



Student Services Centre

Operational Plan

2009 - 2011

December 2008

Introduction

The Student Services Centre (SSC) has as a main focus the delivery of services that meet the needs of:

- prospective, current students, and graduates;
- ECU faculties and schools; and
- external customers and stakeholders of ECU.

These services include administrative and support services to students, services to the faculties and schools of ECU and services to external customers and stakeholders of ECU.

SSC's purpose is to attract, retain and graduate optimal numbers of students and ensure effective and efficient services to all our customers.

Purpose of the Plan

The purpose of this plan is to align the Centre's goals and strategies with ECU's strategic priorities, goals and strategies within the context of the ECU Mission and Vision.

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.

When constructing the SSC Operational Plan consideration is given to the relevant ECU functional plans.

The Student Services Centre will enhance the delivery of services to our customers through the ECU values of Integrity, Respect, Rational Inquiry and Personal Excellence.

Key achievements in 2008

- In 2008 the Student Services Centre consolidated the major structural changes made in 2006 and 2007 and continued to refine services in the new structure. In 2008 the functions of learning advisers and international student support were also assigned to the Centre.
- Continued enhancement of the delivery of services related to:
 - student recruitment and career outcomes;
 - administrative services to students;
 - support services; and
 - system services.
- Further development of staff skills in establishing and maintaining customer relationships.
- Continued implementation of the recommendations of the Admissions review.
- Implementation of appropriate recommendations from the Assessments review.

- Implementation and refinement of the collaborative and comprehensive orientation, transition and first year @ ECU experience.
- Implementation of further Callista functionality (including enhancing on-line services to staff and students) and major upgrades to the system.
- Improvement and consolidation of the delivery of services through the student hubs at each campus.
- Implementation of changes as a result of student survey feedback.
- Electronic examination paper submission trialled.
- Continued planning for the refinement and implementation of student information and communication methods through the Student Portal.
- Initial development of Learning Centres.
- Balanced budget.

Strengths

- Our student focus.
- Our team work.
- Recognition by the ECU community of the importance of the services provided by SSC.
- The multi-skilled and well qualified SSC team.
- Facilities which have been developed for servicing students effectively and efficiently.
- The quality and comprehensiveness of our product.
- Continual improvement of services.
- Use of information technology.
- Professional development of our staff.
- Knowledge of job expectations.

Challenges

- Providing services in a large institution.
- Some undocumented processes.
- Location of teams across campuses and buildings.
- Retention and recruitment of staff within SSC.
- The multi-campus environment.
- Relationship with faculties, schools and other centres.
- Stakeholder relationships.
- Maintaining service provision for prospective, current students and graduates in the manner they prefer to receive them, including recognising the desire for immediate service delivery of the X/Y generations, but maintaining services appropriate to other ECU student cohorts.

Opportunities

- Develop formal and informal processes for interacting and developing relationships with faculties and schools.
- Relocation of services to suitable student friendly hubs.
- Exploit the many ideas we have in the team, and how enthusiastic we are to make changes/provide continuous improvement.
- Build on our positive OHS relationship.
- Harness and utilise SSC team's enthusiasm for continuous improvement.
- Reward and recognition of SSC staff for innovation.
- Develop relationships with the student body.

These opportunities will need to be managed within the constraints of:

- Workload (and the management of)
- IT resources
- Budget
- Staff knowledge and retention of staff
- Leave liability
- Staff who are not as accepting of continuous improvement

How the plan will be implemented and monitored

The Student Services Centre management team have assigned responsibilities and timelines for each strategy. For each section of SSC an Action Plan that feeds into the SSC Operational Plan has been developed.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Glenda Jackson" followed by a horizontal line.

Glenda Jackson PhD
Director Student Services Centre

Role and Purpose of SSC

The Student Services Centre aims to be recognised as a focal point for prospective, current students and graduates for providing services that make engaging with ECU a professional and enjoyable experience.

We do this by:

- Focusing on what our students, staff and other stakeholders tell us they need now and for the future.
- Being proactive in planning our services.
- Streamlining and implementing effective and efficient administrative processes.
- Constantly seeking ways to improve services and maximising our use of technology.
- Working as a team across the Centre and being accountable to each other for communication and leadership.

We value:

- Integrity
- Respect
- Rational inquiry
- Personal excellence

In providing these services we assist ECU to attract, admit, retain and graduate optimal numbers of career ready and satisfied students.

SSC Key Messages

- SSC is student focussed.
- SSC works as a team.
- SSC partners with the Faculties/Schools, other Centres and the wider community to ensure effective and efficient services are provided to students, staff and other stakeholders.
- SSC provides services to 20,000 students who make up ECU's culturally diverse student body, with almost 20% of students coming to ECU from over 90 countries around the world.
- SSC recruits, admits, and provides services to students (and staff) in more than 400 courses.
- SSC has three convenient student hubs, one at each of the campuses. Comprehensive services for students studying off-shore or off-campus are also provided.
- SSC attracts and retains high-quality and committed staff who support students so they experience a world class education.
- SSC supports research students who undertake research that is improving the quality of life for Australians and people around the world.
- SSC is committed to breaking down barriers to education and facilitates the development of alternative entry pathways to higher education, helping West Australians reach their potential.
- SSC is committed to social justice and equity. The Centre provides equity services for students and supports an extensive scholarship and loans program to enable equity groups to successfully complete their higher education studies.

- SSC has designed and implemented cutting-edge facilities and infrastructure and innovative services.
- SSC supports the unique learning environment for its students, to ensure graduates leave the University not only educated, but also work-ready.
- SSC provides flexible services for all students and has a leadership role in implementing programs such as the Elite Athlete Friendly University policy.
- SSC provides services and support to students of the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA) – one of Australia’s premier performing arts institutes in higher education.
- SSC has implemented energy efficient services throughout the Centre to help ECU to be one of the most energy efficient universities in Australia
- SSC provides a comprehensive range of services to attract and retain students.
- SSC makes a difference, provides a fulfilling work experience and is a fun place to work.
- SSC encourages and assists staff to reach their potential through ongoing education, and promoting a work/life balance.

Student Services Centre Goals

SSC goals align to the ECU Strategic Priorities and Goals. These goals will be the focus of SSC's endeavours over the next three years.

Strategic Priority 1: Engaging and Serving our Communities

ECU Goal:		SSC Goal:	Strategies		Timeframe/ Responsibility/ Performance Measure/ Targets	Examples
1.1	To build a reputation for academic outreach, research and creative output which impact and serve the needs of ECU's communities.	To contribute to building the involvement of ECU staff, students and graduates in the development of ECU's reputation for academic outreach and creative output.	a	Promote collaborative partnerships with community groups, business, industry, graduates and school sectors to address their needs.	See Action Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnerships/ engagement with schools by Recruitment and Careers PIBT, EAFU, Mission Australia partnerships
			b	Embed engagement throughout the SSC owned pages of the revamped ECU website.	See Action Plans	
			c	Participate effectively in the process developed to co-ordinate visits to schools/industry across the university.	See Action Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student Recruitment and Careers visits co-ordinated with other ECU stakeholders. Scholarships and awards program administered effectively
			d	Contribute to the consolidated register of engagement activities by reporting on SSC engagement initiatives.	See Action Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Careers activities Student Recruitment activities
			e	Increase the number of visitors on ECU campuses.	See Action Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School visits on campus Student Service staff visits from other universities

ECU Goal:		SSC Goal:	Strategies		Timeframe/ Responsibility/ Performance Measure/ Targets	Examples
			f	Work with Faculties to identify key members of the current student population, to participate in an ECU ambassador program.	See Action Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students to accompany Recruitment and Careers staff on visits to school/expos
1.2	To ensure that ECU's programs reflect our commitment to engagement.	To contribute and support the delivery of curricula which reflects ECU's commitment to engagement.	a	In collaboration with the Faculties promote work-based learning opportunities for students internal and external to SSC and the University.	See Action Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer program development • Employment of ECU graduates in SSC
			b	Ensure the ECU curriculum can be delivered inclusive of all student cohort needs.	See Action Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Database development for students registering a disability.
			c	Provide work integrated learning opportunities for students in SSC.	See Action Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work placements • ECU enrolment assistant programs
1.3	To build engagement throughout the student experience	To facilitate the development of engagement throughout the student experience	a	Seek key stakeholders as partners for development of innovative administrative processes, support services and recruitment practices that provide opportunities for engagement of prospective and current students.	See Action Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage with Faculties/Schools to develop innovative and efficient services. • Engage with other Heads of Student Administration and Student Services Forum group. • CPAG
			b	Facilitate the implementation of the Vice-Chancellor's student awards for students who demonstrate outstanding achievement in engagement.	See Action Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration with Faculties and Guild to identify prospective award applicants.

Strategic Priority 2: Providing a supportive and stimulating learning community

	ECU Goal:	SSC Goal:		Strategies	Timeframe/ Responsibility/ Performance Measure/ Targets	Examples
2.1	To be responsive to students and employers through a relevant and engaged curriculum	Provide support for a relevant and engaged curriculum.	a	Implement effective and efficient administrative processes to allow implementation of a relevant and engaged curriculum.	See Action Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of consultative group SSC/Faculties to develop and implement effective processes.
			b	Facilitate admission to courses and enrolment in units in strong demand areas.	See Action Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liaison with Faculties to identify and implement processes to efficiently admit students.
			c	Implement processes that ensure the quality of course outcomes in on-shore and off-shore programs.	See Action Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Admissions standards
2.2	To enhance the quality of teaching.	Support quality teaching through the provision of effective administrative and support services	a	Plan and implement effective and efficient administrative processes in conjunction with Faculty administrative staff to allow academic staff to focus on quality teaching strategies.	See Action Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement changes to Assessments and Records processes Fully implement online exam submissions. Further develop a cooperative model of providing services by Learning Advisers.
2.3	To enhance student support services and learning experiences	To enhance student support services and contribute to positive learning experiences	a	To add value to the academic outcomes and learning community by providing services that address students' physical, psychological, spiritual and career needs.	See Action Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health, Counselling, Chaplaincy, Equity and Disability services implemented effectively
			b	Recognising the diversity of our students, provide learning support for groups of students according to	See Action Plans	Implement effective and efficient strategies for learning advice and

	ECU Goal:	SSC Goal:		Strategies	Timeframe/ Responsibility/ Performance Measure/ Targets	Examples
				their needs and needs identified by the Faculties.		equity initiatives for students.
			c	Consider the most effective locations for providing services to students.	See Action Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relocation of Learning Advisers to eLabs/libraries for drop in sessions. • Learning Advisers with time in Faculty space where appropriate. • Relocation of some Scholarship/Fees staff to Joondalup Building 18, Level 1.
			d	Use technology to support the needs of all student cohorts.	See Action Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology provided for students with a registered disability.
			e	Facilitate a successful transition to the new Federal "VSU" student services fee arrangements.	See Action Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide services where required
			f	Continue to develop positive relationships with the student body, Faculties and other Centres.	See Action Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guild Reference Group • VCSAF • Faculty Reference Group

Strategic Priority 3: Developing research focus, depth and impact

	ECU Goal:	SSC Goal:		Strategies	Timeframe/ Responsibility/ Performance Measure/ Targets	Examples
3.1-3.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To build areas of research concentration, depth and sustainability To increase research collaboration within and external to ECU To stimulate knowledge transfer and commercialisation To strengthen research culture, training and support To increase Research Higher Degree student enrolments and completions 	Enhance the quality of research higher degree programs through improved policies, procedures and support programs.	a	Provide streamlined administrative and support services for research students through collaboration with the Graduate Research School..	See Action Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integration of GRS administration staff within relevant SSC sections. Attendance at RSSC meetings.
			b	Facilitate the implementation of increase scholarship and sponsorship opportunities for domestic and international Higher Degree by Research students.	See Action Plans	

Strategic Priority 4: Building organisational sustainability

	ECU Goal:	SSC Goal:		Strategies	Timeframe/ Responsibility/ Performance Measure/ Targets	Examples
4.1	To attract, develop and retain the staff required for ECU to achieve its strategic priorities.	To attract, develop and retain the staff required for ECU to achieve its strategic priorities.	a	Continue to build the SSC team to ensure continuous improvement and service focus.	See Action Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross-team recruitment. • At point of recruitment - as part of introduction - visit workplace.
			b	Continue to recruit at all levels for 'team fit'.	See Action Plans	
			c	Implement reward and recognition strategies for the SSC team.	See Action Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of a monthly award for suggestions on improvements to the SSC, eg. process improvements.
			d	Promote the benefits of working within SSC – to help with retention and attraction of staff.	See Action Plans	
			e	Develop and promote Key Messages within SSC.	See Action Plans	
			f	Establish initiatives to embed SSC performance expectations.	See Action Plans	
			g	Provide a safe, healthy and positive work environment.	See Action Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build on OHS relationship.
			h	Develop the customer service competency of staff when dealing with prospective and current students, colleagues and other	See Action Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revisit customer service training within SSC

	ECU Goal:	SSC Goal:		Strategies	Timeframe/ Responsibility/ Performance Measure/ Targets	Examples
				stakeholders.		
			i	Provide opportunities for development of staff to address succession planning.	See Action Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities to act in other positions within and outside SSC..
4.2	To ensure that the University maintains a strong financial position		a	Work with Executive staff and Faculties to develop and implement alternate entry pathways for prospective students likely to succeed in tertiary study.	See Action Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further develop Portfolio entry • Education Direct entry pathway • Grad Dip Ed alternate program model
			b	Improve ECU's presence in the minds of our feeder schools and prospective mature aged students.	See Action Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage with schools • Student Recruitment and Careers activities
			c	Working with the faculties develop and implement mechanisms for early identification of "at risk" students and provide appropriate support.	See Action Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning Centres • Support Services • Student Central
			d	Develop and implement comprehensive recruitment strategies in collaboration with the CMO and the Faculties.	See Action Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning Centres • Support Services • Student Central
4.3	To provide quality infrastructure and services which reflect sustainability	To provide quality services which reflect sustainability principles	a	Reduce duplication in, and streamline, administration processes.	See Action Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty Reference Group initiatives

	ECU Goal:	SSC Goal:		Strategies	Timeframe/ Responsibility/ Performance Measure/ Targets	Examples
	principles					
			b	Develop a formal process for interacting with Faculties and other Centres.	See Action Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up Faculty Reference Group. • Set up reference group with ITSC.
			c	Measure and review processes and methods of service delivery.	See Action Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SSMN benchmarking
			d	Exploit the many ideas we have in the SSC team, and how enthusiastic we are to make changes – continuous improvement.	See Action Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovation award