

EDITH COWAN UNIVERSITY  
2011 ANNUAL REPORT

# SECTION 1 - **OVERVIEW**





## STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

The Hon Dr Elizabeth Constable MLA  
Minister for Education  
19th Floor, Governor Stirling Tower  
197 St George's Terrace  
PERTH WA 6000

12 March 2012

Dear Minister

In accordance with section 61 of the *Financial Management Act 2006* (WA), we hereby submit for your information and presentation to Parliament the Annual Report of Edith Cowan University for the year ending 31 December 2011.

The Annual Report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions of the *Financial Management Act 2006* (WA) and is made in accordance with a resolution of the University's Council.

Yours sincerely

**The Hon Dr Hedy Cowan**  
Chancellor  
On behalf of the University Council

Edith Cowan University  
270 Joondalup Drive  
JOONDALUP WA 6027

## CHANCELLOR'S FOREWORD

During 2011 the University Council and the senior management of the University continued to work together to support the University achieving its objectives.



A number of key initiatives were progressed during the year, including ECU's leadership role in the development of the proposed Wanneroo GP Super Clinic, the completion of the construction of the new Engineering and Technology building on the Joondalup Campus, and the move to become a smoke-free University from 2012. In addition, ECU continued its evaluation of its international programs. Rigorous quality reviews were undertaken on all aspects of the offshore operations and program delivery to help ensure that the University can maintain its place in the international higher education market in the future.

Council was pleased to be involved in the University's preparation for the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency audit in October 2011. A Council Workshop held in September provided an excellent opportunity for Council to engage with the work of the University and to join with the senior leadership team to review significant activity and progress made by ECU over the last few years.

Council welcomed the passage of the *Higher Education Legislation Amendment (Student Services and Amenities) Bill 2010* (Cwlth) and the opportunities it now provides to the University to continue to enhance student services working jointly with the Guild and other student groups.

In April Council endorsed the ECU Reconciliation Action Plan, supporting a range of activities to improve access and success in higher education for Indigenous Australians. The University remains committed to finding strategies that will increase the representation of disadvantaged members of our community in higher education, and the Reconciliation Action Plan is one small part of the work which continues to be done in this vital area.

The work of the University's researchers continues to receive recognition at the highest levels. It was a pleasure for Council to be able to acknowledge the success of Professor Donna Cross, named *Western Australia's Australian of the Year 2012*. Professor Ralph Martins, was named *Western Australian Citizen of the Year 2011* in the category of *Professions*, while Dr Cat Hope was a finalist in the *Arts, Culture and Entertainment* category.

Council noted the continued high performance of ECU on measures of student satisfaction. Whilst surveys are only part of the information gathered by the University, regular oversight of these indicators by Council has confirmed a steady improvement across a range of measures, with targets being achieved or substantial progress being made towards achievement.

Importantly, the University achieved its 2011 financial targets. The Budget for 2012 was approved at the December 2011 meeting of Council, and will provide a sound financial basis to support the strategic goals of the University for 2012. Governance remains a central focus of Council with benchmarking and other indicators suggesting that it is a strength.

Committees of Council are actively involved in oversight of the University, particularly on matters relating to resources, quality, audit, risk and governance. Council is fortunate to have outstanding community and business leaders amongst its members. At the end of 2011 Council recognised the contributions of two highly regarded members who had concluded their third terms on Council; Mr Steve Abbott and Justice Rene Le Miere. Council was delighted to welcome to Council two new members; Mr John Cahill and Dr Saliba Sassine, who bring a wealth of experience to the governing body. The University is fortunate to have secured the services of such outstanding members of the community.

It is an honour to continue to serve as Chancellor of ECU and to work with outstanding students, staff and Council members. As will be seen from the Annual Report, our students, staff and graduates continue to achieve great results.

**The Hon Dr Hedy Cowan**  
Chancellor, March 2012

## VICE-CHANCELLOR'S COMMENTARY

During 2011, the fine achievements of the year at ECU were enhanced by celebrations of three significant anniversaries. One was the 150th anniversary of the birth of Edith Cowan, the second was the 90th anniversary of her election to Parliament as the first woman to achieve this in Australia, and the third was the 20th anniversary of the establishment of Edith Cowan University. It was fitting therefore, that the Western Australian Minister for Education, the Hon Dr Elizabeth Constable MLA, in her 20th year in Parliament and the first woman as an Independent to become a Minister, delivered this year's Vice-Chancellor's Distinguished Oration, entitled "*Edith Cowan: a Woman for our Time*".

Our celebrations were not only focussed on the past. Our students and staff have again excelled this year and highlights are included in this Annual Report. It is my pleasure, however, to give special mention to our world champion advertising students, the ECU team *Boomerang One*, who were announced winners of the International Advertising Association (IAA) global student competition. Headquartered in New York the IAA is represented in 76 countries. The dedication of our staff in their support of our students in this global success is also to be commended.

In November 2011, our colleague Professor Donna Cross was named *Western Australia's Australian of the Year 2012* in recognition of her tireless work as a children's advocate and for improving the health and wellbeing of young people. Another colleague and *Western Australia's Australian of the Year 2010*, Professor Ralph Martins, was named *Western Australian Citizen of the Year 2011* in the *Professions* category. We congratulate Donna and Ralph on their outstanding personal achievements.

In research we are pleased with the award of \$5.6 million in Australian Government funding over the next three years to build research collaborations in four broad areas of research (Health, Education, Environment and Engineering) with nine research intensive Australian universities. In addition, we have a major role in the new Cooperative Research Centre for Mental Health and the Australian Imaging, Biomarker and



Lifestyle Study of Ageing. Other new major research activities include partnerships with the Rio Tinto Group, the WA Department of Fisheries, Centrecare (on suicide prevention) and the National Centre of Excellence in Desalination, as well as internationally-funded security research.

Although many celebrations have taken place throughout the year, we have not averted our focus on delivering quality outcomes. In so doing, we were well prepared for our University's quality audit which was undertaken this year by the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency. We were delighted with the preliminary analysis of the panel of experts, communicated to us during their exit meeting late in 2011 and the audit report itself is due to be provided in early 2012.

Our strong commitment to teaching and learning excellence has resulted in a five-star rating for Teaching Quality and Graduate Satisfaction for the third consecutive year.

With quality high on our agenda, we have not only reviewed our international partnerships, but have also reviewed the courses and units which we deliver and how we deliver them. As part of our *Curriculum 2012* project, we were the first and, at the time, the only University to be awarded funding under the Gillard Government's \$400 million Structural Adjustment Fund. Federal Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills, Jobs and Workplace Relations, Senator Chris Evans, visited ECU to announce our successful bid for \$6.9 million. This funding has greatly assisted in our ability to implement *Curriculum 2012* from the start of Semester 1 2012, which will provide increased emphasis in the discipline/professional contexts for students to increase their critical appraisal skills, abilities to communicate, awareness of cultural differences, understanding of teamwork, and, through these attributes, their employability.

To all of our recent graduates and current students here in Australia and overseas, I congratulate you on your achievements to date and wish you continued success. Like the many thousands of students who graduated from ECU over the past 20 years (and earlier from our predecessor institutions), I strongly encourage you to maintain your links with the ECU community through our Alumni Association.

I acknowledge and thank all of our staff for the many and varied helpful contributions and commend them for their efforts on behalf of the University and the community at large. In particular, I congratulate again, all the recipients (students and staff), of the Edith Cowan Anniversary Celebration Awards.

At the most senior level, we have had to come to terms with the departure of our Vice-President (Corporate). Warren Snell has been the constant member of the senior leadership team, having been with ECU since before we became a University. His personal drive, sound and outcome-focused decision-making, and his overall commitment to ECU have led to many of our University-wide achievements. The University Council, at its August 2011 meeting, resolved to confer on Mr Snell, the degree of Doctor of the University (*honoris causa*). It is my pleasure to thank Warren, on behalf of all ECU stakeholders (past and present) for his immense efforts and contributions. We wish him a well-earned change of pace and much happiness for his future endeavours.

We also farewelled our Executive Dean of the Faculty of Education and Arts and Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Engagement, Equity and Indigenous) Professor Brenda Cherednichenko, who has since commenced her new position of Pro-Vice-Chancellor of Arts and Education at Deakin University. Brenda has achieved much at ECU over the four years here in the West and we wish her continued success.

Another great leader at ECU has been, and continues to be, our Chancellor, the Hon Dr Hendy Cowan, who leads our effective Council. We are grateful to him and all members of the University Council for their contributions to our rapid development. This year we farewelled two long-serving members of Council: Mr Steve Abbott, who has served the University Council since 2002, most recently as Pro-Chancellor; and, Justice Rene Le Miere, who has served Council in addition to chairing the WAAPA Board, since January 2005.

In concluding my commentary for 2011, I acknowledge Mr Arthur Hartley, who passed away earlier this year at the age of 105. Arthur was our oldest Alumnus and was an inspiration to all who knew him. He will be remembered for his lifelong perseverance and determination to succeed. May we all learn from him.



**Professor Kerry O. Cox**  
Vice-Chancellor and President, March 2012





## ABOUT ECU

**Edith Cowan University is a large multi-campus institution serving communities in Western Australia and internationally.**

Awarded university status in 1991, ECU has since developed innovative and practical courses across a wide range of disciplines and a vibrant research culture with high quality researchers and research partners, working at the cutting edge of their fields.

ECU works hard to develop productive and mutually beneficial partnerships with its varied stakeholders.

ECU has almost 24,000 students at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Approximately 4,800 of these are international students originating from over 90 countries.

More than 300 courses are offered through four faculties:

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

The University has two metropolitan campuses at Mount Lawley and Joondalup, and also serves Western Australia's South West Region from a campus at Bunbury, 200 km south of Perth.

ECU is committed to breaking down barriers to higher education through its school and community outreach activities, multiple entry pathways and flexible learning options.

## MISSION, VISION, VALUES AND STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

ECU's strategic direction, as approved by Council, is outlined in: *Edith Cowan University: Engaging Minds; Engaging Communities. Towards 2020.*

### 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.

### Values

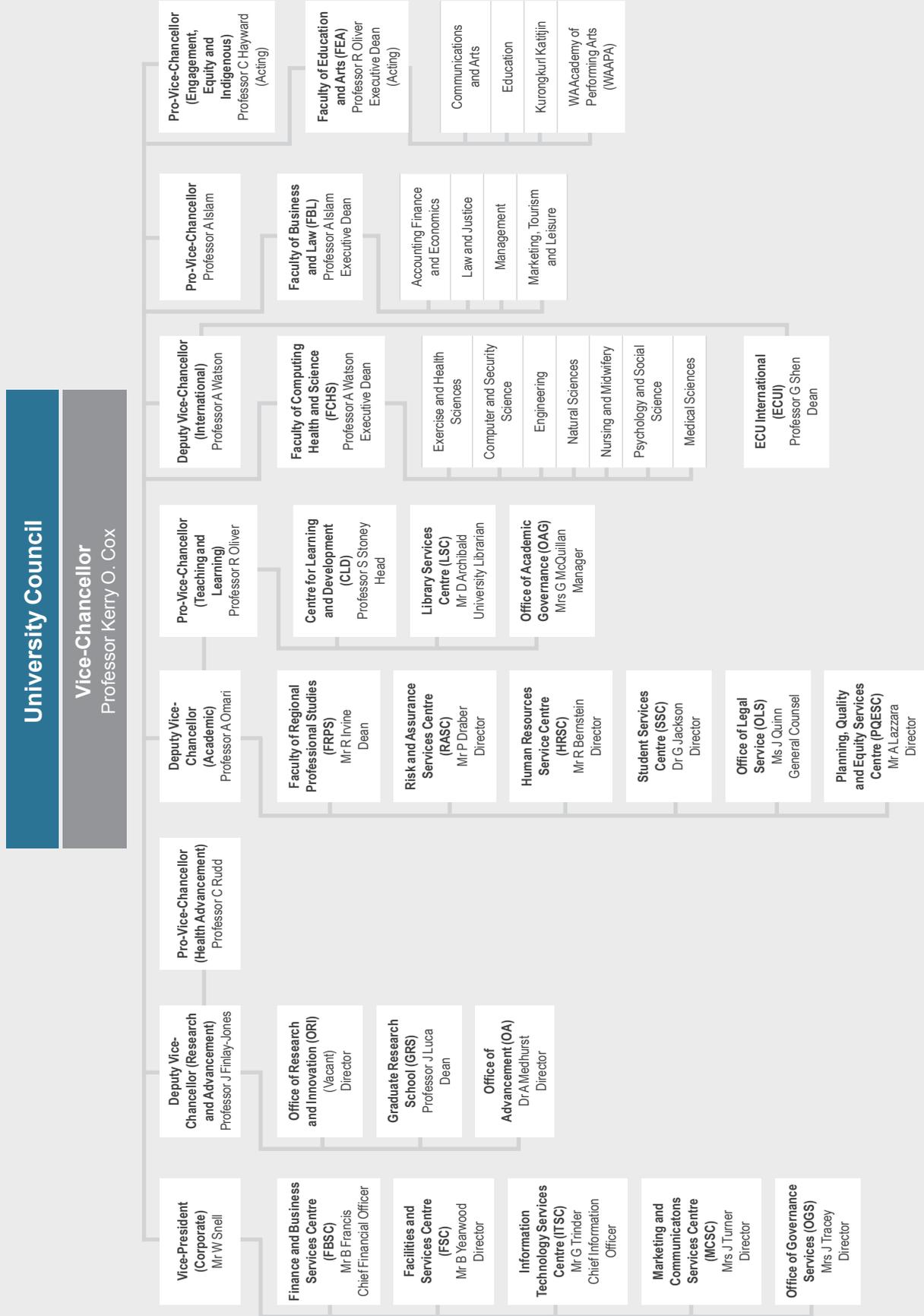
- **Integrity** – behaving ethically and pursuing rigorous intellectual positions
- **Respect** – valuing individual differences and diversity
- **Rational inquiry** – motivated by evidence and reasoning
- **Personal Excellence** – striving to realise potential

### Strategic Priorities

- Engaging and serving our communities;
- Providing programs to meet the needs of our communities, in a supportive and stimulating learning environment;
- Developing research focus, depth and impact; and
- Building organisational sustainability.

# ECU ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

Figure 1: ECU Organisational Structure as at 31 December 2011





## ECU GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

### Council Membership for 2011

Member	Term	Date term commenced/ ended	Council Meetings Attended	Other Committee Meetings Attended
<b>Chancellor (ECU Act, section 12(1))</b>				
Hon Dr Hendy Cowan	01.01.2011 – 31.12.2013 01.01.2008 – 31.12.2010 01.01.2005 – 31.12.2007	Current	6	18
<b>Members appointed by the Governor (ECU Act, section 9(1)(a))</b>				
Mr Steve Abbott (Pro-Chancellor 20.05.06 to 28.08.11)	30.08.2008 – 29.08.2011 30.08.2005 – 29.08.2008 14.05.2002 – 13.05.2005	Term ended 29.08.2011	4(4)*	16
Mr John Cahill	09.08.2011 – 08.08.2014	Term commenced 09.08.2011 Current	2(2)	8
Ms Leslie Chalmers	27.04.2011 – 26.04.2014 27.04.2008 – 26.04.2011 12.04.2005 – 26.04.2008	Current	5(5)	14
Hon Dr Hendy Cowan	31.01.2010 – 30.01.2013 01.03.2007 – 30.01.2010 01.03.2004 – 28.02.2007	Current	6	18
Mr Kempton Cowan	19.12.2009 – 19.12.2012 19.12.2006 – 19.12.2009	Current	4(4)	1
Dr Pamela Garnett	21.09.2009 – 21.09.2012	Current	5	6
<b>Member nominated by Minister charged with administration of the <i>School Education Act 1999</i> (WA) (ECU Act, section 9(1)(aa))</b>				
Dr Norman Ashton	30.08.2011 – 29.08.2014 30.08.2008 – 29.08.2011 30.08.2005 – 29.08.2008	Current	6	10

Member	Term	Date term commenced/ ended	Council Meetings Attended	Other Committee Meetings Attended
<b>Chief Executive Officer – ex-officio (ECU Act, section 9(1)(b))</b>				
Professor Kerry O. Cox	Ex-officio	Current	5	12
<b>Academic Staff – elected (ECU Act, section 9(1)(c))</b>				
Professor Ron Oliver	01.10.2009 – 30.09.2012 01.10.2006 – 30.09.2009 01.10.2002 – 30.09.2006	Current	6	5
Associate Professor Ute Mueller	16.05.2011 – 31.09.2012	Current	4(4)	N/A**
<b>Salaried Staff, Other than Academic Staff – elected (ECU Act, section 9(1)(d))</b>				
Ms Valentina Bailey	01.10.2009 – 30.09.2012 01.04.2009 – 30.09.2009	Current	5	1
<b>Enrolled Students – elected (ECU Act, section 9(1)(e))</b>				
Ms Christine Hamilton-Prime	11.10.2010 – 10.10.2011	Term ended 10.11.2011	3(4)	N/A
Ms Katharine Hawkins	11.10.2010 – 10.10.2011	Term ended 10.11.2011	3(4)	N/A
Mr Luke Butler	11.10.2011 – 10.10.2012	Term commenced 11.10.2011	0(2)	N/A
Mr David Trescuri	11.10.2011 – 10.10.2012	Term commenced 11.10.2011	2(2)	N/A
<b>Alumni – elected (ECU Act, section 9(1)(f))</b>				
Ms Julie Proud	20.09.2010 – 19.09.2013 01.04.2009 – 19.09.2010	Current	5	1
Mr Henry Heng	20.12.2008 – 19.12.2011	Term ended 19.12.2011	4	4
Mr Brad McManus	20.12.2011 – 19.12.2014	Term commenced 20.12.2011	0(0)	0
<b>Members co-opted by Council (ECU Act, section 9(1)(i))</b>				
Ms Janet Curran	20.09.2009 – 21.09.2012	Current	6	8
Mr Neil Douglas	18.03.2009 – 17.03.2012 18.03.2006 – 17.03.2009	Current	3	12
(NB: previously held one term as a Member appointed by the Governor, 28.11.2003 – 01.03.2006)				
Mr Simon Holthouse	12.09.2010 – 11.09.2013 12.09.2007 – 11.09.2010	Current	5	5
Dr Saliba Sassine	25.08.2011 – 16.11.2012	Term commenced 25.08.2011 Current	2(2)	6
Justice Rene Le Miere	18.08.2008 – 17.08.2011 18.08.2005 – 17.08.2008 01.01.2005 – 17.08.2005	Term ended 17.08.2011	2(3)	4
Ms Denise McComish (Pro-Chancellor since 25.08.2011)	22.03.2010 – 21.03.2013 22.03.2007 – 21.03.2010	Current	4(4)	11

\*Council held six regular meeting during the year. The bracketed figures indicate the potential number of attendances for members whose term of office did not cover the full year, or who had leave of absence during the year.

\*\*N/A indicates that the member was not a member of a Council Committee or Board during the year.

Additional Council membership information can be viewed at **Members of Council**.

# UNIVERSITY COMMITTEES

Figure 2: ECU Committees as at 31 December 2011





## WORK OF THE UNIVERSITY COUNCIL

**ECU's enabling Act provides that the Council is the governing authority of the University. The fundamental responsibilities of the Council are to determine the strategic direction and governance framework of the University. The Council is chaired by the Chancellor and consists of the Vice-Chancellor (*ex-officio*) and members drawn from the community and the University's alumni, students and staff. Council members fulfil an important duty for the University and the community and do so on an honorary basis.**

Under the chairmanship of its Chancellor, the Hon Dr HENDY COWAN, the Council met on seven occasions during 2011, holding six regular meetings, and one residential workshop.

The major activities of Council in 2011 fell into four categories:

- strategic direction of the University;
- self-governance of the Council;
- governance of the University; and
- compliance.

### Strategic Direction of the University

Major strategic issues considered by Council in 2011 included:

- the University's lead role in the establishment of the Wanneroo GP Super Clinic;
- international activities and the effect of changes in the international student market; and

- the impact of changes within the higher education sector, particularly in relation to enrolment projections, opportunities for growth, the social inclusion agenda, increasing participation, the uncapping of places, the impact of the half cohort in 2015 and the role of the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency.

To inform and enhance Council's role in shaping the strategic direction of the University, presentations on key issues and themes were included in the Council's meeting program for 2011. Matters discussed during the year included:

- ECU's Mission-based Compact negotiated with the Australian Government;
- ECU's Reconciliation Action Plan;
- strategic staffing issues – demographic challenges and future planning around fit-for-purpose staffing;
- process for the review of Council and members' performance;
- the Report on the National Governance Protocols and the adoption of the *Voluntary Code of Best Practice for the Governance of Australian Universities*;
- ECU's Cycle Two Audit, undertaken in October 2011 by the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA), formerly known as the Australian University Quality Agency (AUQA);
- strategic opportunities provided by the growth of Perth's northern metropolitan area; and
- the updated functional plans for Teaching and Learning; Research and Research Training; and Engagement.

A residential workshop was held in September 2011, focusing on preparations for the TEQSA audit of the University in October 2011.

At its December 2011 meeting, Council considered and approved the Budget for 2012.



## Self-governance of the Council

Council's statement on corporate governance was put in place in December 2002. The Corporate Governance Statement assists current and commencing members of Council, executive management and senior staff of the University in carrying out their roles. It also helps students and staff of the broader University community to be kept informed about governance processes at the University, and serves a similar purpose for the external community, including stakeholders such as governments.

During 2008 amendments to the *Higher Education Support Amendment Act 2003* (Cwth) were passed, removing provisions that had imposed adherence to the National Governance Protocols as a specific condition of Commonwealth Grant Scheme funding. The protocols have been replaced by a *Voluntary Code of Best Practice for the Governance of Australian Universities*. ECU's governing Council has affirmed a commitment to monitor its performance against the *Voluntary Code of Best Practice*.

### Council Evaluation

Following an external review in 2010, in 2011 Council undertook a self-evaluation process – an online questionnaire asking members to assess their own performance and that of Council. An independent reviewer received the responses and prepared a report for the Chancellor. The report confirmed that governance remains robust at ECU, with the skills and expertise of Council members, the leadership of the Chancellor and the working relationship with the Vice-Chancellor highlighted as particular strengths. The work of Council committees was also considered to be highly effective.

## Governance of the University

Key Council activities in 2011 relating to the governance of the University included:

- Regular meetings of Council committees. Reports from these committees were subsequently provided to Council to keep it informed of activities across the academic and operational areas of the University.

- The Vice-Chancellor provided mid-year and end-of-year reports on the performance of the University against its key performance indicators.
- In June and December 2011, the Vice-Chancellor reported on progress against the Key Actions for 2011, as previously approved by Council.
- A number of amendments to the *University Admission, Enrolment and Academic Progress Rules* and the *Misconduct Rules* and the *ECU Foundation Rules* were approved.
- The introduction of a Register of Interests was approved at its October meeting, a key governance improvement.
- All members of Council were offered professional development opportunities throughout the year.

## Compliance

The 2010 Annual Report was approved by Council and submitted to the State Minister for Education in accordance with the required timelines.

The Council's monitoring of the University, particularly through the Resources Committee and the Quality, Audit and Risk Committee, provided assurance to Council that the University has in place appropriate risk management, financial and quality controls.

The *Voluntary Code of Best Practice for the Governance of Australian Universities* (Item 14) requires that a university should disclose in its annual report its compliance with the *Voluntary Code of Best Practice* and provide reasons for any areas of non-compliance. At its August 2011 meeting Council confirmed that it continued to comply with the (then) National Governance Protocols. *The Voluntary Code of Best Practice* was adopted in October 2011, and Council is satisfied that the University is compliant with the new Code of Best Practice.

Item 4 of the *Voluntary Code of Best Practice* (which deals with procedures for the removal of the Chancellor or Pro-Chancellor) does not apply as the University's legislation does not contain the relevant provisions. That notwithstanding, in 2012 the Governance Committee will review the Corporate Governance Statement and the Council Standing Orders to provide greater guidance to Council on this issue.