbeing.

Graduate employment and industry engagement data informs intake decisions and annual unit and course reviews, as required under ECU's [Curriculum Design Policy](#).

Following the rapid move to online study due to COVID-19 for Semester 1, 2020, ECU successfully restored its **on campus teaching mode** for Semester 2, 2020.

RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES AND PARTNERSHIPS IN THE NATIONAL INTEREST

The [ECU Strategic Plan 2017-2021: World Ready](#) articulates ECU's strategic goal of advancing research and knowledge translation, with four objectives: growth in research capacity and culture; extensive research collaboration; increased knowledge translation; and growth in research training, underpinned by 14 actions and six performance targets.

ECU has already met three of its 2021 targets for research and knowledge translation including: *THE* Young University Rankings (top 100); *THE* World University Rankings (top 500); and Citation Impact score, and is on track to meet a fourth relating to publications output.

ECU's four research themes are [Health, Natural and Built Environments](#), [Securing Digital Futures](#), and [Society and Culture](#). All have a Theme Leader to enhance the University's research culture, HDR student support and to increase **industry engagement for commercialisation**.

In 2020, ECU established nine [Strategic Research Institutes and Centres](#) to lead the University's research excellence.

ECU's robust [International Compliance Review](#) process ensures all foreign activities comply with international obligations, sanctions, defence trade controls, **foreign interference** and relevant reporting.

ECU's [Conflicts of Interest](#) policy requires staff to disclose secondary employment including foreign interests and associations. A new Integrity Training Program for all staff will include foreign interference content.

ECU's [Information Security and Information Technology](#), [Compliance](#), [Acceptable Use of Information Systems](#) and [Critical Incident and Business Continuity Management](#) policies and procedures are consistent with Australian Cyber Security Centre guidelines. ECU participates in the [Australasian Higher Education Cybersecurity Service](#) initiative, through the Council of Australasian University Directors of Information Technology and the [Cybersecurity Community of Practice](#).

IMPROVING STUDENT EQUALITY AND OUTCOMES

Actioning the [Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Blueprint](#). The Blueprint details ECU's support for equity, diversity and inclusion. The Blueprint connects to nine equity-related plans, each with strategies and actions; targets and indicators; timelines; and responsibilities. These plans address: inclusive organisational culture; leadership and governance; facilities and services; staff recruitment and career development opportunities; student access, participation, retention and success; complaints process; bullying, harassment and discrimination; awareness and training; teaching and learning; research; community partnerships; monitoring; and progress reporting. More information [here](#).

Providing higher education to regional communities. ECU has significant regional presence through its [South West Campus](#) at Bunbury, [regional study hubs](#) (Mandurah, Margaret River, Bunbury CBD and Busselton) and a community partnership at the [Pilbara Universities Centre](#). The ECU South West Campus is the largest regional campus in Western Australia. Through these sites and by means of its online course offerings, ECU aims to: reduce unemployment; deliver positive outcomes for regions through industry/community partnerships; deliver onboarding and outreach programs to support transitions and aspirations towards further study; support educational needs of community; and provide community access to university facilities.

Actioning the [Reconciliation Action Plan 2018-2021](#). ECU's RAP comprises 36 actions aligned to three pillars: Relationships; Respect; and Opportunities. Kudjikat Wow-r-ing, a sub-committee of ECU's Equity and Diversity Committee (a senior management committee of the Vice-Chancellor), meets quarterly and monitors implementation and progress. The Committee has representation from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff from areas and levels across the University. More information [here](#).

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SIGNED for and on behalf of
THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

In the presence of:

by

Dom English

Ryan Kinder

Full name (please print)

Witness (please print)

First Assistant Secretary

A/g Director

Position

Position or profession of witness (please print)

of the Department of Education, Skills and
Employment as delegate of the Minister for
Education and Youth

Signature

Signature

28/12/2021

Date

SIGNED for and on behalf of
EDITH COWAN UNIVERSITY

In the presence of:

by

Professor Steve Chapman

KAREN D' COSTA

Full name (please print)

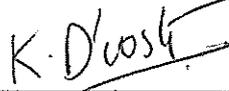
Witness (please print)

Vice-Chancellor

EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Position

Position or profession of witness (please print)



Signature

Signature